



# Remembrance Campaign 2021: Concept Testing

## Final Report

### Prepared for Veterans Affairs Canada

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Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français.

## **Remembrance Campaign 2021: Concept Testing**

Prepared for Veterans Affairs Canada  
Supplier name: Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc.  
November 2021

This public opinion research report presents the results of a set of virtual focus groups conducted by Phoenix SPI on behalf of Veterans Affairs Canada.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) commissioned Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc. (Phoenix SPI) to conduct public opinion research to gauge the effectiveness of creative concepts for the 2021 Remembrance campaign.

### 1. Research Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the qualitative research was to gauge the effectiveness of the creative concepts for the 2021 Remembrance campaign. The objectives were to assess the extent to which the specific creative concepts capture one's attention, convey a message that is clear and easy to understand, are appropriate in tone, and motivate in terms of the call to action.

### 2. Methodology

To meet the objectives, a set of 10 virtual focus groups was conducted, with two groups in each of the following regions: Atlantic Canada (English), Ontario (English), Prairies (English), British Columbia (English), and Quebec (French). One group in each location was held with Canadians aged 18 to 34 and the other with Canadians aged 35 to 54. Groups were mixed by age (within each segment), education, household income, gender, and ethnic background. The fieldwork took place between July 19 and 26, 2021.

### 3. Key Findings

- Most participants expressed at least moderate agreement that each of the three concepts grabbed their attention, provided a clear message, and elicited an emotion. That being said, concepts A (38 million) and B (Unforgettable) were more likely to elicit agreement on these points.
- When asked to compare the three concepts in terms of these criteria, concept B (Unforgettable) emerged as the overall favourite for each criterion. Younger Canadians (18-34) tended to be divided in their preferences between concepts A and B, with Eastern, Atlantic, and French-speaking youth preferring B and Prairies and some youth from British Columbia preferring A. For their part, Canadians aged 35 and older were much more likely to prefer concept B to A.
- Reasons for preferring concept B (Unforgettable) included the following:
  - The approach, in general, tends to be novel.
  - The concept grabs and sustains attention through its pace and focus on action.
  - The message/narration is simple and clear.
  - The concept shows various dimensions of life in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF).
  - It is easy to relate to because it touches on common experiences, but it is also thought-provoking to the extent that it makes people think about how different the daily lives of soldiers are from theirs.
  - It takes viewers on an emotional trip, covering a range of emotions, and the juxtaposition of emotions is powerful.
  - The call to action (i.e., remember Canada's Veterans) is stronger than in the other ads.

- While concept B (Unforgettable) was the overall favourite, participants suggested improvements, including the following: changing the most ‘unforgettable day’, using clearer pictures (e.g., participants were not certain how the photo chosen for the scariest day of the year reflected the ‘scariest day’), slowing down the pace (i.e., some found it too frenetic), focusing more on individuals than on CAF, and adding the element/theme of sacrifice from concept A (38 million).
- General points related to the three concepts:
  - All three concepts tended to be judged positively in terms of coverage/inclusivity, historically in terms of CAF activities and in terms of gender representation.
  - All three concepts tended to be judged critically in terms of calls to action. The call to action was not viewed as strong in any of the concepts.
  - To strengthen the concepts, participants suggested 1) the inclusion of context when possible—for example, information about the photos, such as where and when they were taken, and; 2) greater use of storytelling with a focus on real individuals (e.g., testimonials), something which was viewed as important for Canadians with no direct connection to Veterans.

#### 4. Limitations and use of the findings

The results from the virtual focus groups are not statistically projectable, but they offer detailed opinions about the issues explored through this research. The results of this research will be used by the Government of Canada to guide the messaging and creative development of the 2021 Remembrance campaign.

#### 5. Political neutrality certification

I hereby certify as a Senior Officer of Phoenix Strategic Perspectives that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Policy on Communications and Federal Identity of the Government of Canada and Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research. Specifically, the deliverables do not contain any reference to electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leader.



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Alethea Woods  
President  
Phoenix SPI

#### 6. Contact value

The contract value was \$47,187.88 (including HST).

## INTRODUCTION

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Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc. (Phoenix SPI) was commissioned by Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) to conduct research designed to gauge the effectiveness of creative concepts for the 2021 Remembrance campaign.

### 1. Background and objectives

Within Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), the core responsibility of commemoration is unique in that it serves Veterans and their families, recognizes the contributions of those who made the ultimate sacrifice, and engages the broader Canadian public in remembrance. The purpose of the Remembrance campaign is to honour the Canadians who served our country during times of war, military conflict and peace, and to engage Canadians in remembering past and present sacrifices.

More than 2.3 million Canadians have served in uniform to defend freedom and democracy since the start of the First World War and more than 118,000 have given their lives (Source: VAC Learning Unit). It is important for Canadians to understand the price of freedom. Veterans are passing the torch to the people of Canada, so the memory of their sacrifices and achievements will continue, and the values they fought for will live on.

The strategic focus of commemoration is currently being renewed. Work is underway toward a new approach to understanding the experiences, sacrifices and contributions of all Veterans, and how they have and continue to contribute to Canada. VAC is developing a 10-year strategic plan for commemoration in consultation with the Commemoration Advisory Group and other key stakeholders. This plan will serve as a reference point for commemoration activities going forward.

A national advertising campaign is one way VAC seeks to engage Canadians in remembrance. The Remembrance campaign is focused on engaging and honouring all who have served our country in times of war, military conflict and peace, and have made life better for Canadians and the world. The target audience for this advertising campaign is Canadians aged 18 to 54 years old, with an emphasis on younger Canadians (18 to 34 years old).

In 2021, a new digital creative is planned which will be a main element in the campaign. It is essential that VAC ensure the campaign will resonate with the intended audiences. The Department, therefore, commissioned qualitative and quantitative public opinion research to support the 2021 Remembrance Campaign: 1) online focus groups and 2) a pre- and post-campaign evaluation online survey. The focus of this report is the qualitative research.

The purpose of the qualitative research was to gauge the effectiveness of the creative concepts for the 2021 Remembrance campaign. The objectives were to assess the extent to which the specific creative concepts capture one's attention, convey a message that is clear and easy to understand, are appropriate in tone, and motivate in terms of the call to action. Feedback from the focus groups will be used to adjust the creative elements to ensure they resonate with the target audiences.

## 2. Methodology

A set of 10 virtual focus groups was conducted with Canadians aged 18 to 54. Two groups were held in each of the following regions: Atlantic Canada (English), Ontario (English), Prairies (English), British Columbia (English), and Quebec (French). One group in each location was held with Canadians aged 18 to 34 and the other with Canadians aged 35 to 54.

The following specifications applied:

- Participants were recruited through an online panel using a recruitment screening questionnaire. The short online questionnaire took no more than 5 minutes for panellists to complete. Recruitment adhered to the Government of Canada’s *Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research – Qualitative Research*.
  - When recruiting, individuals were offered the option to complete the recruitment questionnaire in English or French.
  - All individuals recruited were fluent in the language in which the focus group was conducted.
  - All potential participants were informed of their rights under the *Privacy Act*, *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* and *Access to Information Act*. This included informing participants of the purpose of the research; that participation is completely voluntary; and that all information collected would be used for research purposes only.
- These groups lasted two hours and included a mix of participants by age (within each segment), education, household income, gender, and ethnic background.
- All participants were paid an honorarium of \$100 to thank them for taking part in the research.
- In total, 53 individuals participated in this research.
- The fieldwork took place between July 19 and 26, 2021 as follows:

Location	Language	Time
<b>Region 1: Atlantic Canada – [July 20]</b>		
GROUP 1: Canadians aged 35 to 54 years of age	• English	• 5:30 pm ADT
GROUP 2: Canadians aged 18 to 34 years of age	• English	• 7:45 pm ADT
<b>Region 2: Eastern Canada – [July 19]</b>		
GROUP 3: Canadians aged 18 to 34 years of age	• English	• 5:30 pm EDT
GROUP 4: Canadians aged 35 to 54 years of age	• English	• 7:45 pm EDT
<b>Region 3: Prairies – [July 21]</b>		
GROUP 5: Canadians aged 35 to 54 years of age	• English	• 4:00 pm MDT
GROUP 6: Canadians aged 18 to 34 years of age	• English	• 6:15 pm MDT
<b>Region 4: Pacific – [July 26]</b>		
GROUP 7: Canadians aged 18 to 34 years of age	• English	• 4:00 pm PDT
GROUP 8: Canadians aged 35 to 54 years of age	• English	• 6:15 pm PDT
<b>Region 5: French, OLMC – [July 22]</b>		
GROUP 9: Canadians aged 35 to 54 years of age	• French	• 5:30 pm EDT
	• French	• 7:45 pm EDT

GROUP 10: Canadians aged 18 to 34 years of age

- The moderators for this study were Philippe Azzie and Alethea Woods. Both contributed to the preparation of the final report.



## DETAILED FINDINGS

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### 1. Views on remembrance and commemoration

In advance of the review of materials being considered for the Remembrance campaign, participants were asked a set of background and contextual questions about remembrance and commemoration. Issues explored included the main purpose of remembrance or commemoration, the importance of remembrance, views on what should be the focus of remembrance activities, recall of, and experience with, remembrance activities, including the types of activities or initiatives that resonate with them or are particularly meaningful to them.

#### Main purpose of remembrance - to honour, thank, remember

Participants routinely focussed on one or more of three basic themes when asked about the main purpose of remembrance or commemoration. To the extent that there were differences among participants, they constituted variations on these themes as opposed to different views about the purpose of remembrance or commemoration. These themes were as follows:

- *Honouring/respecting, paying tribute to Veterans:* One recurring theme was the importance of honouring, showing respect for, or paying tribute to, those who serve/have served by recognizing their devotion, accomplishments, and sacrifices.
- *Acknowledging/reflecting on our debt to Veterans:* Another recurring theme, sometimes linked to the previous one, was the importance of showing gratitude to those who serve/have served by acknowledging or reflecting on the extent to which we are indebted to them for what we have and for our way of life.
- *Remembering/learning from the past:* The third recurring theme was the importance of remembering the past and learning from it. Younger participants in particular felt that there is a pedagogical dimension to remembrance and commemoration. This includes remembering the formative events of the past, as well as learning the lessons of history and educating ourselves, partly so as not to repeat the errors of the past.

#### Most view remembrance as personally important

Most participants considered remembrance or commemoration to be at least somewhat important to them personally. Reasons given to explain why included the following:

- a direct or personal connection to a current or former member of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) (e.g., a parent, a relative or a friend);
- having met or encountered Veterans and heard their stories/recollections;
- knowing people/having friends whose family members serve/have served in the CAF;
- importance of acknowledging a debt to Veterans and showing gratitude for their sacrifices and what they fought for;
- awareness of issues faced by Veterans, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), especially Veterans of more recent conflicts like the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq; and
- coming from a country where Veterans are revered/highly respected.

Some younger participants emphasized that, while they recognize the importance of remembrance, it has less personal meaning to them due to the absence of a personal connection to Veterans and/or a general lack of knowledge/familiarity with history and the role of Canada’s military.

### Participants point to ‘who’ and ‘what’ remembrance should focus on

Asked what should be the focus of remembrance or commemoration activities, participants tended to draw attention to two things: who should be the focus of such activities and what should be focussed on.

- **Who to focus on:** In terms of who to focus on, participants suggested that the focus of such activities should be on those who serve or have served in the Canadian Armed Forces. This inclusive approach applied to the various capacities in which CAF members have served (e.g., combat, support, medical assistance, etc.), the different types of missions (e.g., combat operations, peace support operations, humanitarian aid, etc.), and the full range of missions CAF members have served in historically, from the two world wars to Iraq and Afghanistan. Some also emphasized or specified that the focus should be on Veterans themselves and their stories/testimonials because it helps humanize and personalize remembrance, especially for those who have no direct personal connection to Veterans or CAF members.

While the focus tended to be on those who should be remembered/commemorated, some participants emphasized that an effort should be made to target younger people/youth who lack a direct or personal connection to Veterans. In this regard, it was also suggested that the focus of such activities in terms of vehicle or channel should be social media.

- **What to focus on:** In terms of what to focus on, participants routinely suggested that the emphasis should be on the following:
  - the sacrifices made by those who serve/have served;
  - their accomplishments (e.g., important events, dates);
  - how/why Veterans’ actions make/made a difference;
  - the values fought for; and
  - the importance of acknowledging/honouring those who served because of our debt to them (e.g., we are the benefactors of their achievements and sacrifices).

It was also suggested that the focus should be on issues/problems faced by Veterans and the importance of supporting Canada’s Veterans. Some younger Canadians also emphasized the importance of providing younger people/generations with historical context and background in order to foster awareness and understanding of Canada’s military history. It was suggested that this would provide them with the capacity to connect to remembrance/commemoration in a more meaningful way. For example, it was suggested that being exposed to personal testimonials of Veterans would be a good way to reach those with no meaningful personal connection to Veterans or the CAF.

### Poppy, Remembrance Day ceremonies - activities participants most often recalled and took part in

Perhaps not surprisingly, the two types of remembrance activities most often recalled by participants were the poppy/wearing of the poppy and Remembrance Day ceremonies (e.g., laying

of wreaths, moment of silence). Related to the latter, a number of younger Canadians recall remembrance/commemorative assemblies or moments of silence in school, including school visits/talks by Veterans. A number of other types of activities/events were recalled by smaller numbers, including the following:

- Veterans' parades.
- writing to Veterans.
- activities/events at Legion halls.
- commemorative coins.
- use of the yellow ribbon.
- Veterans' license plates.
- war amps key tags.
- commemorative plaques identifying members of specific communities who served/died.
- important dates/events (e.g., D-Day, VE day).
- VAC educational materials.
- documentaries/movies.

Wearing a poppy and taking part in a Remembrance Day ceremony were also the two types of remembrance/commemorative activities participants were most likely to have taken part in themselves. Some younger participants specified that they had taken part in Remembrance Day ceremonies at school or as members of the cadets, boy scouts, or girl guides. Other types of activities participants have themselves taken part in were identified by individuals or no more than a few participants. These included visiting a war museum, reading 'In Flanders Fields', volunteering at a local Legion Hall, and taking part in essay writing or poster making contest at school.

### **Remembrance activities involving Veterans most likely to resonate with participants**

Participants collectively identified various kinds of commemorative or remembrance activities that resonate with them or are particularly meaningful to them. That said, activities involving Veterans were most likely to resonate with participants. This included meeting Veterans, hearing/reading their stories or testimonials, writing to Veterans, and watching Veterans' parades. Activities such as these were described as meaningful because the presence or involvement of Veterans personalizes the act of remembrance and makes it concrete by establishing a momentary bond or sense of connectedness to those individuals who are the focus of these activities.

A number of other activities resonate with participants mainly because they provide moments of solitary or individual reflection. These include the moment/two minutes of silence, the laying of wreaths, standing at the tomb of the unknown soldier, the playing of the last post, hearing/reading 'In Flanders Fields', hearing bag pipes, and watching/witnessing the return of caskets of Canadian soldiers who have died on missions. In addition to activities that allow for solitary or individual reflection, some participants said that public gatherings/ceremonies resonate with them because they constitute moments of collective bonding and reflection. Finally, a few participants said activities and initiatives designed to provide or advocate for support of Veterans/assistance to Veterans tend to resonate with them.

## Few recall ads or ad campaigns related to remembrance

Only a few participants could recall specific ads or ad campaigns dealing with commemoration or remembrance. This included what were identified as ‘Lest we Forget’ ads (though no specific ad was identified), ads dealing with specific battles or acts of heroism, heritage minutes/vignettes (unspecified), the ‘We Will Remember’ campaign, and commemorative coins.

## 2. Review of creative concepts

Participants were shown three concepts or approaches for ads Veterans Affairs Canada is planning to run as part of its Remembrance advertising campaign: *38 million* (concept A), *Unforgettable* (concept B), and *Photos* (concept C). The concepts or approaches were presented to participants using a storyboard with static images accompanied by a voiceover. Participants were informed that the ads would be 30 seconds long and could eventually appear on TV or as videos on social media using real footage, professional announcers, and music. In advance of presenting the concepts or approaches, participants were reminded that these are not finished products, and that they should focus on the messages conveyed in these ads, any feelings or emotions they elicit, and the effectiveness of the overall approach.

The order of presentation of concepts or approaches was rotated across groups. Following the presentation of each one, and prior to the group discussion, participants answered the following three questions using a 4-point scale (1 = Not at all, 2 = To a small extent, 3 = To a moderate extent, 4 = To a great extent): to what extent does the ad do the following: grab your attention; provide a message that is clear and easy to understand; and elicit an emotion.

All three ad concepts were judged to be more effective than not in terms of grabbing participants’ attention, providing a clear message, and eliciting an emotional reaction.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, most participants said of each ad that it grabbed their attention, provided a clear message, and elicited an emotion at least to a moderate extent. That being said, participants were more likely to rate concepts A (*38 million*) and B (*Unforgettable*) as *very* effective in each of these areas. When participants were asked explicitly to compare the three ads, the *Unforgettable* approach was much more likely than the other two to be chosen as most effective in terms of sustaining attention, resonating on a personal level, and motivating participants to want to learn more about the role Canada’s military has played in times of war and peace.

On certain points, participant feedback tended to be common or consistent for all three creative concepts. This common or consistent feedback is identified here, in order to avoid repetition. Any nuances on these points related to specific concepts will be identified in the section dealing with the concept(s) in question.

- All three concepts tended to be judged positively in terms of coverage/inclusivity. More specifically, they were judged to be 1) historically comprehensive in the sense that they cover the various campaigns/missions CAF members have served in historically (i.e., from the First World War to the present); 2) inclusive in the sense that they depict a range/variety of CAF activities and operations (e.g., combat, humanitarian aid), and; 3) equitable in terms of gender representation.

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<sup>1</sup> This finding is based on results from the three poll questions asked to participants following their review of each ad.

- There was widespread agreement that each of the ads is clear in its messaging.
- There was a virtual consensus that all three ads are appropriate in tone—that is, there is nothing disturbing or offensive about them.
- There was widespread agreement that each of these concepts targets the Canadian general public.
- Participants routinely suggested that there is no clear or forceful call to action in any of these concepts, or at most a weak one. One of the main suggestions to improve all three concepts was to include more forceful calls to action.

What follows is feedback on each of the three concepts/approaches.

### **A) 38 million**

#### **Overall impressions of ad tend to be positive**

Overall impressions of this concept tended to be moderately positive, with some reacting very positively to it. Participants who were not positive tended to be neutral rather than critical. Positive feedback on this concept, including things participants liked or identified as strengths, tended to focus on two of its aspects/features: the photos/pictures, and the messaging/voiceover. Some also commented positively on the combined effect of the two.

- **Photos/pictures:** A number of participants said they liked the photos used in this approach because of their quality (e.g., crispness, clarity), their historical scope/coverage, the focus on individuals, and the inclusion/depiction of both women and men, as well as relatives/family members.
- **Messaging:** Participants also routinely liked the messaging in this concept, with a focus on the following:
  - The message is simple, clear, and easy to understand.
  - It is sincere/genuine and easy to relate to.
  - It is inclusive—that is, the message of thanks comes from all Canadians and is directed to all Veterans.
  - The message is positive/slightly celebratory, but in an appropriate way, as an expression of gratitude.
  - The emphasis on connectedness/how the past impacts the present (e.g., ‘because there’s a him there’s an us’), is effective to the extent that it resonated with participants and engaged them.
  - The message is appropriate. It focuses on the right things, specifically the impact, achievements and sacrifices of Veterans as well as recognition/acknowledgement of our collective debt to them.

The combination of messaging and images was described by some as both attention-grabbing and thought-provoking, with most describing the ad as at least somewhat meaningful or relevant to them personally.

Reasons for its perceived relevance included the impression that the ad targets all Canadians (e.g., not just those related to Veterans), delivers an authentic/sincere message that resonates (i.e., a

message of thanks/gratitude), fosters reflection on our collective debt to others for what we have, and reminds/encourages Canadians to honour Veterans on Remembrance Day. Some also said that the ad resonates with them because they know Veterans and/or have seen the kind of family reunion scene at airports depicted in one of the photos, something that makes the ad personally relevant or real to them.

There was widespread agreement that the target audience for this ad is the Canadian general public, primarily because of its specific reference to ‘38 million thank-yous’. That being said, it was also suggested that the message of gratitude in this ad might be targeted more at younger Canadians than older ones because older Canadians are perhaps more likely to need no reminder about their debt to Veterans.

### **Critical feedback focuses on pictures/photos and call to action**

Critical feedback on this approach tended to focus on the pictures and the absence of a call to action. Regarding the pictures, some participants felt that, with one exception, they did not really convey anything meaningful, specifically no human warmth, no real action, and no sense of mission or purpose to those who served. The exception was the photo of the reunion of soldiers with family members. A few suggested that the pictures look a little too ‘manicured’ or ‘clean’, and it was also suggested that the pictures focus too much on combat-like engagements. Some younger participants also observed that there is no particular context or framework provided to make these images meaningful or relevant.

In addition, there was a widespread impression that there is no real call to action in this ad, or only a very weak one. It was suggested that, because the focus of the ad is on thanks/gratitude, there is no motivation or reason to follow-up in any way. In other words, the expression of gratitude at the end tends to provide closure. As a result, participants routinely observed that, while the ad is attention-grabbing, it does not motivate them to want to learn more about the role Canada’s military has played in times of war and peace.

The following critical feedback was provided by individual participants or no more than a few:

- The messaging is a little unclear, confusing, or ‘wordy’. In particular, a few participants were confused by the juxtaposition of pronouns and/or did not understand the reference to ‘38 million thank-yous’.
- The ad is a bit too cheerful in tone and/or has a bit of a recruitment-like feeling to it, i.e., promoting life in the CAF.
- The message, while good in acknowledging our debt to Veterans, tends to attribute everything we have to Veterans.

### **Suggestions to improve ad**

Suggestions to make this concept more effective included the following:

- Include a more forceful call to action.
- Include photos that have a less ‘staged’ or ‘manicured’ look to them (i.e., photos that are a little more ‘raw’ or ‘authentic’).
- Show more action/scenes of action in the ad, given that the focus is on Veterans’ accomplishments and our debt to them.

- Include photos that evoke more human emotion/more of an emotional reaction.
- Include images of 'blue helmets' and/or humanitarian aid to emphasize Canada's role in peace-keeping.
- Include the image/picture of soldiers' tombs/a military cemetery to underline the ultimate sacrifice made by some many.
- Include fewer people in the last two frames (i.e., focus more on individuals or no more than a few individuals).
- Show more ethnic diversity and/or include depictions of Indigenous soldiers.
- Include some context/referential framework to make images more meaningful and generate curiosity that might lead more people to follow-up (e.g., dates/places of photos).

## **B. Unforgettable**

### **Overall positive impressions of ad**

Overall impressions of this concept tended to range from moderately to very positive. As was the case with the previous approach, those who were not positive tended to be neutral rather than critical. Participants tended to react positively to the following aspects/features of this approach:

- The overall approach, which tends to be novel/not one seen before.
- It depicts the range of CAF activities from combat to peace keeping.
- The ad grabs and sustains attention through its timing/pace and its focus on action and movement.
- There is a dramatic aspect and build-up to the narration, culminating in a focus on Remembrance Day (the most unforgettable day of the year).
- The message/narration is simple and clear.
- It shows various aspects/dimensions of CAF life.
- The images suggest or point to danger and even violence but without being graphic or explicit.
- The ad covers a range of experiences (e.g., the hardest day of the year, the longest day of the year).
- The juxtaposition/contrast of emotions and events depicted is powerful.

In addition, participants routinely described the approach in this ad as personally meaningful. Reasons given to explain why included the following:

- The message is easy to relate to because it touches on universal emotions, yet it is thought-provoking by making us reflect on how different the daily lives of CAF members/Veterans are from ours.
- It reminds us of what Veterans face throughout their lives and invites us to take one day of the year to acknowledge/recognize this.
- It alludes to the sacrifices made by Veterans and our debt to them.
- It shows/depicts the various kinds of things Veterans do/are exposed to and the different facets of a CAF member's life in such a way as to make it possible to relate to them even though we are not in the CAF.

As was the case with the previous concept, there was widespread agreement that the target audience for this ad is the Canadian general public. Some detected this in the fact that the message culminates in a reference to Remembrance Day and the general call to remember Canada's Veterans. Others detected this in the range of images used, from combat footage to humanitarian



aid, to family reunions. In other words, there was a sense that the range of images was designed to appeal to as wide an audience as possible. A few participants felt that the ad tended to target what was described as ‘middle-aged white Canadians’ because there is no depiction of diversity. On the other hand, it was also suggested that the ad targets new Canadians because it depicts diversity within the CAF in the final photo.

### Critical feedback focuses on cognitive dissonance, ‘frenetic’ pace of ad, and absence of call to action

Critical feedback tended to focus on three aspects of this approach: a certain amount of cognitive dissonance, the ad’s frenetic pace, and the absence of a call to action.

- **Cognitive dissonance:** This manifested itself primarily in what was described as a disconnect between pictures and text. In some instances, the disconnect had to do with participants’ inability to intuitively link a picture to its description. For example, *why is the image of the soldier sitting alone described as the ‘darkest’ day of the year?, what is the meaning of the ‘brightest’ day of the year?* In other instances, participants felt that the chosen picture was not appropriate or particularly evocative of what it was supposed to evoke. For example, some felt that the picture associated with the scariest day of the year was not particularly evocative of ‘the scariest day’ in the life of a veteran or CAF member. As a result of this disconnect, some participants felt that the messaging in this ad was not very clear. In other words, as a result of trying to connect text and image in a meaningful way, the overall message of the ad was either lost or simply unclear to them until the end.

Beyond the disconnect between picture and text, a few participants felt that the reference to Remembrance Day as the most ‘unforgettable’ day of the year was discordant or unsuitable. While they could not think of a more suitable term, the expression ‘unforgettable’ was seen to have an entertainment-like ring to it, not in harmony with the solemnity of the day it was associated with (i.e., November 11<sup>th</sup>).

- **Frenetic pace of ad:** While acknowledging that the ad is attention-grabbing, a few participants described its pace as too fast or frenetic, to the point that the message might be lost or unclear.
- **Absence of a call to action:** Although some participants felt that there is more of a call to action in this approach than in the other two because of the call to remember Veterans, there was still a widespread assumption that there is no clear call to action, or only a very weak one, with some specifying that the focus on Remembrance Day and the call to remember entails no further kind of action or follow-up on our part.

Beyond this, participants commented critically on the following aspects of this approach:

- Some participants suggested that this approach lacks a focus on specific individuals/CAF members/Veterans, and/or a story-like element that would make it more humane/easier to relate to.
- A few felt that there was not enough of an emphasis on the theme of the sacrifices made by CAF members and our debt to them.
- A few participants felt that the focus is too much on the CAF as an organization or entity and not enough on what we as Canadians should be doing to acknowledge our debt to Veterans.



- It was suggested that while there is nothing inappropriate in this concept in terms of tone, the images and sounds in the final version could be a trigger for some Veterans who are still dealing with some of the consequences of their deployments (e.g., the loudest day of the year, the scariest day of the year).

### Suggestions to improve ad

Suggestions to make this concept more effective included the following:

- Provide a more effective/clear call to action.
- Change the reference to Remembrance Day as the most ‘unforgettable day’.
- Find a more appropriate picture/photo to depict certain ‘days’, e.g., the ‘scariest day of the year, the ‘darkest’ day of the year’.
- Try to incorporate a more story-like element to the narrative and a greater focus on individuals.
- Emphasize the element of sacrifices made by Veterans and our debt to them in the messaging.
- Slow down the pace/speed of the ad.
- Include some context/referential framework to make images more meaningful and generate curiosity that might lead more people to follow-up (e.g., dates/places of photos).
- Use an actual veteran as a narrator.

### C. Photos

#### Overall impressions of ad tend to range from neutral to moderately positive

Overall impressions of this concept tended to range from neutral to moderately positive. Positive feedback, including things participants liked or identified as strengths, tended to focus on the following aspects/features.

- *The use of photos/pictures:* The use of photos/pictures as a motif was something many participants liked about this approach or found appealing. Reasons included the connection between pictures and memory/remembrance (e.g., the way they preserve memories and are witnesses to the past), the universal resonance or appeal of photos/pictures (i.e., everyone has some and/or can relate to them), their enduring/lasting nature (i.e., they tend to transcend time). Some felt that the use of photos enhanced what they took to be this ad’s main message, which was the importance of remembrance.
- *The focus on Veterans as relatives:* Participants also routinely liked the focus in this approach on Veterans as relatives and the many ways in which Veterans are connected to others (e.g., uncle, parent, sister). It was noted that this serves as a reminder that Veterans are all around us and/or connected to those we know (identified by a few as part of the messaging in this ad). It was also noted that this focus on Veterans as relatives helps personalize or individualize Veterans, especially for people with no direct connection to a veteran.
- *The focus on mission/commitment to peace:* Some participants liked this approach’s emphasis on Veterans’ commitment to peace as the goal/mission of Canada’s international engagements. It was observed that this helps establish a common thread or link between Canada’s early engagements (e.g., WW1) and its later ones (e.g., Iraq).

## **Neutral and critical reactions focus mainly on ad's 'traditional' approach and lack of call to action**

Neutral as well as critical reactions to this approach tended to focus on what was described as its 'standard' or 'stereotypical' approach. This approach was described as one that uses family pictures or photos of relatives and plays on the theme of 'nostalgia' to communicate its message. The message could be anything, with some, for example, associating this approach with ads about cancer. Although there is nothing wrong per se with such an approach, it was routinely observed that it tends to be overused, and as a result, the ads that use it are not very attention-grabbing or memorable. Other characterizations of this approach, with a focus on its inability to engage or attract attention, included describing it as 'inoffensive', 'soft', and 'non-controversial'.

Indeed, it was the ad's overall approach that tended to divide participants regarding its relevance or meaningfulness to themselves personally. Those who described the approach as at least somewhat meaningful usually pointed to the effectiveness of using photos/pictures/the nostalgic element and the references to Veterans as relatives as something they can relate to or as something that strikes a chord. It was noted, for example, that despite no direct or personal connection to a veteran, one can relate to the theme of connectedness and the fact that Veterans are related to people all around us. This somehow makes them familiar to us even if we do not know them.

On the other hand, those who said that the ad did not resonate with them often focused on the same elements, observing that the approach does not grab them, is slow-moving, that the photos are meaningless, and that their mind began to wander because of the stereotypical approach used. Some also said that the ad was not personally meaningful to them precisely because it tends to focus on those who are related to or have a family connection to Veterans. As a result, the ad does not resonate with them because it does not apply to them.

Related to the latter point, while most participants felt that the target audience for this ad is the Canadian general public (mainly because of the depiction of traditional photos and smart phones), many felt that it tended to target Canadians with a direct personal link to Veterans or members of the CAF. For some, those with a direct connection to a veteran were more likely to be older, and as a result, some felt that this ad targets older Canadians in particular. On the other hand, it was also suggested that the ad tends to target younger Canadians because of the reference to more remote family connections (i.e., grandfather, great-grandmother) and the depiction of a photo on a smart-phone.

One point on which those who found the ad meaningful and those who did not agreed, was that the ad lacks a forceful call to action.

## **Suggestions to improve ad**

Suggestions to make this ad more effective included the following:

- Provide a more effective/clear call to action (e.g., for stories about Veterans go to ...).
- Focus more on the sacrifices made by Veterans/our debt to them.
- Provide more context/information (e.g., dates and places where photos were taken).
- Make the ad a little more hard-hitting/emotional.
- Include an individual looking at the photos/album.

- Make the pictures larger/more distinct.

### 3. Ads compared

As noted above, when participants were asked explicitly to compare the three concepts, the *Unforgettable* approach was much more likely than the other two to be chosen as most effective in terms of sustaining attention, resonating on a personal level, and motivating participants to want to learn more about the role Canada’s military has played in times of war and peace. Youth (18-35) tended to be divided in their preferences between *38 million* and *Unforgettable*, with Eastern, Atlantic, and QC youth preferring *Unforgettable* and Prairies and some BC youth preferring *38 million*. For their part, older Canadians were much more likely to prefer *Unforgettable*.

Participants’ reasons for preferring an approach in each of these areas are identified below. Not surprisingly, when explaining their preference participants tended to re-iterate or re-emphasize points they had previously made regarding these ads.

#### Sustaining attention

Reasons given by participants to explain why the *Unforgettable* concept is most effective in terms of attracting and sustaining attention included the following:

- The overall approach is novel/uncommon.
- Its timing/pace and its focus on action and movement are gripping.
- It depicts various aspects/dimensions of CAF life.
- The range of emotions depicted.
- The juxtaposition/contrast of emotions and events depicted.

Reasons given to explain why the *38 million* concept is most effective in this regard included the following:

- The message is simple and clear.
- The focus on connectedness.
- The emphasis on the sacrifices made by of Veterans and our collective debt to them.

Reasons given to explain why the *Photos* concept is most effective in this regard included the following:

- Its touching message/the nostalgic aspect.
- Its personal/humane approach.
- Its warmth.

#### Resonating on a personal level

Reasons given to explain why the *Unforgettable* concept is most effective in terms of resonating on a personal level included the following:

- The text is thought-provoking (i.e., it makes one reflect on the lives of CAF members compared to our own).

- The range of emotional experiences depicted is something everyone can relate to/has experienced.
- The emotional reaction it elicits (e.g., it takes one on an emotional roller-coaster).

Reasons given to explain why the *38 million* concept is most effective in this regard included the following:

- It addresses everyone, i.e., 38 million Canadians.
- The emphasis on connectedness.
- The focus on the sacrifices made by Veterans.
- The message of thanks is heartfelt/genuine.

Reasons given to explain why the *Photos* concept is most effective in this regard included the following:

- The nostalgic element.
- The focus on Veterans as relatives.
- Its warmth.

#### **Motivating participants to want to learn more**

As noted above, neither of the approaches was considered very effective in terms of motivating participants to learn more about the role Canada's military has played in times of war and peace. That said, comparatively-speaking, reasons given to explain why the *Unforgettable* concept is most effective in terms of motivating participants to learn more about the role Canada's military has played in times of war and peace included the diversity of situations depicted (which elicits curiosity about the range of CAF activities), and the call to remember Canada's Veterans.

Reasons given to explain why the *38 million* concept is most effective in this regard included curiosity about the origin/source of the photos/images, as well as reference in the final frame to 'learning more'.

Reasons given to explain why the *Photos* concept was most effective in this regard also included the reference in the final frame to 'learning more'. It was also observed that the ad was one that would be watched over and over again, which might induce someone to follow-up at some point.

## **4. Related issues**

### **Thoughts about future creative concepts and/or materials related to commemoration campaign**

By way of conclusion, participants were asked if they had any thoughts about the design of any future creative concepts and/or supporting materials related to a public commemoration campaign. Suggestions included the following:

- Include clear and forceful calls to action/motivate people to follow-up in some way.
- Make ads story-like with focus on real individuals/testimonials. This was seen as particularly important for those with no direct connection to Veterans.
- Address issues faced by returning CAF members, particularly PTSD.

- Develop ads in which individual Canadians are seen thanking Veterans (e.g., a mosaic of thanks).
- Use relatives of individuals serving in the CAF.
- Focus on contemporary/current CAF activities (i.e., what are CAF members doing right now).
- Include depictions of new Canadians and Indigenous Canadians.
- Represent CAF role in domestic capacities (e.g., floods, wildfires).

### **Ways to reach/engage more Canadians through commemorative or remembrance initiatives**

When it came to ways in which VAC could do to reach and engage more Canadians through commemorative or remembrance initiatives, participants suggested the following:

- Use social media as much as possible.
- Create more heritage moments with a focus on Veterans.
- Go into schools.
- Use podcasts that provide a forum to Veterans to tell their stories.
- Focus on more than November 11<sup>th</sup>/Remembrance Day.
- Provide context/background for youth with limited historical knowledge of Canada's military history. This includes developing and disseminating pedagogical/educational materials.
- Remember that ads need to resonate with people with less/no direct connection to Veterans.
- Focus on themes/issues that connect Canada's early and later/more recent engagements/theatres of operation.
- Try to develop more community-based events/initiatives (e.g., parades, contests, ceremonies at sports events).
- Inform Canadians about what they can do to help/assist Veterans.

## APPENDIX

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### 1. Research instruments

#### Recruitment Questionnaire

##### [Landing Page](#)

Thank you for your interest in this research study. This short online questionnaire will take no more than 5 minutes to complete. The purpose of the online questionnaire is to confirm the eligibility of individuals interested in participating in this research study.

##### [Background information](#)

- This research study is being conducted by Phoenix Strategic Perspectives (Phoenix SPI), a Canadian public opinion research firm, on behalf of the Government of Canada, and specifically Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC).
- The research is designed to help VAC gauge the effectiveness of the creative concepts for the 2021 Remembrance campaign.
- We are interested in hearing your opinions; no attempt will be made to sell you anything or change your point of view.

##### [About the research study](#)

- The research involves online group discussions.
- The discussions will last up to 2 hours.
- People who qualify for the research and take part will receive a cash gift to thank them for their time.

##### [How does the online questionnaire work?](#)

- Your decision to complete the questionnaire is completely voluntary and confidential.
- Your decision on whether or not to participate in the research will not affect any dealings you may have with the Government of Canada, now or in future.

##### [What about your personal information?](#)

- Your personal information will be collected by Phoenix SPI in accordance with the applicable provincial privacy legislation or the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA).
- Phoenix SPI supports and strictly adheres to the Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research, industry standards and guidelines for Internet and other types of research. To view Phoenix SPI's privacy policy, please [click here](#).

##### [Need to contact us?](#)

PROGRAMMING NOTE: "Contact us" will open a new window that will contain the following:

For more information about this research, contact Phoenix SPI by email at [research@phoenixspi.ca](mailto:research@phoenixspi.ca) or by telephone at 1-844-960-1700.

Phoenix SPI  
1678 Bank Street, Ste. 2  
Ottawa, ON K1V 7Y6

[www.phoenixspi.ca](http://www.phoenixspi.ca)

**Eligibility Screener**

1. In which of the following age categories do you belong? [RECRUIT A MIX BY AGE WITHIN EACH AGE SEGMENT: UNDER 35 AND AGED 35+]

Under 18	THANK/TERMINATE
18 to 24	[CANADIANS 18-34]
25 to 29	[CANADIANS 18-34]
30 to 34	[CANADIANS 18-34]
35 to 39	[CANADIANS 35+]
40 to 44	[CANADIANS 35+]
45 to 50	[CANADIANS 35+]
50 to 54	[CANADIANS 35+]
55 or older	THANK/TERMINATE

[TERMINATION MESSAGE – AGE-under 18: Thank you for your interest. To be eligible for this research study you must be 18 years of age or older. / TERMINATION MESSAGE – AGE-55+: Thank you for your interest. Unfortunately you are not eligible to participate in this study.]

2. Do you, or a member of your household or immediate family, work in any of the following fields?
- a. Marketing research, public relations firm, or advertising agency
  - b. The media (i.e., radio, television, newspapers, magazines, etc.)
  - c. Federal or provincial government

Yes	THANK/TERMINATE
No	CONTINUE

[TERMINATION MESSAGE – INDUSTRY: Thank you for your interest. Unfortunately you are not eligible to participate in this study.]

3. What language do you speak most often at home?

English	
French	[REGION 5]
Prefer not to say	THANK/TERMINATE

4. In which province or territory do you live?

British Columbia	[REGION 4 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]
Alberta	[REGION 3 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]
Saskatchewan	[REGION 3 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]
Manitoba	[REGION 3 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]
Ontario	[REGION 2 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]
Quebec	[REGION 2 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]

New Brunswick	[REGION 1 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]
Nova Scotia	[REGION 1 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]
Prince Edward Island	[REGION 1 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]
Newfoundland and Labrador	[REGION 1 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]
Yukon	[REGION 4 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]
Northwest Territories	[REGION 3 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]
Nunavut	[REGION 2 IF Q4=ENG; REGION 5 IF Q4=FR]
Prefer not to say	THANK/TERMINATE

5. Are you First Nations, Métis or Inuk (Inuit)?

Yes	[INDIGENOUS]
No	
Prefer not to say	

6. [DO NOT ASK IF Q5=YES] Were you born in Canada?

Yes
No
Prefer not to say

7. [ASK IF Q6=NO] How long have you been living in Canada?

Less than 1 year	[NEW CANADIAN]
1 to just under 3 years	[NEW CANADIAN]
3 years to just under 5 years	[NEW CANADIAN]
5 or more years	
Prefer not to say	

RECRUIT A MAXIMUM OF 2 INDIGENOUS AND/OR NEW CANADIAN PARTICIPANTS FOR EACH GROUP.

8. Which best describes your gender? [RECRUIT A MIX FOR EACH GROUP]

Female
Male
Prefer to self-describe: [TEXT]
Prefer not to say

9. What is the highest level of education that you have completed? [RECRUIT A MIX FOR EACH GROUP]

Some high school
High school diploma or equivalent
Registered apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma
University certificate or diploma below bachelor's level
Bachelor's degree



Post graduate degree above bachelor’s level  
Prefer not to say  
THANK/TERMINATE

10. Which of the following best describes your total household income last year, before taxes, from all sources for all household members? [RECRUIT A MIX FOR EACH GROUP]

Under \$20,000  
\$20,000 to just under \$40,000  
\$40,000 to just under \$60,000  
\$60,000 to just under \$80,000  
\$80,000 to just under \$100,000  
\$100,000 to just under \$150,000  
\$150,000 and above  
Prefer not to say  
THANK/TERMINATE

**CONTINUE TO C. INDUSTRY SCREENING**

**Industry Screening**

We have a few final questions for you.

11. Have you ever attended a discussion group or taken part in an interview on any topic that was arranged in advance and for which you received money for your participation?

Yes  
No  
CONTINUE  
GO TO CONSENT

12. When did you last attend one of these discussion groups or interviews?

Within the last 6 months  
6 months to under 2 years  
2 or more years  
THANK/TERMINATE  
CONTINUE to Q13  
GO TO CONSENT

13. How many discussion groups have you attended in the past 5 years?

Fewer than 5  
5 or more  
GO TO CONSENT  
THANK/TERMINATE

[TERMINATION MESSAGE – INDUSTRY\_2: Thank you for your cooperation. We already have enough participants who have a similar profile to yours, so we are unable to invite you to participate.]

**CONTINUE TO D. CONSENT**

**Consent**

14. The focus groups we’d like to invite you to participate in will take place online using an online platform and webcams. You will be required to access the platform via a weblink and to participate using your webcam. The platform will be accessible via a mobile device or a

laptop/desktop environment. How comfortable would you be participating in this type of discussion?

Very Comfortable	CONTINUE
Fairly Comfortable	CONTINUE
Not Very Comfortable	THANK/TERMINATE
Very Uncomfortable	THANK/TERMINATE

15. Participants will be asked to voice their opinions in front of others. How comfortable would you say you are doing this in English (English screener) / français (French screener)?

Very Comfortable	CONTINUE
Fairly Comfortable	CONTINUE
Not Very Comfortable	THANK/TERMINATE
Very Uncomfortable	THANK/TERMINATE

16. The discussion group will be recorded. These recordings are used to help with analyzing the findings and writing the report. The results from the discussions will be grouped together in the research report, which means that individuals will not be identified in any way. Is this acceptable?

Yes	CONTINUE
No	THANK/TERMINATE

17. There may be some people from Veterans Affairs Canada who have been involved in this project observing the online session. They will not take part in the discussion. Is this acceptable?

Yes	GO TO INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE
No	THANK/TERMINATE

[TERMINATING MESSAGE: Thank you for your cooperation. We already have enough participants who have a similar profile to yours, so we are unable to invite you to participate.]

**CONTINUE TO E. INVITATION**

### Invitation to Participate

We would like to invite you to attend the online focus group session where you will exchange your opinions in a moderated video session with others. The discussion will be led by a researcher from the public opinion research firm, Phoenix Strategic Perspectives. The group will take place on [DAY OF WEEK], [DATE], at [TIME]. It will last up to two hours. Information regarding how to participate will be sent to you by email in the coming days. You will be asked to log into the online session 15 minutes prior to the start time. People who participate will receive \$100 to thank them for their time.

i. Are you willing to participate?

Yes	CONTINUE
-----	----------

No                      THANK/TERMINATE

ii.        May we have your contact information so that we can send you information related to the online focus group?

First name:

Last Name:

Daytime phone number:

Evening phone number:

Email:

EXIT MESSAGE: Thank you very much for your time and willingness to participate in this research.

EXIT LINK:

## Moderator's Guide

### Introduction (5 minutes)

- Introduce moderator/firm and welcome participants to the focus group.
  - TECHNICAL CHECK; CONFIRM SOUND AND VIDEO QUALITY.
  - Thank you for attending/value your being here.
  - Tonight, we're conducting research on behalf of the Government of Canada, specifically Veterans Affairs Canada.
  - Veterans Affairs Canada is planning an advertising campaign which will run later this year, the focus of which is Remembrance. We'll be asking for your opinion on ideas being considered for that Remembrance campaign.
  - The discussion will last approximately two hours.
- Describe focus group.
  - This is a "virtual round table" discussion.
  - My job is to facilitate the discussion, keeping us on topic and on time.
  - Your job is to offer your opinions. There are no right or wrong answers.
  - I'd like to hear from everyone, so we have a range of opinions.
  - I'll try to call on you, but feel free to wave if you want to contribute.
- Explanations.
  - Comments treated in confidence.
    - Anything you say during these groups will be held in confidence.
    - Our report summarizes the findings but does not mention anyone by name. The final report will be available through Library and Archives Canada.
    - We encourage you to not provide any identifiable information about yourself.
  - Your responses will in no way affect any dealings you have with the Government of Canada.
  - The session is being recorded. The recordings remain in our possession and will not be released to anyone, even to the Government of Canada, without your written consent.
    - Recording is for report writing purposes/verify feedback.
  - There are people from Veterans Affairs Canada, and the ad agency, involved in this project who will be observing tonight's online session.

- Purpose: oversee the research process and see your reactions first-hand.
- Any questions?
- Roundtable introduction: Please tell us your first name.

### Context (15 minutes)

As I mentioned, we'll be asking for your opinion on ideas being considered for a Remembrance campaign, but before we get to that I'd like to take a few minutes to discuss remembrance and commemoration in general. THE FOCUS IS ON REMEMBRANCE/COMMEMORATION AS IT RELATES TO CANADA'S VETERANS. CLARIFY IF NECESSARY.

1. In your opinion, what is the main purpose of remembrance or commemoration? [DO NOT LINGER; INTERESTED IN TOP-OF-MIND REACTIONS]
2. How important is remembrance or commemoration to you personally? Why?
3. What do you think should be the focus of remembrance or commemoration activities?

Possible probes:

- Values fought for (e.g. price of freedom)?
  - Sacrifices made?
  - Contributions/achievements (e.g. international security, peace support, humanitarian aid)?
4. What kinds of commemorative or remembrance activities or initiatives do you recall, or are you aware of? NOTE: THIS COULD INCLUDE CEREMONIES, EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, ADS, PROJECTS, EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS, PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS, SOCIAL MEDIA (SHARING OF POSTS, ETC.).
  5. What kinds of commemorative or remembrance activities or initiatives, if any, have you taken part in?
  6. What kinds of commemorative or remembrance activities or initiatives, if any, resonate with you or are particularly meaningful to you? Why?

### Review of creative concepts (90 minutes)

Let's turn to the advertising materials being considered as part of the commemoration campaign Veterans Affairs Canada is developing for 2021. Before we do, I'd like you to think about any messages or advertising campaigns dealing with commemoration or remembrance that you have seen or heard.

7. Can anyone recall any ad or ad campaign dealing with commemoration or remembrance? NOTE: THE FOCUS IS ON ANY CAMPAIGN CARRIED OUT BY WAY OF MEDIA AND DESIGNED FOR THE BROAD CANADIAN PUBLIC. If so, what do you recall about what you saw/read/heard? What about it was memorable and why?

Now we'll turn to the materials we would like to get your opinions about tonight. Veterans Affairs Canada has developed three concepts or approaches for ads it is planning to run as part of its Remembrance advertising campaign. The ads would be 30 seconds long and could eventually appear on TV or as videos on social media.

The ads have not been finalized yet, so what we are presenting to you this evening are only various concepts or approaches being considered. To do this, each concept will be presented to you using a storyboard with static images accompanied by a voiceover. The purpose is to give you the idea of what the ad would look and sound like before it gets produced with real footage, professional announcers and music. Think of them as sketches that an artist would do before the final painting.

As you review them, therefore, please keep in mind that these are not finished products. What we want you to focus on are the messages conveyed in these ads, any feelings or emotions they elicit, and the effectiveness of the overall approach. We will not be talking about the quality of the images, or the quality of the soundtrack. NOTE: ENSURE CLARITY BEFORE PROCEEDING.

I'm going to show you the advertising concepts one at a time.

Let's start with the first ad which I'll call concept... [A, B, C]. Take a minute to watch the ad. I'm going to show it twice and then I'd like you to answer some questions about it [POINT TO POLL AND EXPLAIN HOW TO USE AS NEEDED]. Please keep your reaction to each ad to yourself until we discuss it as a group.

CREATIVE CONCEPTS:

- A (38 Million)
- B (Unforgettable)
- C (Photos)

ROTATE PRESENTATION ACROSS GROUPS

POLL:

To what extent, if at all, does the ad do the following:

- A. Grab your attention.
- B. Provide a message that is clear and easy to understand.
- C. Elicit an emotion.

SCALE: 1=Not at all, 2=To a small extent, 3=To a moderate extent, 4=To a great extent

Now let's talk about this ad as a group.

**FOR EACH AD, ASK THE FOLLOWING:**

8. What is your overall impression of this ad? Why do you say that?

- Probe:
  - Positive, neutral, negative impressions
  - Perceived strengths and weaknesses

○ CHECK POLL RESULTS

9. What message is this ad trying to communicate? *CHECK POLL RESULTS* Does it communicate the message clearly? Why/why not?
10. What about the tone of the ad... is it appropriate?
  - Probe:
    - Is anything inappropriate, disturbing, offensive?
11. Is this ad meaningful or relevant to you? Does it resonate with you on a personal level? Why is that?
12. How effective is this ad in terms of attracting and sustaining your attention, in the sense that you would watch it from start to finish?
13. Does this ad motivate you to want to learn more about the role Canada's military has played in times of war and peace? Why/why not?
14. Who do you think is the target audience for this ad? Why do you say that?
15. What changes, if any, would you suggest in order to make this ad more effective or meaningful?

Let's turn to the next ad. Once again, please keep your reaction to yourself until we discuss it as a group.

**PLAY AD THEN REPEAT QUESTIONS 8-15. ONCE ALL THREE ADS HAVE BEEN TESTED, ASK:**

Now that you've reviewed the three ads, I'm going to ask you to compare them. Let's have another look at each of them. [SHOW ADS ONE AFTER THE OTHER, REVERSING THE ORIGINAL ORDER OF PRESENTATION].

16. Which of these ads do you think would be most effective in terms of attracting and sustaining your attention, in the sense that you would watch it from start to finish? Why is that?
17. Which of these ads do you think would be most effective in terms of resonating with you on a personal level? Why is that?
18. Which of these ads do you think would be most effective in terms of motivating you to learn more about the role Canada's military has played in times of war and peace? Why is that?

**Conclusion (10 minutes)**

We've covered a lot tonight and I really appreciate you taking the time to share your opinions. CHECK WITH OBSERVERS TO SEE IF THERE ARE ANY LAST QUESTIONS.

19. Do you have any thoughts about the design of any future creative concepts and/or supporting materials related to a public commemoration campaign?

20. What (more), if anything, do you think VAC could do to reach and engage more Canadians through commemorative or remembrance initiatives?
21. Does anyone have any last thoughts or feedback to share with Veterans Affairs Canada about the topic?

Thank you very much for your time. This concludes the discussion group. Your incentive will be available via e-transfer or a cheque. We will contact you by email to determine your preference.



## 2. Ad concepts

### Concept A: 38 million



VO: Because there is a him, there is an us.



Because there is a her, there is a we.



Because there is a they, a them.



There is a me, a you.



Because there is a lieutenant. A master sailor. A private.



There's a Canada.



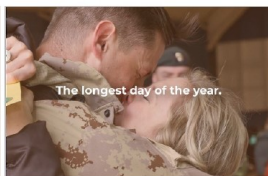
To those who sacrifice so much, 38 million thank-you's.



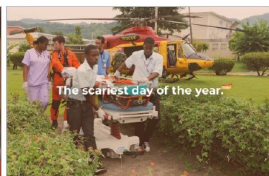
### Concept B: Unforgettable Day



The hardest day of the year.



The longest day of the year.



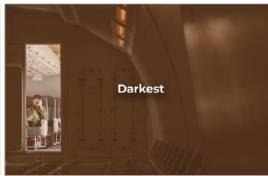
The scariest day of the year.



The loudest.



Quietest



Darkest



Shortest



Brightest



The bravest day of the year.



November 11. The most unforgettable day of the year.



Remember Canada's Veterans.



VO: A message from the Government of Canada.



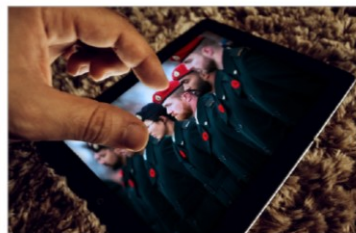
### Concept C: Photos



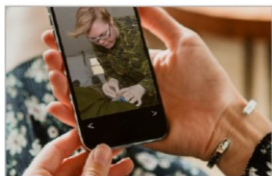
VO: They're on our walls. Our shelves.



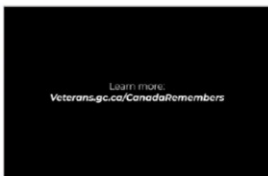
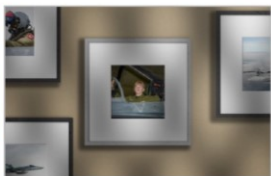
The photos. An uncle, perhaps. Grandfather. Great-grandmother. Sister. Nephew. Parent.



Unsure of what lay ahead; only certain of their commitment to peace



Each picture captures a moment in time, but the difference made by those who serve, is as real today as the day the photo was taken.



Title frame: Learn more: Veterans.gc.ca/CanadaRemembers.



VO: A message from the Government of Canada.