



Veterans Affairs
Canada

Anciens Combattants
Canada

Report on Plans and Priorities

2012-13



The Honourable Steven Blaney, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Veterans Affairs

Canada

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Minister's Message



We have reached an historic crossroad. For the first time in the Department's 68-year history, we are caring for and supporting more modern-day Veterans than we are traditional Veterans from the Second World War and Korean War. The health and social needs of these Veterans are growing more complex and diverse than ever before. Many Veterans want to see the Department improve services and provide faster, online access to information at any time of the day or night.

These new realities bring with them substantial challenges and opportunities. These new realities also illustrate why our Government is determined to re-invent the Department to better serve our modern day Veterans. Employees of Veterans Affairs Canada play a crucial role in the Department's modernization while remaining strongly committed to delivering the best possible service to Veterans and their families.

We have made great progress over the past year. We improved the New Veterans Charter to provide greater help to seriously ill and injured Veterans. With these enhancements, our Government has committed \$189 million between 2011-12 and 2015-16 and \$2 billion over the life of the program to ensure that Canadian Force Veterans receive adequate financial support. Additionally, our Government's commitment has been further illustrated by the fact that Budget 2012 has maintained the budget for Veterans benefits.

As outlined in this *Report on Plans and Priorities*, we will deliver real and meaningful results. We will improve the quality and timeliness of the care and support provided to Veterans and their families. My priorities include:

- simplifying complex policies and programs;
- modernizing business practices and investing in new technologies to provide better service, faster answers, and a more hassle-free environment for both Veterans and staff;
- realigning the Department to ensure our employees are in the right places, with the right skills — including a stronger understanding of the military culture — to serve Veterans better; and
- engaging Canadians, especially youth, in commemorating Canadian military accomplishments.

We will be cutting red tape to create a more responsive department that is better positioned to deliver on its mandate. While we have come a long way in a very short period of time, there is still much to do. We will also work to eliminate the unnecessary layers of bureaucracy that have developed over time. We will also strengthen our communication with Veterans by using clear, plain language and will develop more convenient ways for Veterans to communicate with the Department, whether it is a click, a call or a visit.

As a final note, I continue to maintain my commitment to commemorating those who served and died for our country and those who continue to serve today. I have recently been to France where we commemorated the 95th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, a battle which defined Canada as a nation. I witnessed first hand how the commemoration of this battle still connects with

Canada's youth. I look forward to working diligently on other upcoming commemorative events including the 70th anniversary of the Dieppe Raid, the 60th anniversary of the Korean Armistice as well as the preparation for the centennial anniversary of the First World War.

We will also actively communicate with Canadians, especially with our country's youth through social media and use new and innovative strategies to increase their engagement in commemoration.

As we pursue this ambitious agenda, Canadians should know that this Government will stand its ground when it comes to serving our nation's heroes.

The Honourable Steven Blaney, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Veterans Affairs

Section I : Organizational Overview

This section provides high-level information on the Veterans Affairs Portfolio.

Raison d'être

Canada's development as an independent country with a unique identity stems partly from its achievements in times of war. Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) exists to assist and help those whose courageous efforts gave us this legacy and contributed to our growth as a nation.

VAC's mandate is set out in the [Department of Veterans Affairs Act](#). It charges the Minister of Veterans Affairs with responsibility for "the care, treatment, or re-establishment in civil life of any person who served in the Canadian Forces or Merchant Navy or in the naval, army, air forces or merchant navies of Her Majesty, of any person who has otherwise engaged in pursuits relating to war, and of any other person designated ... and the care of the dependants or survivors of any person referred to." Through an Order-in-Council, VAC has responsibility for keeping alive the achievements and sacrifices of those who served Canada in times of war and peace.

Responsibilities

Veterans Affairs Canada

Veterans Affairs Canada achieves its mandate by providing services and benefits that respond to the needs of Veterans, other individuals and their families.

VAC has three main roles:

Provider of disability compensation and financial support – VAC administers programs which recognize and compensate for the pain and suffering of service-related disabilities. The Department also provides financial support and assistance when career-ending or service-related disabilities affect one's ability to earn income.

Funder for health care and re-establishment services – The Department works with other levels of government—federal, provincial and territorial—to provide access to health programs that enhance the well-being of Veterans and other eligible individuals, promote independence and ensure continued care. The Department also provides support to Canadian Forces Veterans and their families to ease their transition to civilian life.

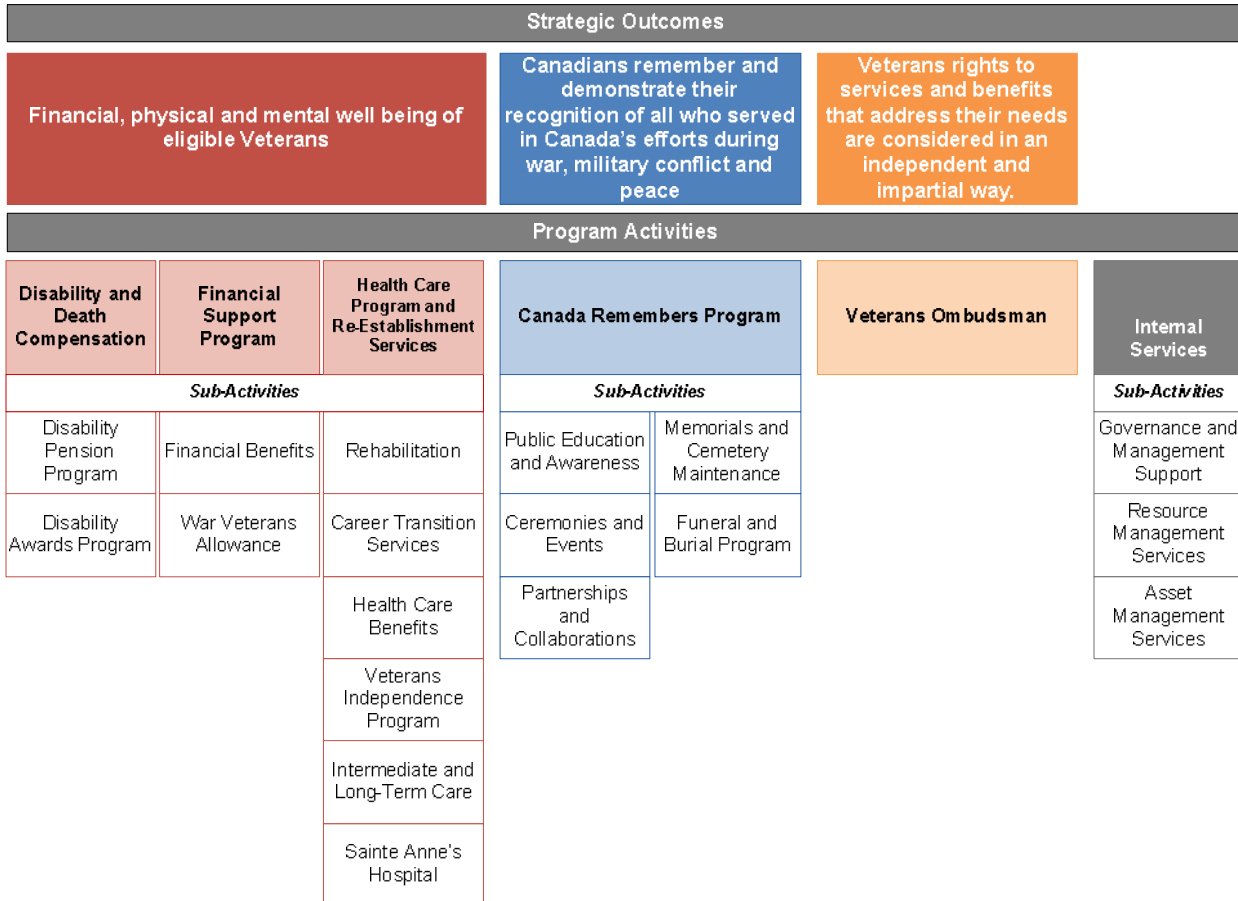
Catalyst for national and international remembrance – The Department keeps alive the achievements and sacrifices of those who served Canada in times of war, military conflict and peace, and promotes the importance of these efforts on Canadian life as we know it today. VAC fosters remembrance of the contributions made by Canada’s war dead and Veterans through its [Canada Remembers Program](#). It also maintains and operates 14 memorial sites in Europe.

Veterans Ombudsman

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman helps Veterans and their families address concerns related to VAC and the [Veterans Bill of Rights](#). As an impartial and independent officer, the Veterans Ombudsman reports directly to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and works to ensure that Veterans, their representatives and their families are treated fairly.

Program Activity Architecture

Veterans Affairs Canada works to achieve three strategic outcomes (SOs). The following chart outlines these strategic outcomes as well as the program activities and sub activities that flow from them.



Organizational Priorities

This section provides an overview of the priorities that the Department has chosen to focus its attention and resources on in 2012-2013. The priorities outlined are not an exhaustive list of the Department’s initiatives, but rather focus on the strategic activities that have been identified as crucial to the Department’s success.

Veterans Affairs Canada

Modernization of the Department		New in 2012-2013
<p>Contributing to: all strategic outcomes and program activities</p>	<p>Why is this a priority? The Veteran population being served by VAC is changing and so too are the needs and expectations of Veterans and their families. If VAC is to meet the increasingly complex needs and higher service expectations of this evolving group, it must fundamentally change its existing processes, systems and culture. Modernizing VAC as a whole will result in a revitalized, streamlined and responsive Department that is better positioned to deliver on its mandate.</p> <p>Plans for meeting the priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Department wide re-engineering aimed at improving operations and refocusing on core business. › Modernize internal services in order to reduce bureaucracy, red tape and redundancy. › Increase the use of technology to reduce inefficient paper-based processes. › Conduct a policy renewal exercise to simplifying existing policies. › Improve integration throughout the Department in order to improve efficiency and responsiveness. › Support Government of Canada initiatives aimed at modernizing and improving the public service. 	

Improving Service Delivery		Ongoing since 2011
<p>Contributing to: Strategic Outcome 1</p> <p>PA(s) ▪ 1.1, 1.2 & 1.3</p>	<p>Why is this a priority? Veterans expect easier access to programs, faster service and appropriate levels of support. VAC will take additional steps to respond to the diverse and changing needs of all Veterans over the coming years to provide them and their families with faster and easier access to benefits and services delivered by employees who are equipped to do their job and who understand the military culture.</p> <p>Plans for meeting the priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Work with the CF to improve departmental policy integration, improve shared forecasting and better align transition support services. › Increase access to information on VAC's programs and services. › Improve case management capacity to better support individuals with complex needs. › Continue to streamline decision-making processes to further reduce wait times. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Expand the use of technology in delivering benefits and services to Veterans. › Continue engagement of stakeholders and committees such as the Scientific Advisory Committee to promote open dialogue and information sharing. › Establish partnerships with both private and public sector partners on initiatives such as Helmets to Hardhats to improve services for Veterans and their families.
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Transfer of Ste. Anne’s Hospital	Ongoing since 2009
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<p>Contributing to: Strategic Outcome 1</p> <p>PA(s) ▪ PA 1.3</p>	<p>Why is this a priority? It has been a long-standing policy of the Government of Canada to transfer hospitals to provinces. In 1963, the Glassco Commission completed a study and recommended to Cabinet that departmentally operated hospitals be transferred to the provinces. In response, all hospitals owned by VAC were transferred to the provinces with the exception of Ste. Anne’s Hospital, the last remaining federally owned Veterans hospital.</p> <p>There is a declining demand for long-term care beds for traditional Veterans at the Hospital. Transferring Ste. Anne’s to the Government of Quebec would ensure that most employees would be retained, would maximize the Hospital’s expertise in geriatrics and psycho-geriatrics, and increase bed availability for other Canadians in need.</p> <p>Plans for meeting the priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Continue negotiations with the Government of Quebec aimed at reaching an agreement for the transfer of Ste. Anne’s Hospital. › Ensure that priority access to care and services for Veterans, the interests of employees and official languages are key considerations in discussions for the transfer. › Continue to communicate regularly with Veterans, employees and other key stakeholders to keep them informed on the future of Ste. Anne’s Hospital. › Ensure that bed capacity is maximized to allow Ste. Anne’s Hospital to continue to provide care and services to Veterans and to maintain staff expertise.
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Workplace Renewal	New in 2012-2013
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<p>Contributing to: all strategic outcomes</p> <p>PA(s) ▪ Internal Services</p>	<p>Why is this a priority? VAC is in the midst of a period of significant change. In order to ensure its success, the Department must create a work environment that encourages and supports employees while ensuring that its workforce is properly aligned with Veteran demographics. VAC will also work to enhance opportunities for Veterans to obtain positions in the Public Service.</p> <p>Plans for meeting the priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Provide employees throughout the Department with new tools, skills and simplified procedures. › Support employees in changing the culture within the Department to enhance service levels for Veterans while improving the workplace for employees. › Create a workplace that supports the well-being, health and productivity of
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	<p>employees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Realign employee resources with changing Veteran demographics, IT advancements and simplification of policies and processes. › Provide an environment that fosters creativity and innovation moving into the future. › Broaden staff knowledge of the CF and military experience. › Open all VAC staffing processes to CF members and treat CF experience as an asset qualification as part of our robust Hiring of Veterans Action Plan. › Effectively manage the Department’s workforce as we work through departmental transformation.
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Office of the Veterans Ombudsman

<p>Advance the fair treatment of the Veteran community and to uphold the rights articulated in the <i>Veterans Bill of Rights</i></p>		<p>Ongoing since 2009</p>
<p>Contributing to: Strategic Outcome 3</p> <p>PA(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PA 3.1 </p>	<p>Why is this a priority? Parliamentarians and Canadians firmly believe that Canada has the obligation to provide the very best support to the men and women who put their lives at risk defending our country and the values that we hold dear. As such, the Office is committed to act as an independent voice to the fair treatment of all Veterans, those still in uniform and their families who are entitled to receive from Canada compensation and/or services for serving our country. The Office views fairness as an outcome that can be objectively measured in terms of the adequacy, sufficiency and accessibility of the benefits and services in place to address their needs.</p> <p>Plans for meeting the priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Provide direct assistance through early intervention activities so that complaints, information requests and referrals are resolved in a timely and appropriate manner. › Focus on initiating and investigating systemic issues, along with assessing and contributing to the resolution of complex Veterans issues. › Maintain public consultation initiatives (including Web-based approaches, town halls and speaking platforms) aimed at engaging Veterans and other stakeholders to identify and to inform on issues of concerns and priorities. 	

Risk Analysis

Operating Environment

Veterans Affairs Canada is in the midst of the most significant transformation in the Department's 68-year history. The composition of the Veterans and Canadian Forces members being served is changing rapidly—both in terms of their demographics and the complexity of their needs and expectations. As a result, VAC is modernizing how its programs and services are being provided.

Demographic Trends

The demographics of those served by VAC continue to evolve. Traditional war Veterans are now outnumbered by Canadian Force Veterans. At the same time, the overall number of Veterans is decreasing, although at a slower pace than was initially anticipated for the following reasons:

- › More war service Veterans than was originally projected;
- › Expanded eligibility for benefits to Allied Veterans;
- › More Canadian Forces Veterans participating in VAC programs as a result of enhancements made to the New Veterans Charter; and
- › Increased outreach and communication efforts by the Department to reach Veterans and their families who may not be aware of VAC services and benefits.

Service Expectations

Veterans' expectations for service continue to be high and diverse as they seek support to meet needs ranging from complex health matters to end of life issues. This increasing complexity and diversity of Veterans' needs is expected to continue as the needs of those who were involved in the Afghanistan mission emerge.

VAC Workload

These changing needs and increasing service expectations are adding more pressures on employees. VAC's workload requires careful management to ensure that resources are used as efficiently as possible and that key business priorities are met. The Department will manage its priorities by realigning resources; simplifying business processes; leveraging technology; defining roles and responsibilities more clearly; and delivering services in a more targeted and efficient way.

For example, VAC has already made some progress in managing workloads, most notably in the area of case management. With approximately 10,000 Veterans being actively case managed, VAC has been able to maintain a ratio of 1 case manager for every 40 Veterans. Veterans presenting with less complex needs are supported largely by client service agents. This approach has allowed staff to better manage their workloads while providing Veterans with more appropriate levels of service.

As the number of Veterans we serve declines, and changes in business processes and technology make us more efficient, the Department anticipates it will need fewer employees. Between 2011-2012 and 2015-2016, VAC is expecting a reduction of about 500 FTEs. With a significant number of VAC's workforce eligible to retire in this same timeframe, the Department will try to manage these reductions largely through retirements and other departures.

Risks

At Veterans Affairs Canada, risk management is a fundamental underpinning of good management and decision making. VAC's approach to risk management is designed to address risk in any area or level within the Department in order to provide reasonable assurance that corporate objectives and desired outcomes will be achieved.

The Department has developed a Corporate Risk Profile (CRP) as an element of its risk management framework. The CRP is the formal mechanism to identify and mitigate against both internal and external corporate risks and opportunities. Well managed risks create opportunities for VAC. A number of opportunities have been identified within risk assessments conducted throughout the organization.

Successful management of risks and opportunities strongly contribute to realizing efficiencies and effectiveness in improving overall performance and outcomes in the delivery of services and benefits to Veterans.

The following risks have been identified as having the potential to impact the Department's ability to achieve its strategic outcomes.

Managing Change

There is a risk that the magnitude and pace of change occurring within VAC over the coming years could have an impact on the Department's ability to meet the needs of Veterans and other individuals during the transition period and that is why VAC is working to mitigate this risk.

By continuing to strengthen its governance structures, senior management is able to provide the oversight necessary to support transformation with sound decision-making. In addition, VAC is fostering a culture of change throughout the Department through the implementation of a change management framework aimed at supporting employees through the transition to a new working environment.

The Department is realigning organizational resources to better support its evolving model and footprint while ensuring that employees are provided with appropriate training and skill development opportunities. VAC is working to improve and increase communications in order to ensure clarity, consistency and quality in transformation-related messaging.

Programs and Service Delivery

There is a risk that large-scale, government-wide strategic changes may impact the Department's ability to deliver its programs and services while maintaining strong partnerships and stakeholder relations.

In order to mitigate this risk, VAC is conducting a review of its business processes and procedures to improve efficiency in program delivery. The Department is continuing to implement an outreach plan to strengthen relations with Veterans, stakeholders and CF members. This will increase opportunities to provide them with accurate and relevant information about VAC's benefits and services and gain insights into how they meet their needs.

VAC is also working with Veterans' organizations to better understand how best to honour and serve Veterans and their families. The Department will continue to train employees and introduce new technology to assist with knowledge transfer and performance management.

Ste. Anne's Hospital

The risks associated with the transfer of the Ste. Anne's Hospital to the Government of Quebec are complex in nature given the scope of the project. Mitigation strategies have been put in place to ensure ongoing monitoring and the provision of flexibility for adjustment when necessary. Mitigation strategies include, but are not limited to, a detailed and comprehensive project plan; regular communication/consultation updates with various stakeholders including employees, unions, Veterans and their families; as well as a commitment to ensure Veterans continue to receive priority access to high level of care.

Planning Summary

The following table presents the Department’s planned financial and human resources over the next three fiscal years.

Financial and Human Resources

	Financial Resources (\$ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs ¹)		
	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Veterans Affairs Canada	3,562.2	3,315.2	3,318.2	3,461	3,302	3,030
Office of the Veterans Ombudsman	5.9	5.9	5.9	40	40	40

Note: The Department’s planned spending as outlined above is based in part on reference levels that were established in 2007. This approach to budget planning causes future year projections (i.e., 2013 -2014 and 2014-2015) to be generally understated. This is not due to a reduction in Veterans programs. It is simply a reflection of the government’s planning process, which does not adjust planned spending beyond the upcoming year (2012-2013).

¹ Full Time Equivalents

Performance Summary Tables by Strategic Outcome

Strategic Outcome 1 Financial, physical and mental well-being of eligible Veterans

Performance Indicator(s)		Target(s)			
Percentage of eligible Canadian Regular Force Veterans with family incomes which fall below the Low Income Measure		The rate of low income among eligible Canadian Force Veterans will not exceed that of the Canadian population			
Comparison of the mortality rate of Canadian Regular Force Veterans with the general Canadian population		The mortality rate of Canadian Forces Veterans will not exceed that of the Canadian population			
Percentage of eligible Canadian Regular Force Veterans who report they are "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their life in general		The rates of life satisfaction among eligible Canadian Force Veterans will be comparable to the Canadian population			
Program Activity	Forecast Spending 2011-2012 (\$ millions)	Planned Spending (\$ millions)			Alignment to Government of Canada Outcomes
		2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	
Disability and Death Compensation	2,132.5	2,244.5	1,962.4	1,960.5	Income Security and Employment for Canadians
Financial Support Program	136.1	99.8	86.0	93.7	Income Security and Employment for Canadians
Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services	1,127.3	1,100.0	1,155.7	1,153.4	Healthy Canadians
Total for SO1	3,395.9	3,444.3	3,204.1	3,207.6	

Strategic Outcome 2 Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all who served in Canada's efforts during war, military conflict and peace

Performance Indicator(s)		Target(s)			
Percentage of Canadians who participate in remembrance activities		35%			
Program Activity	Forecast Spending 2011-2012 (\$ millions)	Planned Spending (\$ millions)			Alignment to Government of Canada Outcomes
		2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	
Canada Remembers Program	44.3	47.4	46.1	45.6	A Vibrant Canadian Culture and Heritage
Total for SO2	44.3	47.4	46.1	45.6	

Strategic Outcome 3 Veteran's rights to services and benefits that address their needs are considered in an independent and impartial way

Performance Indicator(s)		Target(s)			
Percentage of Veterans and other clients who feel that the Ombudsman has raised issues, which ensure fair and equitable treatment by the Department		80%			

Program Activity	Forecast Spending 2011-2012 (\$ millions)	Planned Spending (\$ millions)			Alignment to Government of Canada Outcomes
		2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	
Veterans Ombudsman	6.8	5.9	5.9	5.9	Income Security and Employment for Canadians
Total for SO3	6.8	5.9	5.9	5.9	

Program Activity Supporting all Strategic Outcomes


Program Activity	Forecast Spending 2011-2012 (\$ millions)	Planned Spending (\$ millions)			Alignment to Government of Canada Outcomes
		2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	
Internal Services	98.0	70.4	65.0	65.0	
Total	98.0	70.4	65.0	65.0	

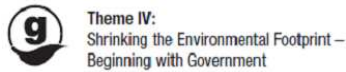
Notes: Forecast Spending has been reduced by \$6.8 million for 2011-2012, \$20.5 million for 2012-2013, \$18.7million for 2013-2014 and \$17.7 million per year thereafter to reflect the transfer of resources to Shared Services Canada, which is now responsible for e-mail, data centre and network services for the Government of Canada.

Totals may not add due to rounding.

Contribution to the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

The Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS) outlines the Government of Canada’s commitment to improving the transparency of environmental decision-making by articulating its key strategic environmental goals and targets. Veterans Affairs Canada ensures that consideration of these outcomes is taken into account in its decision-making processes. In particular, through the federal Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process, any new policy, plan, or program initiative includes an analysis of its impact on attaining the FSDS goals and targets. The results of SEAs are made public when an initiative is announced, demonstrating the Department’s commitment to achieving the FSDS goals and targets.

Veterans Affairs Canada contributes to Theme IV - Shrinking the Environmental Footprint – Beginning with Government as denoted by the visual identifier below.



These contributions are made through the Internal Services Program Activity and are further explained in Section II.

For additional details on Veterans Affairs Canada’s activities to support sustainable development, please see Section II of this RPP and our [departmental website](#). For complete details on the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy, please see the following [website](#).

Expenditure Profile

Veterans Affairs total planned spending for the 2012-2013 fiscal year is \$3,568.0 million. The majority of planned spending will be used to meet the expected results of the three strategic outcomes with only 2.0% being allocated to Internal Services.

VAC's reference levels for program expenditures are adjusted on a year-by-year basis.

The Department anticipates that over the next three years, the number of individuals accessing VAC's traditional programs—that is, Disability Pensions, War Veterans Allowance, the Veterans Independence Program (VIP), and Treatment Benefits—will decrease.

Overall, the number of individuals accessing VAC programs is expected to decrease approximately 4% by March 2014. Projected decreases will vary by Veteran group with the most notable changes over the next three years being:

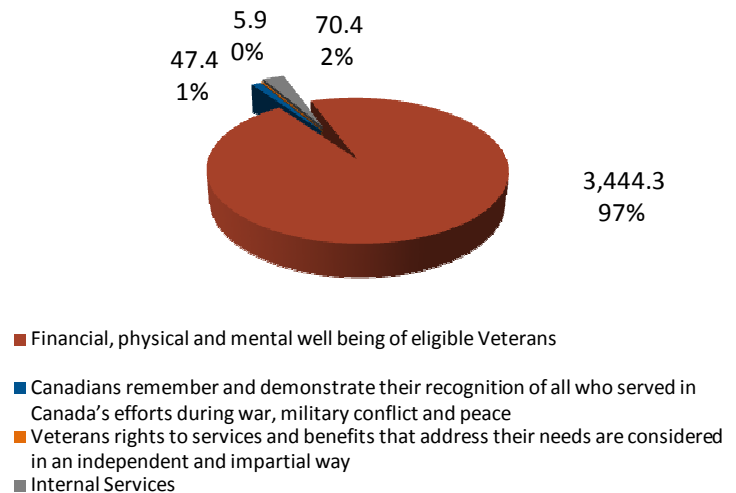
- a decrease in war service Veterans by approximately 35%;
- a decrease in survivors of war service Veterans by approximately 9%; and,
- an increase in Canadian Forces Veterans by approximately 30%.

Over the longer term, the resulting shift in program usage is expected to result in:

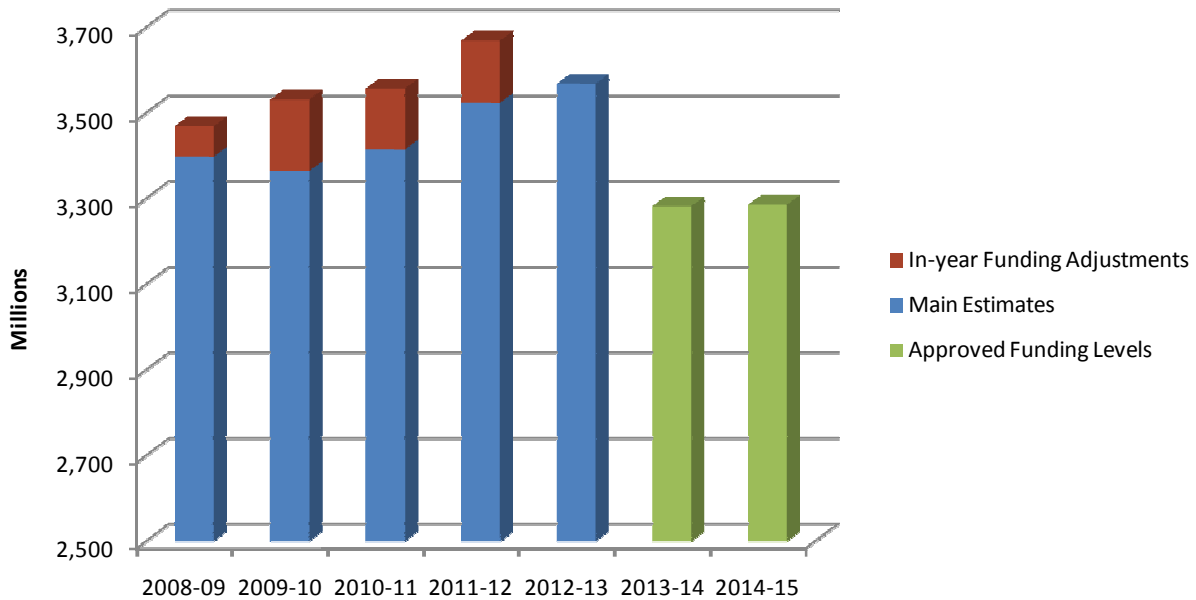
- a decline in the proposed reference levels for VAC's traditional programs which support primarily war service Veterans and their families;
- an increase in proposed reference levels for VAC's programs under the New Veterans Charter which support Canadian Forces Veterans and their families; and
- an increase in proposed reference levels for many programs as a result of inflationary adjustments.

It is important to note that VAC's funding projections fluctuate from year to year because of the non-discretionary nature of its programs which are driven by the needs of Veterans. To address these fluctuations, the Department prepares an annual submission during the year requesting that its program funding level be increased (both for the current year and for the next fiscal year) as part of the government's planning cycle.

Planned Spending Breakdown by Strategic Outcome 2012-13 (\$ millions)

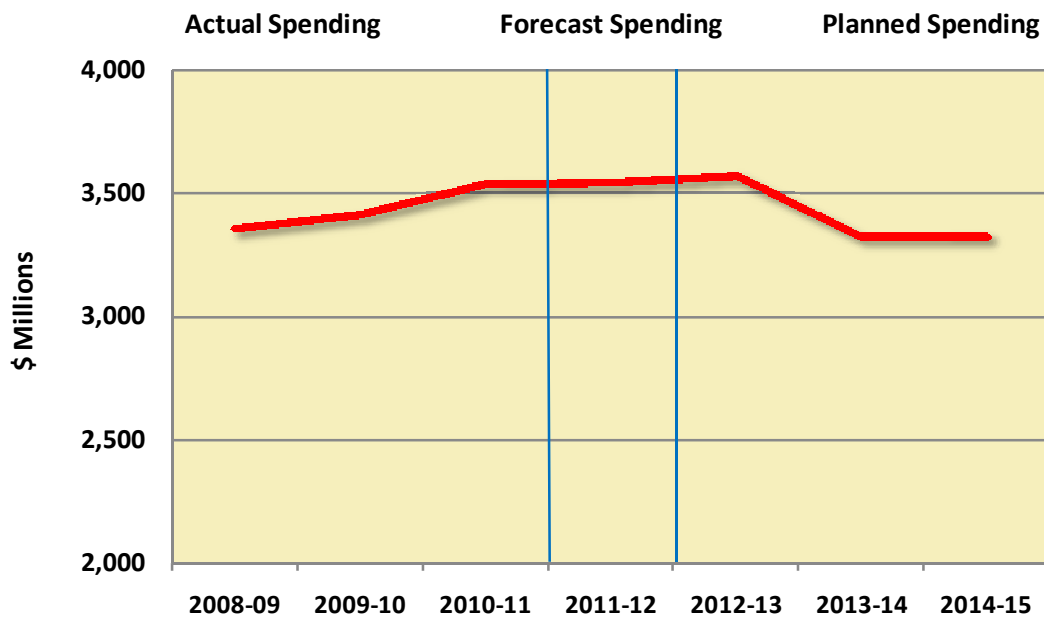


As a result of this process, the planned spending levels noted in this report for 2013-14 and beyond are not a true reflection of the changing demographic profile and needs of the individuals VAC serves. Instead, the planned spending figures are based in part on reference levels which need to be updated or corrected each year through the “estimates” process. As noted in the chart below, VAC’s budget over the past two years has increased by an average of \$150 million through the in-year “supplementary estimates” process.



As Veterans Affairs Canada is a needs-based department, requests for supplementary funding ensure that the Department has the funds required to meet the needs of Veterans. In short, a Veteran who is entitled to a benefit is paid that benefit, whether 10 Veterans come forward, or 10,000.

Departmental Spending Trend (\$ millions)



Veteran demographics are a major factor in forecasting budget requirements—from preparation of initial forecasts through to the approval of planned spending.

The increase in the Department’s planned spending for 2012-2013 demonstrates the Government of Canada’s commitment to maintaining Veterans’ benefits and services. As noted previously, planned spending for 2013-2014 and beyond is generally understated throughout this report. This is not due to a reduction in Veterans programs. It is simply a reflection of a planning process which does not adjust planned spending beyond the upcoming year (2012-2013).

Voted and Statutory Items

For information on organizational appropriations, please see the [2012–2013 Main Estimates publication](#).

Section II : Analysis of Program Activities by Strategic Outcome

This section provides detailed information about the Department’s program activities and how they support the achievement of our strategic outcomes. An overview of planned spending, performance information and key planning highlights can be found for each program activity.

Strategic Outcome 1

Financial, physical and mental well being of eligible Veterans

Program Activities

Disability and Death Compensation	Financial Support	Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services
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Veterans Affairs Canada assists and helps the men and women who have proudly served Canada in times of war, conflict and peace.

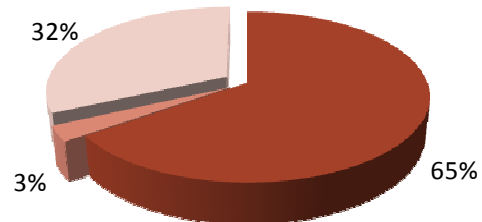
To ensure their continued well-being after release, VAC provides access to a full range of programs and services designed to meet their medical, psycho-social, vocational and financial needs. These programs includes: Disability Benefits, Financial Benefits, Health Care Benefits, the Veterans Independence

Program, Rehabilitation Services and Vocational Assistance.

The Department contributes to the well-being of Veterans by:

- › Maintaining departmental programs and services that respond to the needs of Veterans and their families;
- › Conducting and partnering on research projects that support advancement in areas such as mental health;
- › Partnering with the Canadian Forces on various initiatives such as integrated personnel support centres and other initiatives that support transition from military to civilian life; and
- › Strengthening outreach, engagement and consultation efforts to better serve CF members, Veterans, Veterans’ organizations and other stakeholders.

Planned Spending Breakdown by Program Activity 2012-13



Total Planned Spending for 2012-13: \$3.44 Billion

- Disability and Death Compensation
- Financial Support
- Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services

Year	Financial Resources (\$ millions)	Human Resources (FTEs)
2012-2013	3,444.3	2,654
2013-2014	3,204.1	2,510
2014-2015	3,207.6	2,291

SO1 Planning Highlights

- › Re-engineering policies and processes to reduce complexity and support better decision making;
- › Reducing the time it takes to render disability benefit decisions;
- › Providing Veterans with easier and faster access to needed health benefits;
- › Consulting with members of the Canadian Forces and their families to better understand and respond to their needs;
- › Revising our mental health strategy to better meet the needs of Veterans and their families;
- › Enhancing military and Veteran health capacity through strong partnerships; and
- › Enhancing case management to better support individuals with complex needs by
 - clarifying the roles and responsibilities of client service team members;
 - implementing workload intensity tools;
 - establishing national access to case management consultants;
 - developing a national case-management learning strategy; and
 - establishing competency profiles for key client service team members.

Program Activity 1.1 – Disability and Death Compensation

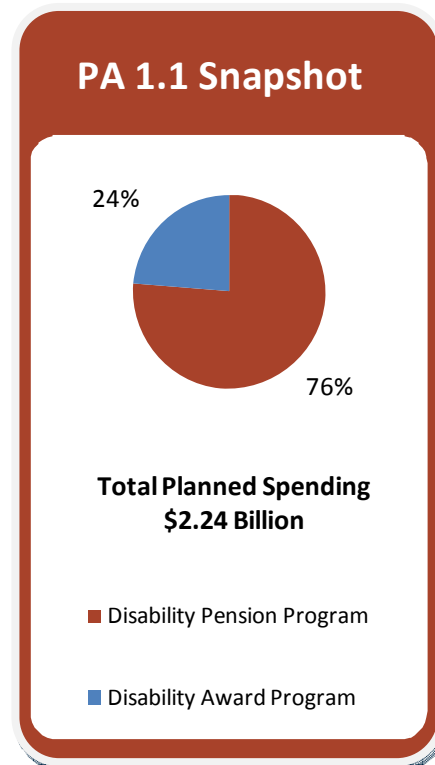
Sub Activities:

- Disability Pension Program
- Disability Award Program

This program supports eligible Veterans, Canadian Forces Veterans and members, survivors, spouses/common-law partners, dependents and civilians whose lives have been permanently affected as a result of service to their country.

In recognition of the effects of service-related disabilities or death, compensation is provided in the form of monthly disability pensions, lump-sum disability awards and monthly allowances. The amount of benefit awarded is dependent on the severity of the disability and its impact on daily functioning.

This program activity is delivered through grants.



Program Activity Disability and Death Compensation						
Human Resources (FTEs) and Planned spending (\$ millions)						
2012-2013		2013-2014		2014-2015		
FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	
824	2,244.5	759	1,962.4	661	1,960.5	
Expected Results		Performance Indicators		Targets		
Eligible Veterans feel the effects of their service-related disability have been recognized.		Percentage of eligible Veterans who feel the disability benefits they have received from Veterans Affairs Canada has recognized their service-related disability.		65%		
Eligible Veterans receive compensation in recognition of the effects of service-related disabilities or death.		Total number of recipients of disability and/or death compensation and the dollar value of the compensation.		As Required		

Planning Highlights

Redesigning the Disability First Application Process

VAC will complete a business process redesign of the first application process for disability benefits. This will result in a streamlined process that maximizes the use of technology; that provides more efficient and customized service for Veterans and their families; and that supports employees to better to do their jobs by equipping them with current information and appropriate tools.

Providing faster access to disability benefits

VAC will work to better support the needs of Veterans by reducing internal complexity, simplifying the application process and providing online tools in order to reduce the time required to render a decision for first applications from 16 to 12 weeks.

Improving disability letters

VAC will work to improve the disability letters that are sent to Veterans and other

applicants by simplifying their wording and improving their clarity.

Policy renewal

VAC will work to simplify its existing policies and processes to support better decision making and improve the quality and timeliness of service to Veterans and other individuals.

Scientific Advisory Committee

In December 2011, Minister Blaney announced a new Scientific Advisory Committee, consisting of internationally recognised experts, to provide advice on Veterans health issues. It will be important to receive the findings of this committee and to monitor other research so VAC can respond to the emerging needs of Veterans.

Program Activity 1.2 – Financial Support Program

Sub Activities:

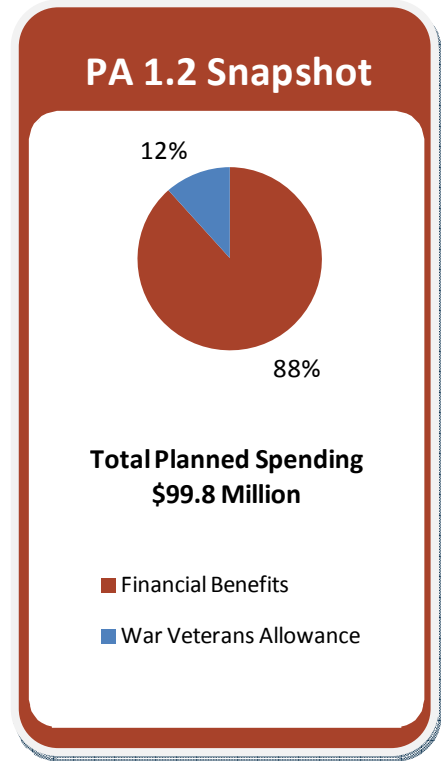
- Financial Benefits
- War Veterans Allowance

This program provides income support to eligible Veterans, qualified civilians and their survivors. The intent of the support is to ensure that recipients have income which is adequate to meet their basic needs.

In recognition of the effects of war time service in the case of war service Veterans, income support may be paid in the form of a monthly War Veterans Allowance. The program also provides economic support to Canadian Forces Veterans, survivors, spouses/common-law partners and dependents for the economic impact that a career ending and/or service-related injury or death can have on a Veteran’s ability to earn income, advance in a career or save for retirement.

Compensation is provided in the form of a monthly income support payment. A lump-sum supplementary retirement benefit is available to those who are totally and permanently incapacitated. There is also an allowance available for those with severe and permanent impairments.

This program activity is delivered through grants.



Program Activity		Financial Support Program			
Human Resources (FTEs) and Planned spending (\$ millions)					
2012-2013		2013-2014		2014-2015	
FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending
55	99.8	51	86.0	44	93.7
Expected Results		Performance Indicators		Targets	
The income of eligible Veterans is sufficient to meet their basic needs.		The percentage of earnings loss recipients whose family income falls below the low income measure.		The rate of low income among earnings loss recipients will be comparable to the rate of low income for working Canadians.	

Planning Highlights

Updating program arrangements

VAC will work with its major partners—the Department of National Defence (DND) and its insurance arm, the Service Income Security Insurance Plan (SISIP)—to update the Program Arrangement that was put in place when the New Veterans Charter was enacted in 2006. This update will better reflect the obligations of all three parties to co-ordinate, consult and share information to enhance the transition process for all medically releasing CF members. Early progress has already been made as evidenced in DND/SISIP's recent alignment with VAC's Earnings Loss program.

Promoting the enhancements to the New Veterans Charter

VAC will promote the enhancements to the New Veterans Charter that came into effect on October 3, 2011 by reaching out to additional Veterans who may be eligible for the enhanced benefits and finalizing the operational enhancements. Outreach will be conducted through participation in seminars and presentations to CF members and by sharing information with releasing members on the New Veterans Charter during their individual transition interviews.

Program Activity 1.3 – Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services

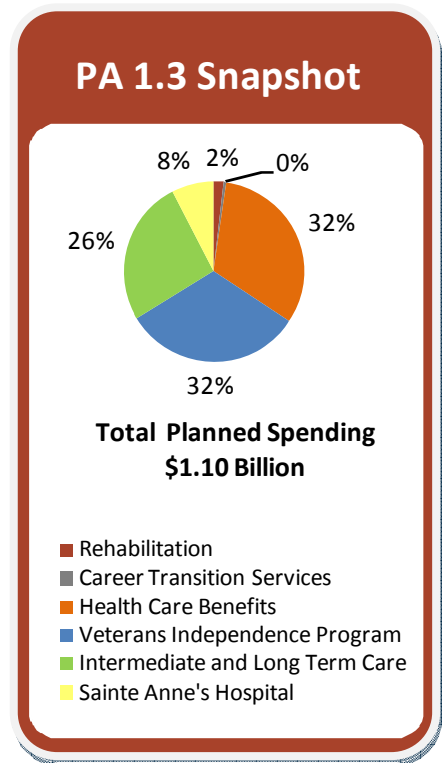
Sub Activities:

- Rehabilitation
- Career Transition Services
- Health Care Benefits
- Veterans Independence Program
- Intermediate and Long-Term Care
- Ste. Anne’s Hospital

This program is designed to maintain or enhance the physical, mental and social well-being of eligible Veterans, Canadian Forces members, civilians, and their survivors and dependants and other individuals, promote independence, and assist in keeping them at home and in their own communities by providing a continuum of care.

The program provides access to employment support, health benefits, home care and long-term care.

This program activity is delivered through operating funds and contributions.



Program Activity Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services

Human Resources (FTEs) and Planned spending (\$ millions)

2012-2013		2013-2014		2014-2015	
FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending
1,775	1,100	1,700	1,155.7	1,586	1,153.4

Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Targets
Eligible Veterans are able to remain in their own homes and communities.	The percentage of community dwelling Veterans in receipt of the Veterans Independence Program who are admitted to a long-term care facility during the fiscal year.	< 10%
Payments for health care/treatment benefits are processed in a timely and efficient manner.	The percentage of payments processed for health care benefits which are paid directly to service providers.	70%
Eligible Veterans actively participate in the civilian workforce	The percentage of eligible Canadian Forces Veterans who are unemployed.	The unemployment rate of Canadian Forces Veterans will not exceed that of the Canadian population

Planning Highlights

Redesigning the Treatment Benefits and Veterans Independence Programs

The Department will redesign the business processes of the Treatment Benefits and Veterans Independence Programs to ensure that Veterans and their families receive more efficient service. To achieve this, VAC will streamline its processes, make better use of technology and support employees with current information and appropriate tools.

Improving communications

VAC will work to improve how Health Care Program information is communicated to Veterans and service providers. The Department will review and update the relevant information available on its website. We will also review all correspondence, including official decision letters, and rewrite these to ensure they are complete and easy to understand.

Strengthening provider relationships

VAC will be working with the Federal Health Care Programs System (FHPCS) contractor to develop a comprehensive strategy and plan to strengthen provider relationships to ensure that communication is ongoing; that issues are being resolved quickly; and that VAC is kept aware of industry changes.

Delegating VIP decision making

VAC will further clarify the roles and responsibilities of client service team managers, case managers and client service agents in making VIP-related decisions in order to better serve Veterans and other individuals receiving VIP benefits.

Improving technology

The Department will increase the use of technology in the delivery of its programs to reduce inefficiencies. Primary areas of focus include tracking and recording information in the Client Service Delivery Network (CSDN) to consolidate information in one location and to enhance program statistical information. VAC will also look to decrease turnaround times by setting up a digital imaging process for many of its VIP-related forms.

Improving rehabilitation services and vocational assistance

VAC will develop new service standards relating to the delivery of rehabilitation services and vocational assistance. This will ensure that staff and contractors have a clear understanding of what is expected and will improve departmental monitoring of these programs.

Policy Renewal

VAC will simplify its existing policies and create new ones that better support decision making by front-line staff. Research-based evidence will be used to support program and policy development.

Strategic Outcome 2 Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all who served in Canada's efforts during war, military conflict and peace

Program Activity

Canada Remembers Program

Generations of Canadian Veterans, through their courage, determination and sacrifices, have helped to ensure that Canadians live in a free and peaceful country. Remembering their contributions depends largely on a Canadian population that actively acknowledges Veterans' achievements and sacrifices through remembrance-based activities.

Year	Financial Resources (\$ millions)	Human Resources (FTEs)
2012-2013	47.4	98
2013-2014	46.1	98
2014-2015	45.6	98

Remembrance activities are an essential component of ensuring that future generations understand the high cost of freedom and the importance of protecting human rights, freedom and justice around the world.

VAC contributes to ongoing remembrance by:

- leading and supporting ceremonies and events in Canada and abroad that recognize and honour Canada's war dead and Veterans;
- providing remembrance-based resources (a wide range of learning materials using a variety of media) for Canadian youth and educators and interpreting war memorials in Europe and Canada;
- establishing and leveraging partnerships that extend the reach of Veterans Affairs Canada's remembrance mandate;
- providing funeral, burial and grave marking assistance in partnership with the Last Post Fund Corporation; and,
- maintaining war graves, Veterans' graves and memorials in Canada and worldwide in partnership with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and others.

SO2 Planning Highlights

- › Increasing the awareness and participation of Canadians in remembrance activities;
- › Bringing remembrance to Canadians, especially youth, through technology and community events;
- › Increasing the recognition of Canadian Forces Veterans and ensuring programming reflects how they wish to be recognized;
- › Working with the Last Post Fund to achieve greater efficiencies and to decrease administrative expenses;
- › Continuing to improve the Partnership Contribution Programs' business processes to enhance service delivery and to strengthen partnerships; and
- › Launching a new learning package on the post-Korean War missions of the Canadian Forces.

Program Activity 2.1 – Canada Remembers Program

Sub activities:

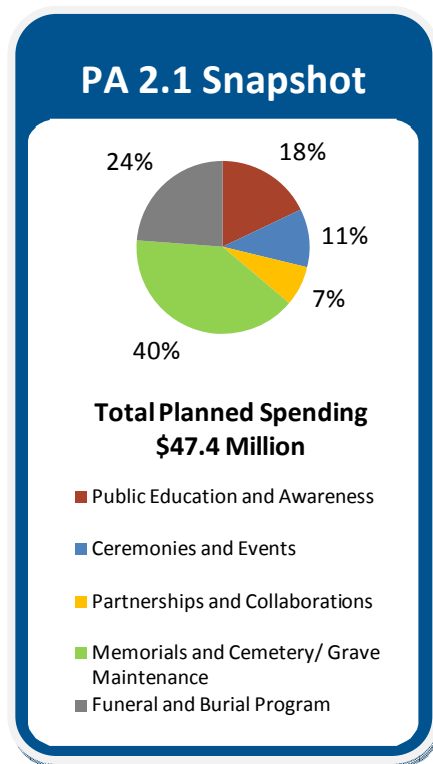
- Public Education and Awareness
- Ceremonies and Events
- Partnerships and Collaborations
- Memorials and Cemetery Maintenance
- Funeral and Burial Program

Canadian Veterans and those who died in service have made valuable contributions to the development of Canada. Under the authority of P.C. Order 1965-688, this program ensures that Veterans and those who died in service are honoured and the memory of their sacrifices and achievements is preserved.

Canada Remembers activities promote the following outcomes: Canadians are knowledgeable about their efforts; Veterans are publicly recognized for their service; communities and other groups lead remembrance activities; symbols erected to their memory are maintained in perpetuity; and, eligible Veterans receive dignified funerals and burials.

Encouraging pride in our shared military history, celebrating the contributions and acknowledging the sacrifices of those who served, and preserving symbols to mark their courage all contribute to the Government of Canada’s outcome of a vibrant Canadian culture and heritage.

This program is delivered through grants, contributions and operating funds.



Program Activity Canada Remembers Program						
Human Resources (FTEs) and Planned spending (\$ millions)						
2012-2013		2013-2014		2014-2015		
FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	
98	47.4	98	46.1	98	45.6	
Expected Results		Performance Indicators		Targets		
Canadian Veterans and those who died in service are honoured and the memory of their achievements and sacrifices is preserved.		The percentage of Canadian Veterans’ overall satisfaction with how VAC delivers its remembrance programs.		85%		

Planning Highlights

Commemorating Canadian Military Accomplishments

April 9, 2012 marked the 95th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge and a Canadian delegation led by the Minister of Veterans Affairs and the Governor General of Canada participated in ceremonies held in France. Also in attendance were close to 5,000 Canadian youth. These youth witnessed the courage and perseverance shown by the young Canadians who fought during the Battle of Vimy Ridge. They will form a new generation that will help shape the future of our great country. In Canada, events included ceremonies at the National War Memorial, in Toronto, Vancouver and in many other communities across Canada.

In addition, VAC is planning activities to mark the 70th anniversary of the Dieppe Raid in August 2012, and is exploring ways to commemorate Canadian sacrifices and accomplishments in post-Korea and modern-day peace keeping missions. Looking further ahead, VAC is in the preliminary stages of planning to mark the 60th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice, where more than 500 Canadians lost their lives in the pursuit of peace and democracy.

Centennial of the First World War

Planning is underway to mark the Centennial of the First World War, beginning in 2014 until 2018, in partnership with many domestic and international partners. This commemoration will ensure that those who died in service to Canada

are honoured and the memory of their sacrifices and achievements is preserved for all Canadians. As there are no surviving Veterans of the First World War, this commemoration will provide assurance to those Veterans who are still living and to those CF members who are still serving, that Canada recognizes their service and will continue to demonstrate her appreciation no matter how much time passes.

Recognizing modern-day Veterans

Ensuring modern-day Veterans receive the recognition they deserve is a complex and ongoing project of the Department. After learning that approximately half of VAC clients (45% of modern-day Veterans and 58% of traditional Veterans – 2010 National Client Survey) were unaware of the Department's remembrance programming, VAC provided sessions to CF members on bases across Canada to provide them with information about its Canada Remembers Program. As a result of these sessions, VAC was given considerable feedback about what remembrance means to current Canadian Forces (CF) members and their feeling about how they wish to be recognized. This information will be compiled, analyzed and considered in program development to commemorate modern-day Veterans in ways that are relevant to them. More immediately, VAC will complete and release its *Canadian Forces Around the World* learning kit to create better awareness among Canadians of the actions of Canadian Forces Veterans, thus ensuring their legacy is protected.

Youth and technology

VAC will continue to apply new and innovative strategies to engage Canadians, especially youth through the use of technology such as the Department's website, the virtual poppy, remembrance applications (APPS) and Quick Response or QR codes. VAC will also continue to further develop social media tools such as Facebook, YouTube, Twibbon and Twitter.

Recognizing sacrifices

Another planning highlight that will contribute to the realization of honouring the memory of the sacrifices and achievements of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service are plans for the ongoing maintenance and improvements of VAC memorials, cemeteries and gravemarkers, in Canada and overseas. In addition, VAC will continue to work with stakeholders to respond to their priorities and concerns with regard to funeral and burial benefits.

Strategic Outcome 3

Veteran’s rights to services and benefits that address their needs are considered in an independent and impartial way.

Program Activity

Veterans Ombudsman

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman (OVO) works to ensure that Veterans and other individuals served by VAC are treated respectfully, according to the *Veterans Bill of Rights*, and receive the services and benefits they need in a fair and timely manner.

Year	Financial Resources (\$ millions)	Human Resources (FTEs) ²
2012-2013	5.9	40
2013-2014	5.9	40
2014-2015	5.9	40

The OVO addresses complaints, emerging issues and systemic problems related to programs and services provided or administered by VAC, and those related to the Veterans Review and Appeal Board.

More broadly, the OVO plays an important role in expanding awareness of Veterans’ needs and the contributions they continue to make to Canadian society when they return to civilian life.

The Veterans Ombudsman has the following mandate:

- Review and address complaints arising from the application of the provisions of the *Veterans Bill of Rights*;
- Review and address complaints related to programs and services provided or administered by the Department or by third parties on the Department’s behalf, including individual decisions on benefits and services for which there is no right of appeal to the Veterans Review and Appeal Board;
- Identify, research and investigate emerging and existing systemic issues related to the provisions of the Department’s programs and services;
- Review systemic issues related to the Veterans Review and Appeal Board; and
- Provide information and recommendations to the Minister in relation to identified systemic issues.

² Includes 10 VAC positions which provide support to the OVO

SO3 Planning Highlights

- › Ensuring the fair treatment of Veterans, serving members of the Canadian Forces, and the RCMP, as well as all other individuals served by Veterans Affairs Canada;
- › Reviewing and addressing complaints arising from application of the *Veterans Bill of Rights*, as well as individual decisions on programs and services;
- › Facilitating access to VAC programs and services;
- › Providing awareness and opportunities for public and Veteran consultations; and
- › Enhancing ability to respond to requests through the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*.

Program Activity 3.1 – Veterans Ombudsman

This program provides Veterans and other individuals (war service Veterans, Veterans and serving members of the Canadian Forces (Regular and Reserve), members and former members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, spouses, common-law partners, survivors and primary caregivers, other eligible dependants and family members, other eligible individuals and representatives of the afore-mentioned groups) with the opportunity to request independent reviews of their complaints.

It promotes fair and equitable treatment in accessing the services, benefits and programs from Veterans Affairs Canada. This is accomplished by: providing them with information and referrals to facilitate their access to programs and services; reviewing and addressing complaints arising from the *Veterans Bill of Rights* and decisions on benefits and services for which there is no right to appeal to the Veterans Review and Appeal Board; and researching and investigating emerging and existing systemic issues related to the provisions of the Department's programs and services and providing information and recommendations to the Minister in relation to those issues.

This program is delivered through operating funds.

Program Activity Veterans Ombudsman						
Human Resources (FTEs) ³ and Planned spending (\$ millions)						
2012-2013		2013-2014		2014-2015		
FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	
40	5.9	40	5.9	40	5.9	
Expected Results		Performance Indicators		Targets		
Veterans and other clients are aware and have access to Ombudsman services.		The percentage of contacts responded to.		90%		
		Number of unique visitors/social media 'hits'.		Same or increased		
Veterans/clients, Veterans Affairs Canada, influencers and government decision makers are aware of the issues and recommendations raised by the Ombudsman Office.		Number of appearances to Senate and House of Commons committees on Veterans Affairs/Briefings to Parliamentarians.		5		

³ Includes 10 VAC positions which provide support to the OVO

Planning Highlights

Early intervention

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman will continue to provide direct assistance through early intervention activities so that complaints, information requests and referrals are resolved in a timely and appropriate manner.

Investigations

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman will focus on initiating and investigating systemic issues, along with assessing and contributing to the resolution of complex Veterans issues.

Public consultation

By maintaining public consultation initiatives (including web-based approaches, town halls and speaking platforms) aimed at engaging Veterans and other stakeholders, the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman will be better able to identify and inform all Veterans and other individuals on issues of concern and emerging priorities.

To further promote the well-being of all Veterans, the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman will continue to work with the Veterans Ombudsman Advisory Committee.

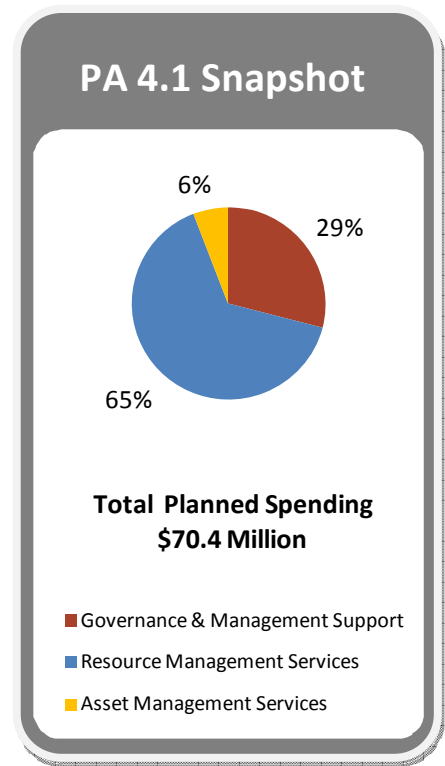
Program Activity 4.1 – Internal Services

Sub Activities

- Governance and Management Support
- Resource Management Services
- Asset Management Services

Internal Services are groups of related activities and resources that support the needs of programs and other corporate obligations of an organization. These groups are: Management and Oversight Services; Communications Services; Legal Services; Human Resources Management Services; Financial Management Services; Information Management Services; Information Technology Services; Real Property Services; Materiel Services; Acquisition Services; and Travel and Other Administrative Services.

Internal Services include only those activities and resources that apply across an organization and not to those provided specifically to a program.



Program Activity		Internal Services				
Human Resources (FTEs) and Planned spending (\$ millions)						
2012-2013		2013-2014		2014-2015		
FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	
709	70.4	694	65.0	641	65.0	

Planning Highlights

Delivering internal services

VAC will implement a service delivery model for internal services in order to reduce duplication, eliminate a layer of management, and increase overall efficiency.

The Department will also work with Shared Services Canada (SSC) in response to the recommendations of the Administrative Services Review.

Managing the workforce

VAC will continue to plan its employee needs carefully, to make sure staff resources are aligned with changing client demographics, IT advancements and the simplification of policies and processes. The Department will also ensure that employees have the skills and tools needed to achieve success.

Measuring Performance

VAC will implement a *Measuring Program Decisions Compliance Framework* in order to improve the effectiveness of its decision making. This framework will cover the appropriateness of program delivery in terms of conformance with relevant laws, authorities, policies and accepted standards of conduct—all measured at both the job and program levels. Trends and issues will be used to further inform policy and program direction.

Privacy Action Plan 2.0

VAC will implement the second phase of its privacy action plan to advance a deeper understanding of privacy and the need to protect information at all levels throughout the Department.

The plan, building on the successes of the first phase, will work to fully integrate privacy protection as part of the overall management framework. Privacy will be reviewed in the following areas:

- › Training and awareness;
- › Governance;
- › Administration and practices;
- › Monitoring and evaluation; and
- › Reporting and priority identification

Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

Veterans Affairs Canada is a participant in the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS) and contributes to the Greening Government Operations targets through the Internal Services Program Activity. The Department contributes to the following target areas of Theme IV of the FSDS:

- › Green Buildings;
- › Surplus Electronic and Electrical Equipment;
- › Printing Unit Reduction;
- › Paper Consumption;
- › Green Meetings, and
- › Green Procurement.

For additional details on VAC's Greening Government Operations activities please see [Section III – Supplementary Information tables](#).

Section III: Supplementary Information

Financial Highlights

The future-oriented financial highlights presented within this *2012-2013 Report on Plans and Priorities* are intended to serve as a general overview of Veterans Affairs' financial position and operations. These financial highlights are prepared on an accrual basis to strengthen accountability and improve transparency and financial management.

Future-oriented financial statements can be found on [VAC's website](#).

Future-Oriented Financial Statements

(\$ millions)	Estimated Results 2011–2012	Forecast 2012–2013	% Change
Condensed Statement of Financial Position (future-oriented)			
<i>At March 31</i>			
ASSETS			
Financial Assets ⁴	68.4	68.4	0%
Non-Financial Assets	134.0	125.9	-6%
TOTAL	202.4	194.3	-4%
LIABILITIES			
Total Liabilities	122.8	123.2	0%
EQUITY	79.6	71.1	-11%
TOTAL	202.4	194.3	-4%
Condensed Statement of Operations (future-oriented)			
<i>At March 31</i>			
EXPENSES			
Total Expenses	3,597.1	3,619.6	1%
REVENUES			
Total Revenues	22.5	22.5	0%
NET COST OF OPERATIONS	3,574.6	3,597.1	1%

Condensed Statements of Financial Position and Operations

The planned spending for the Veterans Affairs Portfolio as reported on a modified-cash basis for 2011-2012 is \$3,574.6 million.

⁴ Amounts due from the Consolidated Revenue Fund have been recognized as a new asset under the revised Treasury Board Accounting Standards 1.2 issued in 2010. This has resulted in an increase in financial assets as compared to the RPP of 2011-12.

This amount has been adjusted by estimated amounts for items such as refunds of prior years' expenditures, services provided without charge (i.e. accommodations, legal services, etc.) and amortization of capital assets to arrive at a future oriented total expense of \$3,619.6 million for 2012-2013.

The total expenses, net of expected revenues (primarily from Ste. Anne's Hospital) leave an estimated net cost of operations for 2012-2013 of \$3,597.1 million. Approximately 90% of planned spending for 2012-2013 is paid directly to or on behalf of VAC clients for compensation and financial support, health care and commemoration.

List of Supplementary Information Tables

The following tables can be found on the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat website at: www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rpp/2012-2013/info/info-eng.asp

- Details on Transfer Payment Programs (TPP)
- Greening Government Operations
- Sources of Non-Responsible Revenue
- Internal Audits and Evaluations

Section IV : Other Items of Interest

Gender Based Analysis (GBA)

Consistent with the Canadian government's commitment to gender equality, Veterans Affairs Canada will use gender based analysis to ensure that gender considerations are taken into account in policy, planning and decision-making processes. The Department will look at the impact that its policies, programs and activities might have on people because of their gender and will take into consideration the differences faced by men and women in all their diversity.

Progress has been made on a range of gender-based analysis initiatives. The Department has:

- › created a sustainable GBA framework;
- › completed a self assessment of the Department's GBA performance;
- › provided GBA specific training to key employees; and
- › completed a GBA analysis on a selected initiative as a pilot.

Contact Information

To make a general enquiry about Veterans Affairs Canada, its programs or services, call **1-866-522-2122**. To contact the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman, call **1-877-330-4343**.

Websites

The following websites will provide more detailed information on material provided in this report. If further information is required, contact may be made through the Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) general inquiries lines.

Veterans Affairs Canada:

veterans.gc.ca

Office of the Veterans Ombudsman:

www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca

Publications

VAC produces a variety of publications on its programs and services. Copies of these publications are available on the Department's websites.

For more information or to ask questions, contact:

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 Veterans Affairs Canada
 P.O. Box 7700
 Charlottetown PE C1A 8M9
 E-mail: plan@vac-acc.gc.ca