

Veterans Affairs

2005-2006 Report on Plans and Priorities

Approved:

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The Honourable Albina Guarnieri, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Veterans Affairs

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Minister's Message



On December 14, 2004, in the presence of more than 100 of our Veterans and numerous Members of Parliament and Senators, I had the privilege of launching 2005 as the Year of the Veteran. The Year of the Veteran is to inspire Canadians to remember and recognize those who served Canada during war, military conflict and peace. Over the course of the year, Veterans' achievements and sacrifices will be recognized at ceremonies and events, to be held in Canada and overseas, with special emphasis on the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Canadians will have a multitude of opportunities to express their gratitude to those to whom we all owe a tremendous debt. The year will also serve as a national history lesson for all Canadians, especially our youth so that memories can be passed on to future generations.

Since coming to Veterans Affairs nine short months ago, I have been impressed by the dedication and contributions of my Portfolio staff to our approximately 209,000 clients. Our Veterans and their families have diverse, complex requirements, and my Department is fully committed to ensuring that appropriate benefits and services are in place to meet their needs. Continuing to care for aging war Veterans, preparing recent Canadian Forces (CF) Veterans for productive civilian careers and guarding the memory of the sacrifices our Veterans have made for Canada are our priorities in the coming years.

The advancing age of our war Veteran clients, and their increasing health issues translate into intense and complex care requirements. More than ever, we must continue to ensure that we meet the needs and expectations of this special group of clients and their primary caregivers. My Department's current system of support has evolved historically to continually meet the needs of these war Veterans, and we are dedicated to caring for them in the final decades of their lives.

I must note, however, that this same system of support that serves our war Veterans so well has not proven as effective in meeting the needs of today's CF Veterans and their families. With an average age of 36 at their time of release from the CF, this growing group of clients is faced with developing second careers as they transition to civilian life. To meet their distinctive requirements, it is clear that a new Veterans' Charter is needed for a new century. My Department's Service and Program Modernization Task Force currently is working on the design of a new suite of benefits and services to meet the needs of our CF Veterans and their families.

The contribution that our war Veterans and CF Veterans have made to Canada's development as a nation and its role on the international stage demands that we pass on a tradition of respect and awareness to all Canadians. It is vital that our communities and especially our youth take full advantage of the living history that our Veterans carry with them and so willingly share. In pursuing this goal, my Department will proactively target our youth. Youth learning, youth engagement and community

support are the cornerstones of my Department's new approach, and each significantly reinforces our sense of national identity and unity. As part of this initiative and in recognition of the advancing age of our war Veterans, our commemoration and remembrance focus will shift to more community led ceremonies and events in Canada.

It is with great pride that I present the 2005-2006 Report on Plans and Priorities. It outlines how the Government of Canada, through Veterans Affairs, will continue to honour its commitment to care for those who have so selflessly served, and continue to serve, this great country, Canada; all the while keeping alive, for future generations, the memory of their sacrifices and accomplishments that continue to provide Canadians a great source of pride and purpose.

I want this to be a very special year, not just in Ottawa, but all across our great country. The Year of the Veteran is our year to thank a noble generation of Canadians for the days of daring that earned an age of peace.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Albin Guarnieri". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "A".

The Honourable Albin Guarnieri, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Veterans Affairs

Chair's Message



Since its inception, the Veterans Review and Appeal Board (VRAB) has worked diligently to provide a fair, transparent, and independent redress process for disability pension claimants and War Veterans Allowance appellants. VRAB has adapted to several changes including the nature of the claims coming before the Board, as well as, the demographics of the claimants.

For the planning period of 2005-2006, the Board will continue to implement its strategic plan by concentrating its efforts to enhance program delivery, to improve communications, and to improve management accountability. The Board will also strengthen the Member appointment process through the implementation of a more transparent and rigorous assessment and selection process. Success in these areas will benefit the people who appear before the Board and Canadians as a whole.

During the previous planning period, VRAB reviewed its adjudication processes and explored potential areas for improvement and efficiencies. Over the next year the Board will be piloting or implementing these changes, as well as, researching other options. Changes in program delivery will position VRAB to more effectively and efficiently adjudicate claims that are growing increasingly complex on both legal and medical grounds.

In making changes, the Board has and will continue to communicate with Veterans and external organizations. It is important that our stakeholders understand the adjudication process, as well as the reasons upon which Board decisions are made. The Board will also be conducting a public opinion survey on Appellant perceptions of the Board and the redress process.

Regarding the Board's responsibility to the Canadian public, VRAB will continue to meet the expectations of the Federal Government's Management Accountability Framework and evolving reporting requirements. The Board will be proactive in Risk Awareness and Assessment by providing all employees an opportunity to discuss the issues at stake for the organization.

Along with celebrating the Year of the Veteran and the 60th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the Veterans Review and Appeal Board will mark its 10th anniversary during 2005-2006 planning year. The Board looks forward to building upon its past successes and ensuring claimants receive the benefits to which they are entitled under the law.

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Victor A. Marchand
Chair, Veterans Review and Appeal Board

Section I - Overview

Summary Information

The Veterans Affairs Portfolio is comprised of Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), commonly referred to as the Department, and the Veterans Review and Appeal Board (the Board), which operates at arm's length from the Department. The Department's vision is to provide exemplary service which honours the sacrifice and achievements of our Veterans and clients. The vision of the Veterans Review and Appeal Board (VRAB), is to be an exemplary leader in administrative tribunals that demonstrates fairness, competence and excellence in service to Canadians by providing independent, consistent and reasonable decisions that are grounded in law.

Veterans Affairs Canada's strategic direction over the next three years is to continue to provide exemplary client-centred service and to support the health and wellness of our clientele as we strive to meet the needs of our aging War Service Veterans and the younger modern day Canadian Forces Veterans and members. As well, VAC is committed to honouring and promoting remembrance as a significant component of our national identity. To achieve these VAC will place priority on:

- modernizing our programs and services
Canada is at a crossroads in the provision of services and benefits to its Canadian forces (CF) members and Veterans. A new cohort of Veterans is participating in frequent and prolonged peacekeeping missions and other international operations, often returning home with physical and psychological injuries. Too often, medically-released CF members experience an unsuccessful transition from military to civilian life and feel a lack of recognition for their sacrifices. The department has responded to this unacceptable situation by establishing the Service and Modernization Task Force to research and develop amendments to the current structure and content of programs and services to better meet the emerging needs of modern CF Veterans.
- dedicating 2005 as the Year of the Veteran
Throughout this year, Canadians will celebrate, honour, remember, and teach our youth about the contributions and sacrifice of our Veterans. This is a year to demonstrate a national show of gratitude for our Veterans, an opportunity to renew our commitment to remembrance, and pass that tradition on to a new generation of Canadians. Throughout this calendar year, many ceremonies and events will be held in Canada and overseas that will commemorate the achievements and sacrifices of all Veterans. Highlights of events include:
 - recognizing Second World War Veterans at the Victory in Europe Day in May, and in August to mark the Victory in the Far East;
 - unveiling the Seventh Book of Remembrance "*In the Service of Canada*" to

- commemorate Canadian Forces members killed in service since October 1, 1947, with the exception of those who are included in the Korea War Book of Remembrance;
- continuing restoration work at the Vimy Memorial in France; and
 - helping Veterans share their stories with youth.
- encouraging Canadians to strengthen their sense of community by organizing and participating in community-based activities and ceremonies.
 - continuing the Ste. Anne's Hospital modernization project to provide the highest quality of geriatric and psycho-geriatric care; and
 - further refining our existing programs and services for our aging war Veterans, including the Veterans Independence Program (VIP). VIP has, for many years, been focussed on helping senior Veterans live out their lives with a maximum of independence, care and support. The Department is currently part of a Continuing Care Research Project which will add to our knowledge and greater understanding of home care services. We also recognize the tireless efforts of caregivers and therefore, we will be providing lifetime continuation of VIP services to eligible primary caregivers of Veterans.

The Veterans Review and Appeal Board's strategic and long term plans provide for sustenance and improvement in the review and appeal process. Veterans, Canadian Forces members, RCMP claimants, and certain civilians pursuing redress have increasingly complex medical conditions. As well, pension legislation changes and streamlining within VAC continue to have an impact on VRAB and its operations. The Board will strengthen its capabilities through improvements in research, training, program delivery and communication to ensure a fair adjudicative process.

Veterans Affairs Mandate

VAC's mandate stems from laws and regulations. Among the more significant is the *Department of Veterans Affairs Act*, which charges the Minister of Veterans Affairs with the following responsibilities:

“The care, treatment, or re-establishing in civil life of any person who served in the Canadian Forces or merchant navy or in the naval, army or 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...”

Veterans Review and Appeal Board Mandate

The Veterans Review and Appeal Board's has full and exclusive jurisdiction to hear, determine and deal with all applications for review and appeal that may be made to the Board under the *Pension Act*, the *War Veterans Allowance Act* and other Acts of Parliament.

Planned Spending for Veterans Affairs Program (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
2,853.1	2,931.9	2,955.6

Planned Spending for Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
12.9	12.8	12.8

Human Resources for Veterans Affairs Program (Full-Time Equivalents)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
3,422	3,414	3,410

Human Resources for Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program (Full-Time Equivalents)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
141	140	140

VAC's Strategic Direction

VAC's Five-Year Strategic Plan 2001-2006, introduced in June 2001, identified ten priorities to guide the Department in meeting the diverse and changing needs of its clients, while creating a vibrant organization and fulfilling workplace. Equally important, was the commitment made to review these priorities, identify new challenges and emerging issues, and update the Plan on an annual basis.

Update 2004 marked the third annual review of the Plan. In this Update six priorities remained to guide the Department over the next two years, (as defined in the following table). Two of these priorities in particular, improving and expanding services for Canadian Forces Veterans and still-serving members and re-focussing remembrance activities on the involvement of Canada's youth, are presently the central points of focus for the Department.

Strategic Objective 1: Integrity of Our Programs and Services

- Improving and expanding services for Canadian Forces Veterans and still-serving members
- Re-focussing remembrance activities on the involvement of Canada's youth in community-based activities within Canada, while respecting our overseas responsibilities
- Partnering to serve the RCMP and eligible civilians
- Transforming service delivery and promoting innovation in policies and practices

Strategic Objective 2: Organizational Effectiveness

- Aligning our strategic human resources initiatives to support the goals of the organization and aspirations of our people
- Advancing the development of our information management and information technology capacity in support of service improvement, organizational effectiveness and Government-On-Line

We have recently embarked on a new strategic planning exercise that will carry our Department into 2011. This new Five-Year Strategic Plan will build on the success of the previous plan, and renew our strategy for the next five years. It is anticipated that the new Strategic Plan will be ready for publication in the fall 2005.



Web Site Access

The Department

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=department/mandate>

VAC Five Year Strategic Plan - Update 2004

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=department/reports/update2004>

Portfolio Plans and Priorities

Over the next three years, Veterans Affairs will continue to provide client-centred services and benefits that respond to the needs of our Veterans, other clients and their families in recognition of their service to Canada and to keep the memory of their achievements and sacrifices alive for all Canadians.

To provide these benefits and services, Veterans Affairs Canada plans to spend approximately \$2,866 million in 2005-2006, including \$1,724 million for pensions and allowances for disability and death, and economic support. A further \$946 million supports health care, treatment benefits, and other health services required to meet our clients' needs. Remembrance programming and the Veterans Review and Appeal Board are supported with a planned spending of \$73.9 and \$12.9 million respectively. The above amounts include allocated corporate services costs. A further \$109 million will be required for pensions and health care program delivery.

Clients

Veterans Affairs serves a diverse group of clients, which includes Veterans from the First World War, the Second World War and the Korean War, as well as former and still-serving Canadian Forces members. In addition, our family of clients extends to spouses, children, and caregivers of Veterans, past and present members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and certain allied Veterans and eligible civilians.

As of March 2004, we are providing benefits and services to approximately 209,000 clients and this number is expected to remain relatively constant through to March 2008. Between March 2004 and March 2008, the number of War Service Veteran clients is expected to decrease by 9%, whereas the number of Canadian Forces Veteran clients is expected to increase by 37%, and the number of RCMP clients is expected to increase by 62%. Survivor clients are expected to decrease by 11% over the same time period. VAC has witnessed an average increase per annum in the number of Veterans applying for disability pensions in the past decade of 14%.

Pressures

In recent years, the pace of deployments and the number of Canadian Forces (CF) members serving in peacekeeping missions and other international operations have increased significantly, with frequent and prolonged deployments to war zones. Canada's growing participation in international and multilateral operations has led to an increased number of CF Veterans and still-serving members seeking assistance from VAC. In addition, with the Canadian Forces population increasing for the foreseeable future, there is an urgency to respond to their needs in a way that fulfills our commitment to take care of injured personnel by promoting health and wellness.

Health care continues to be a national priority. Changes to Canada's Health care system, whether through further developments in home and community care, promotion of healthy living, or new initiatives, including the creation of the Health Council, can and will have an impact on Veterans Affairs Canada. As the Health Council assesses the performance of Canada's health system and the pace of

implementation of the various commitments made in the February 2003 *First Ministers' Accord on Health Care Renewal*, VAC will continue to assess the relevance of its findings in relation to our own programs and services. Similarly, the progress made in defining a national minimum level of home and community care services, including palliative and end-of-life care to be covered by provincial health insurance plans, may influence our program operations and/or delivery mechanisms.

One of the recent changes in Canada's health care system is an effort to better manage drug benefit programs. In her annual report to Parliament in November 2004, the Auditor General expressed concern over the management of the federal drug benefit programs and the inappropriate use of drugs. Veterans Affairs Canada is working with other federal departments to address this concern.

The portfolio faces many internal pressures in our efforts to meet the demands of the increasing workload and the evolving needs of our clients. These pressures include the introduction of evolving technology and our human resource demographics. As of January 2005 slightly more than 35% of Portfolio employees were 50 years of age or older. Of the EX group, 62% were 50 years of age or older. In today's open market, where opportunities are abundant, it is of particular concern to attract and identify staff with the highest potential for our current and longer term needs. To meet these challenges, the Department will be working towards modernizing its human resource capacity while strengthening our information management and information technology capacities and enhancing our internal communications.

Priorities

Modernization Task Force


VAC's Service and Program Modernization Task Force, established in 2003, is designing a comprehensive and improved suite of programs and services to enable the Department to better support CF Veterans' active participation in society and to aid in the successful transition of Canadian Force members and families to civilian life. Key programs proposed include disability awards, rehabilitation, earnings loss, health benefits, and job placement assistance. Using a "wellness approach", VAC proposes to focus on rehabilitation and reintegration to civilian life and on providing one-stop client-centred service.

With respect to its proposed approach, VAC has engaged major Veterans' organizations in extensive consultations. The Task Force has and continues to work closely with the Department of National Defence, and is in consultations with other federal stakeholders, including Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Feedback from this consultation process is being used to modify program design. The increased awareness of the need to provide more assistance to CF members, CF Veterans and their families was influenced by Dr. Neary and the VAC-CF Advisory Committee. This action is supported by the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veteran Affairs and the Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, raising the key issue of the well being of Canada's current military personnel and of Veterans who have recently retired from service.

Over the next three years, we are working towards eliminating our current backlog and reducing turnaround times for the disability pension applications. Our clients should begin to see results in spring 2005.

Veterans Affairs Canada, in partnership with the RCMP, assumed additional responsibility in December 2002 for the delivery of benefits and services to still-serving and retired members of the RCMP. We noted that the needs and expectations of the RCMP differ from our other two major client groups. The culture under which they live and work also differs greatly. These differences result in the requirement to identify and understand their specific needs. Therefore, both organizations are working together to identify ways and methods to enhance this understanding and improve client service.

The needs analysis, currently underway, will be completed with a resulting report in the spring 2005. Based on the results, next steps will be identified and may include the following objectives: better communications with clients; information sharing on best practices in health care; filling gaps in service; and, identifying possible areas for pilot projects in programs, services and delivery.

 Web Site Access
Modernization Task Force http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/clients/sub.cfm?source=forces http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=forces/staffq_and_a

Ste. Anne's Hospital

Ste. Anne's Hospital, located less than half an hour from downtown Montreal, on the West Island, provides Veterans and other clients with high quality geriatric and psycho-geriatric care. It is the last remaining federal hospital for Veterans. In order to maintain this high standard of service, the staff at Ste. Anne's Hospital constantly seek ways to improve the manner in which they provide their services. These include: upgrading its facilities; improving specialized services offered to Canadian Forces members and Veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder or other psychological problems linked to operational stress; and continuing its work in the fields of dementia, dysphagia, pain, and clinical research. Through its Day Centre, Ste. Anne's Hospital provides care and support services to its clients still living in their homes.

Work is well underway on the modernization of the hospital, which was originally built in 1917. The new thermal power plant and the electrical sub-station are expected to begin operating in the winter 2005. Also in 2005, more than 100 Veterans suffering from cognitive deficits will be able to take advantage of a new pavilion, which will be more

secure and better adapted to their specific needs. Renovations to the main Tower of the hospital should begin in the fall 2005 and are expected to be completed in the spring 2008. This modernization initiative, announced in 2001, will bring the hospital in line with provincial standards. As a result of the conversion of dormitories into private rooms, the \$67.7 million project will result in 446 beds and provide Veterans with an enhanced living environment.

The Ste. Anne's Centre, which opened its doors in 2001, offers specialized services for post-traumatic stress disorder and other psychological disorders related to operational stress, to Veterans and members of the Canadian Forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The Centre provides out-patient and in-patient care. The Centre is involved in the coordination and standardization of care throughout the entire Veterans Affairs network; development of a questionnaire to evaluate the quality of care; participation in the treatment standards committee; development of a telemedicine program; promotion of training related to operational stress for professionals in the community; participation in an international study on post-traumatic stress disorder; and the implementation of a new residential program. Partners in providing these mental health services include the Department of National Defence, the Provinces, and community mental health organizations.

Research is a key component to ensuring the integrity and high quality of programs. Ste. Anne's Hospital is constantly evaluating and adjusting its programs to ensure they meet the needs of its patients. The goal of research at Ste. Anne's Hospital is to contribute to bridging the gap between research and clinical practice in the domains of gerontology and mental health. As part of its ongoing quest for excellence, the Hospital has created a multi disciplinary scientific research council. Its plans for 2005 include research projects for each of the research priorities (pain, dementia, post-traumatic stress syndrome), establishment of a formal research partnership with McGill University and, improved evidence based practice. In 2006 a research directorate and a team of researchers will be established, and in 2007 publications of the findings for each of the above priorities will be produced.



Web Site Access

Ste. Anne's Hospital

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=steannes>

Veterans Independence Program (VIP)

On December 7, 2004, the government announced the extension of the Veterans Independence Program's (VIP) housekeeping and/or grounds maintenance services for life to the primary caregivers of all Veterans who were in receipt of these VIP services since the program began in 1981. This will benefit approximately 4,000 additional primary caregivers of Veterans. This extension of VIP addresses the needs of primary caregivers who indirectly benefited from, have come to rely upon, and have continuing health needs for these VIP services. It will ensure that primary caregivers retain VIP

when a Veteran is admitted to a long-term care facility or passes away. With the passage of regulatory amendments in 2005, Veterans Affairs Canada will take action to ensure the smooth implementation of the program enhancement. This includes communication materials to foster awareness of the services available to primary caregivers and the development of relevant policies and procedures.

Mental Health

The Department has increased the capability for assessment and treatment of Operational Stress Injuries (OSI) for its clients at Ste. Anne's Hospital by establishing a National OSI Centre. In addition, out-patient OSI Clinics have been opened in London, Winnipeg and Québec City. Plans are also underway to open more clinics across the country; two OSI clinics in 2005-2006 (Calgary, Fredericton), and one clinic in 2006-2007 (Ottawa). The intent is to have one clinic in each Region, thus ensuring that all clients have access to assessment and treatment services for their OSIs as a result of their military service.

A Mental Health section has been added to the Department's web site providing clients with information on OSIs. An interactive web site is under development for the Network of Clinics and providers in the community.

Through the network of clinics the Department plans to implement other research projects focussed on understanding the mental health issues and the effectiveness of mental health treatments.


Research

Veterans Affairs Canada's, Research and Information Directorate is conducting a two-year Continuing Care Research Project with the Government of Ontario, to be completed in 2006-2007. This project will add significant new knowledge and lead to a greater understanding of the costs and care outcomes for Veterans Independence Program clients using home care, compared to residential care and assisted housing. The results will be used to improve existing programs for Veterans and to contribute to national policy discussions about continuing care by sharing lessons learned through our experience in delivering a national home care program for more than twenty years. As well, it will gather research evidence on the relative costs and outcomes of long term home care, assisted living, and residential care. VAC's Research and Information Directorate continues to improve in areas such as communications with Canadians through the implementation of a Knowledge Transfer and Exchange Program, including the implementation of public and internal web sites. The Directorate is also undertaking a number of important research activities in areas such as mental health, rural health, and continuing care to improve programs for Veterans, and to contribute to national policy discussions where possible.

Quality Management

VAC is developing a comprehensive Quality Management Program (QMP) which will be fully implemented by the end of 2005-2006. The QMP will enable staff and management at all levels of VAC to work collaboratively to meet national performance and outcome standards for the delivery of consistent, exemplary, client-centred services, and to foster continuous quality improvement in the delivery of VAC benefits and services.

As part of the QMP, VAC has partnered with the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA) and the Royal Canadian Legion to measure quality assurance in long term care. Through this partnership, VAC's ten care outcome standards have been incorporated in the CCHSA's national accreditation program in Long Term Care facilities where Veterans reside.

 Web Site Access
Veterans Independence Program http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/clients/sub.cfm?source=services/vip
Mental Health http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/clients/sub.cfm?source=mhealth
Research http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/providers/sub.cfm?source=pro_research
Quality Management http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/providers/sub.cfm?source=approach

Remembrance and Year of the Veteran

Veterans Affairs Canada will continue its leadership role in remembrance programming for all Canadians to keep alive the memory of the achievements and sacrifices of those who served Canada in times of war, armed conflict and peace. As a special honour to all Veterans, the Government of Canada has declared 2005 as the Year of the Veteran. Throughout this commemorative year, we aim to facilitate all Canadians being able to celebrate, honour, remember and teach about the service and sacrifice of Canada's Veterans. Commemorative events will serve as a natural engagement for our youth. We will be involved with pan-government initiatives, and work with a number of private and voluntary organizations to make Canadians, and in particular our youth, more aware of the significance of our Veterans' contribution and sacrifices. Our youth are our pride and our future and their development is a fundamental part of maintaining a solid foundation of citizenship in Canada. As Canada continues to age and mature as a nation, it looks to today's youth to become the new leaders of our country. We will provide opportunities for youth to learn about and understand how the sacrifices and achievements of Canada's Veterans impact life in Canada today.

Scouts Canada, in partnership with VAC, will incorporate remembrance in their Appreciation and Citizenship Badges, profile remembrance in their Leader Magazine, and within their learning resources for up to 150,000 children across Canada. Historica, well known for their dramatic 60-second vignettes, "Heritage Minutes," along with Heritage Canada and VAC, will develop several "Heritage Minutes" with accompany learning material to profile several remembrance themes including the contribution of Aborigines and the Home Front. In conjunction with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, ceremonies and events will be held in each of the provincial and territorial capitals. Other events include displays in federal government offices, media campaigns, concerts, and plays. In remembrance and recognition of the 60th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War, VAC will publish an educational booklet as a resource for educators of grade seven to twelve students across Canada. Other Anniversaries to be recognized in 2005 are the Victory in Europe (VE) and Victory in Japan (VJ). Three days of ceremonies and events will recognize Canadian Veterans of the Far East, and, in particular, Prisoners of War (POW). VAC will bring Hong Kong and other Far East POWs from across the country to Ottawa to make this a truly extraordinary national event and opportunity for the Nation to honour this deserving group of Veterans. Other notable events planned in this year include the unveiling of the Seventh Book of Remembrance "*In The Service of Canada*", to commemorate Canadian Forces members who died in service since October 1, 1947, with the exception of those that are included in the Korea Book of Remembrance, and a pilgrimage to the Netherlands to mark the 60th Anniversary of its liberation.

Grave Registry

In May 2004, VAC and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission launched a two-year pilot project to locate and identify all Veterans' graves throughout the Province of Quebec. Similar to the Virtual War Memorial Web Site which provides information on those Veterans who died in service during the First World War, Second World War, and Korean War, this pilot project involves the creation of a separate grave tracking database which will be used to create a registry of information on those Veterans who passed away outside the theatre of war. This information will include the name, military service, date of death, grave location, and cemetery maintenance. By 2006, it is anticipated that this registry will have compiled data on approximately 20,000 to 25,000 Veterans buried in Quebec. Upon completion of this pilot project, it is anticipated that this grave tracking registry will be expanded Canada-wide. Canadians will be able to search this on-line registry which will include name, military service, date of death, grave location (Global Positioning System coordinates), cemetery maintenance, and other information. The successful implementation and future Canada-wide expansion of this registry will allow VAC to preserve this crucial information for all Canadians and future generations, on the final resting place of Canada's Veterans.

Remembrance Publications

Veterans Affairs Canada recently began an extensive review of its collection of Remembrance publications. This involves a comprehensive update of the information provided in these publications from a historical perspective, rewriting of text at the grade 10 language level for today's youth, and a complete redesign of the booklets to a

uniform, recognizable design for this “Remembrance Series.” It is anticipated that the transformation of these publications will be complete by the fall 2005. These publications will be made available on-line for use by the general public, and to schools across Canada for students of all ages. By preserving this military historical information, VAC increases Canadians’ understanding and appreciation of how our Veterans have served our country with courage and honour.

Canadian Battlefield Memorials Restoration

Work is nearing completion on the \$30 million five-year Canadian Battlefield Memorials Restoration Project. Initially scheduled for completion in July 2006, contracting delays in 2004 resulted in a postponement of completion to December 31, 2006. This project focusses on four key activities: restoration and rehabilitation of the Vimy Monument in France; rehabilitation of memorial sites; battlefield terrain conservation; and Subterranean Features Investigation. In December 2004, work began on the Vimy Monument and this is expected to be completed by December 31, 2006. Seven of eleven memorials have been rehabilitated. Lastly, the battlefield terrain conservation will be completed by spring 2006. Project partners include Public Works and Government Services Canada; the Commonwealth War Graves Commission; Office National des Forêts de France; the Canadian Embassy in Paris, Belgium, and Croatia; and a number of other national and international associations. The rehabilitation of these memorials and sites will preserve and safeguard the dignity and integrity of these assets, and ensure the health and safety of both the public and employees.



Web Site Access

Remembrance

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/>

Year of the Veteran

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=feature/yearofveteran05>

Grave Registry

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=department/press/viewrelease&id=257>

Remembrance Publications

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=collections/books/7thbook>

Canadian Battlefield Memorials Restoration

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=Memorials/cbmr>

Pensions Advocacy

Staff in the Bureau of Pensions Advocates’ (BPA) fourteen district offices across Canada are responsible for providing advice and counselling to clients who are uncertain about any aspect of the decision they receive from Veterans Affairs Canada regarding their application for pension. Lawyers and legal assistants work together to help applicants

determine the best way to proceed in their particular situations. This assistance is provided free of charge. The options include the Bureau requesting a Departmental Review of the case by a Pension Adjudicator, representing a client before the Veterans Review and Appeal Board (VRAB), or counselling a client not to proceed. Of the applicants who proceed to VRAB, approximately 95% are represented by the Bureau. The remaining 5% are represented by a Service Officer of the Royal Canadian Legion, other Veterans' organization, or a private solicitor. Alternatively, they may choose to represent themselves.

A number of initiatives will be undertaken over the next three years to improve service to Veterans and other clients. Within the Bureau, results of the client feedback questionnaire, implemented in the fall of 2004, will be analysed, and adjustments will be made to service as necessary on an ongoing basis. Implementation of the new Client Service Protocol will also be monitored, to ensure that enhanced communication with clients is a priority. BPA will continue to work with VRAB to develop and pilot VRAB's case management system and assess its success by July 2005. This may allow for improved case preparation and resolution of issues before the hearing takes place. It could also result in a decision being fast-tracked with no need for a hearing. While the Bureau had good success in establishing a presence on the Canadian Forces (CF) Base at Valcartier, efforts to expand to other CF locations will be suspended, as we focus on refining the redress process in response to the modernization of VAC's programs. Lastly, BPA will continue to reach out to RCMP clients through presentations and distribution of printed information on VAC's benefits and services.

To monitor progress, the Bureau will evaluate the feedback received from clients and adjust its communications and services to accommodate the needs identified. It is anticipated that client questionnaires will provide valuable information on clients' satisfaction and identify service gaps where the Bureau needs to focus in meeting the needs of its clients. Streamlining and improving the review and appeal process with VRAB could result in faster turnaround for decisions. Increasing awareness, among the Canadian Forces and RCMP members, of the services that VAC provides is important in fostering a better understanding of the pension/redress process, thus lessening the frustration of clients.



Web Site Access

Bureau of Pensions Advocates

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=department/organization/bpa1>

Veterans Review and Appeal Board

The Veterans Review and Appeal Board provides an independent redress process for applicants who are dissatisfied with a disability pension decision of the Department of Veterans Affairs or a Regional Review Committee War Veterans Allowance decision. The adjudicative process includes two levels of redress: review and appeal.

The Board is continuing to improve communication with claimants and stakeholders to ensure they are well-informed of the role of the Board and the redress process. A Communications Strategy will be in place by spring 2005 and a public opinion survey will be conducted in 2005-2006. As well, information pertaining to the Board is available through the Board's web site which is updated and expanded on a regular basis and inquiries by telephone, correspondence and e-mails are responded to in a timely manner.

As part of its ongoing commitment to program delivery improvements, the Board plans to implement program delivery improvement strategies by July 2005. The four components include: developing a new case management system which will improve pre-hearing preparation and reduce efforts required post-hearing; enhancing the Members' learning program to ensure it is addressing training needs; improving research capability so that timely feedback and accessible information is available for complex and difficult emerging issues and legislative provisions; and developing a policy and rules framework which will authorize and support the other three program delivery strategies.



Web Site Access

Veterans Review and Appeal Board

<http://www.vrab-tacra.gc.ca/>

Section II - Analysis of Program Activities by Strategic Outcome

Summary

Parliament has indicated the need for better results information for its committee deliberations on value for money, and to provide more meaningful information to the Canadian public on how government delivers its programs. The Management Resources and Results Structure (MRRS) was developed to address this need. It is comprised of the following elements which are designed to provide both Parliamentarians and Canadians with more in-depth information on how departments utilize their resources to serve them.

The MRRS elements are:

- Strategic Outcomes;
- Programs linked to strategic outcomes (PAA);
- Actual and planned resource information for each element;
- Performance measures and results for each element; and
- Governance structure.

The Program Activity Architecture (PAA), is a comprehensive list of program activities used to report to both Treasury Board and Parliament. This architecture is designed to better link programs to results - true linkages between financial and non financial information. It is in line with Management Accountability Framework (MAF) expectations in that it supports Governance and Strategic Direction and Performance. Along with the activities and sub-activities identified in this section, each is supported by Expected Result(s) and Performance Indicator(s). More detailed information will be added in future reports.

The performance measurement strategy the Portfolio will be using to report on expected results is built around existing survey tools and reporting databases.

Program Activity Architecture

The Department's Expected Results for its Program Activity based upon its Strategic Outcome.

Strategic Outcome	Program Activity
Canadian war Veterans, eligible Canadian Forces Veterans and still-serving members, RCMP clients, qualified civilians and their families receive benefits and services in a fair and timely manner	Pensions and Allowances for Disability and Death and Economic Support
	Health Care Benefits
Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all those who served in Canada's efforts during war, military conflict and peace	Canada Remembers

The Board's Expected Results for its Program Activity is based upon its Strategic Outcome.

Strategic Outcome	Program Activity
Fair and effective resolution of disability pension and War Veterans Allowance appeals from Canada's war Veterans, eligible Canadian Forces Veterans and still-serving members, RCMP clients, qualified civilians and their families	Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program

Veterans Affairs Program

The Veterans Affairs Program has two Strategic Outcomes one of which is dedicated to Veterans Services and the other which falls under Remembrance.

Strategic Outcome #1:

Canada's War Service Veterans, eligible Canadian Forces Veterans and still-serving members, RCMP clients, qualified civilians and their families receive benefits and services in a fair and timely manner.

Flowing from this Strategic Outcome are two Primary Activities: Pensions and Allowances for Disability and Death, and Economic Support, and Health Care Benefits.

Program Activity Name:

1. Pensions and Allowances for Disability and Death, and Economic Support

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
1,724.3	1,770.4	1,781.5

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
361	354	354

Expected Result

Clients are satisfied with the suite of programs

Performance Indicators

- Consistent and fair adjudication process
- Percentage of surveyed clients are satisfied with the benefits and services which they have received

This primary Program Activity is supported by the following three Sub-Activities:

- Pensions and Allowances for Disability and Death;
- Economic Support; and
- Bureau of Pensions Advocates.

Planned spending for this Program Activity includes corporate services costs which are not allocated to the sub-activities described below.

1.1 Pensions and Allowances for Disability and Death

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
1,660.1	1,708.4	1,720.7

Provide pensions for disability or death and economic support in the form of allowances to: members of the Canadian Forces and Merchant Navy Veterans who served in the First World War, the Second World War or the Korean War; certain civilians who are entitled to benefits because of their wartime service; former and still-serving members of the Canadian Forces (including those who served in Special Duty Areas); survivors and dependants of military and civilian personnel.

Expected Result

Qualified individuals receive the benefits and services in a fair and timely manner

Performance Indicators

- Redress process
- Achieved Turnaround Times
- Total number of applications/decisions
- Total program expenditures
- Total number of clients
- Total number of recipients

1.2 Economic Support

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
24.0	22.6	21.4

The War Veterans Allowance (WVA) is a form of financial assistance available to eligible Veterans, qualified civilians and their survivors, dependants and orphans. In recognition of war service, qualified persons are provided with regular, monthly income to meet basic needs. WVA is based on income, domestic status and number of dependants. Recipients are paid at a single, married or orphan's rate. Payments are indexed annually to the CPI. Eligibility for WVA is determined by the wartime service of a Veteran or qualified civilian, age or health, income and residency.

Expected Result

Qualified individuals receive the benefits to which they are entitled in a fair and timely manner

Performance Indicators

- Redress process
- Total number of clients
- Total expenditures
- Total number of claims

1.3 Bureau of Pensions Advocates

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
8.2	8.2	8.2

The Bureau of Pensions Advocates provides advice, assistance and representation to individuals dissatisfied with decisions made by Veterans Affairs Canada. These

decisions involve claims for entitlement to disability pension or assessments awarded for pensioned conditions. BPA provides representation for WVA Appeals before the Veterans Review and Appeal Board.

Expected Results

- Clients receive advice on redress options
- Clients receive full and adequate representation

Performance Indicators

- Achieved turnaround times
- Clients' rights protected
- Clients informed of redress process and their rights
- Published client information
- Professional case preparation and presentation

Program Activity Name:

2. Health Care Benefits

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
945.8	987.1	1,004.7

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
1,219	1,215	1,210

The Health Care Program, designed to enhance the quality of life for VAC clients, aims to ensure that eligible clients receive appropriate health care benefits and services. Through its national treatment services program, the Department provides a wide range of health care benefits and services which include medical, surgical or dental examinations or treatment, surgical or prosthetic devices or aids, preventative health care, and prescribed drugs. The benefits and services available from Veterans Affairs Canada are intended to complement those provided as insured and extended health services by provincial and territorial authorities. The services which individual clients receive depend upon their particular circumstances and health needs.

The Department's Veterans Independence Program is a national home care program that assists eligible clients to remain independent in their own homes or communities by offering a variety of programs and services, such as housekeeping, grounds maintenance, and personal care. The Department also provides eligible clients with long-term care in its hospital facility at Ste-Anne de Bellevue, Quebec, or community or contract facilities.

Expected Result

Clients are satisfied with the benefits and services provided to them

Performance Indicator

Percentage of clients satisfied with benefits and services provided to them

This primary Program Activity is supported by the following three sub-activities:

- Long-Term and Nursing Home Care including VIP community care;
- Treatment Benefits and Other Health Services; and
- Home Care and Other VIP.

Planned spending for this Program Activity includes corporate services costs which are not allocated to the sub-activities described below.

2.1 Long-Term and Nursing Home Care (including VIP community care)

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
356.5	368.3	357.8

Veterans Affairs Canada is responsible for providing long term care for eligible Veterans and civilians. VAC supports LTC in three types of beds: (1) a departmental bed in Ste. Anne’s Hospital, VAC’s sole remaining facility; (2) a contract bed located in designated facilities across Canada; or (3) a community bed located in any community care facility provincially licensed to provide the equivalent of federal type II care. The Veterans Independence Program (VIP) assists clients to remain healthy and independent in their own homes or communities. It does this by offering a variety of services to those who meet the eligibility requirements. VIP is not intended to replace other federal, provincial or municipal programs. It is combined with these other available services to best meet the needs of each client. The services Veterans receive depend on their particular circumstances and health needs.

Expected Result

Veterans’ needs are met either in long term care facilities or at home

Performance Indicators

- Service Providers are registered and established criteria process is in place
- Total Program of Choice (POC) expenditure
- Total Contract services expenditure
- Quality Control processes

2.2 Treatment Benefits and Other Health Services

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
336.5	356.9	377.3

Treatment Benefits include any medical, surgical, dental examination, or treatment provided by a health professional, the provision of any surgical or prosthetic device or aids and their maintenance, home adaptations to accommodate the use of the devices or aids, preventative health care, and prescribed drugs. In addition, eligible clients may be entitled to receive supplementary benefits such as costs associated with travel to receive treatment and costs associated with medical examinations requested by the Department.

Expected Result

Clients receive the treatment benefits and services to meet their identified needs

Performance Indicators

- Satisfactory results from client questionnaire and surveys concerning long term care facilities
- Satisfactory results from Quality Management Program
- Findings of the Continuing Care Research Project

2.3 Home Care and Other VIP

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
226.3	236.1	243.7

Veteran pensioners, civilian pensioners, special duty area pensioners, and military service pensioners, income-qualified Veterans and income-qualified civilians are eligible for Veterans Independence Program services as follows: Home Care Services, Ambulatory Health Care Services, Home Adaptations Services, and Intermediate Care Service in a community facility, other than a contract bed. Home Care in the principal residence consists of: health and support services care provided by health professionals; personal care services by persons other than health professionals; housekeeping services by homemakers performing routine and non-routine housekeeping services when the health and safety of the client is at risk; access to nutrition services; and grounds maintenance services.

Expected Result

Clients needs are identified and met and/or a referral is made

Performance Indicators

- Number of screens completed
- Number of assessments completed
- Service Providers bonded where appropriate
- Total expenditure
- Findings of Continuing Care Research Project
- Quality Assurance processes

Strategic Outcome #2

Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all those who served in Canada’s efforts during war, military conflict and peace.

Flowing from this Strategic Outcome is one primary Program Activity that is further supported by two Sub-Activities.

Program Activity Name:

3. Canada Remembers

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
73.9	56.8	51.6

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
151	128	125

The Canada Remembers Program endeavours to keep alive the memory of the achievements and sacrifices made by those who served Canada in times of war and peace; to engage communities in remembrance of these achievements and sacrifices; and, to promote an understanding of their significance in Canadian life.

Expected Results

- Canadians aware of sacrifice
- Veterans receive recognition

Performance Indicators

- Informed Canadians
- Community based participation of Canadians at remembrance events
- Maintenance of Memorials, graves and artifacts

The primary Program Activity is supported by the following two sub-activities:

- Remembrance Outreach; and
- National and International Memorials

Planned spending for this Program Activity includes corporate services costs which are not allocated to the sub-activities described below.

3.1 Remembrance Outreach

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
21.2	15.7	15.7

The Remembrance Outreach activity takes into account all forms of information to reach out to Canadians everywhere, particularly youth, to help them recognize the role of Canada's servicemen and women in conflict throughout the world and how this role has contributed to our nation's development. One example of outreach is a partnership support program which is used by VAC to extend its reach in partnering with stakeholders in the development and delivery of its programs by promoting partnerships with and building capacity within Canadian communities.

Expected Results

- Canadians, especially youth, informed on the contributions/sacrifices made by Canadians who have served
- Involvement of Canadians in remembrance activities
- Utilization of education material

Performance Indicators

- Number of visits to web sites
- Number of submissions/requests
- Number of ceremonies and events
- Number of learning material created and distributed
- Number of youth participating
- Number of partnerships
- Total expenditure

3.2 National and International Memorials

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
47.3	35.8	30.7

National and International Memorials carries out responsibilities in Canada and Overseas. It includes work associated with Canadian International Memorials, cemetery maintenance and funeral and burial services. Sub activities include working with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the Canadian Veterans Association of the United Kingdom and the Last Post Fund.

Expected Results

- Recognition of Veterans' life and death
- Maintenance, preservation and presentation of Canada's remembrance memorials
- Commemorative resources are protected, developed and showcased

Performance Indicators

- Number and location of Canadian war dead
- Number of maintained graves, memorials and battlefield sites
- Number of events
- Number of visitors
- Total expenditure

4. Program Delivery for Pensions and Health Care

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
109.1	117.6	117.8

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
1,691	1,717	1,721

VAC's suite of benefits and services is delivered by staff at Head Offices in Charlottetown and Ottawa and Regional and District Offices across Canada. Under this Program Activity VAC records the salary and other operating resources related to two activities, Pensions & Allowances for Disability & Death, and Economic Support, and Health Care. The Program Delivery resources are split approximately equally between the two activities.

Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program

The Veterans Review and Appeal Board has one Strategic Outcome and one primary Program Activity.

Strategic Outcome #1

Fair and effective resolution of disability pension and War Veterans Allowance appeals from Canada's War Service Veterans, eligible Canadian Forces Veterans and still-

serving members, RCMP clients, qualified civilians and their families.

Program Activity Name:

1. Veterans Review and Appeal Board

Planned Spending (\$ millions)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
12.9	12.8	12.8

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
141	140	140

Expected Results

Fairness in the Disability Pension and War Veterans Allowance Program

Performance Indicators

- Well reasoned decisions, consistent with the evidence and the law
- Continuous improvements in program delivery

Section III - Supplementary Information

Management Representation Statement

We submit, for tabling in Parliament, the *2005-2006 Report on Plans and Priorities* for Veterans Affairs, a Portfolio comprising Veterans Affairs Canada and the Veterans Review and Appeal Board.

This document has been prepared based on the reporting principles and disclosure requirements contained in the *Guide to the Preparation of the 2005-2006 Report on Plans and Priorities*:

- It accurately portrays the Portfolio's plans and priorities.
- The planned spending information in this document is consistent with the directions provided in the Minister of Finance's Budget and by Treasury Board Secretariat.
- It is comprehensive and accurate.
- It is based on sound underlying Portfolio information and management systems.

The reporting structure on which this document is based has been approved by Treasury Board Ministers and is the basis for accountability for the results achieved with the resources and authorities provided.



Jack Stagg
Deputy Minister
Veterans Affairs Canada
February 22, 2005



Victor Marchand
Chair
Veterans Review and Appeal Board
February 22, 2005

Organizational Information

Program Activity Architecture

Accountability

The Minister of Veterans Affairs is supported by a Deputy Minister and an Associate Deputy Minister. The Associate Deputy reports directly to the Deputy. The Department has three branches, and two divisions which report to the Deputy Minister while four divisions report directly to the Associate Deputy Minister. General Council is functionally responsible to the Deputy Minister for legal services.

The Veterans Review and Appeal Board is headed by a Chairperson who is the Chief Executive Officer and reports to Parliament through the Minister of Veterans Affairs. The Chairperson is supported by a Deputy Chairperson, an average of 30 full-time Governor-in-Council appointees, and a Director General.

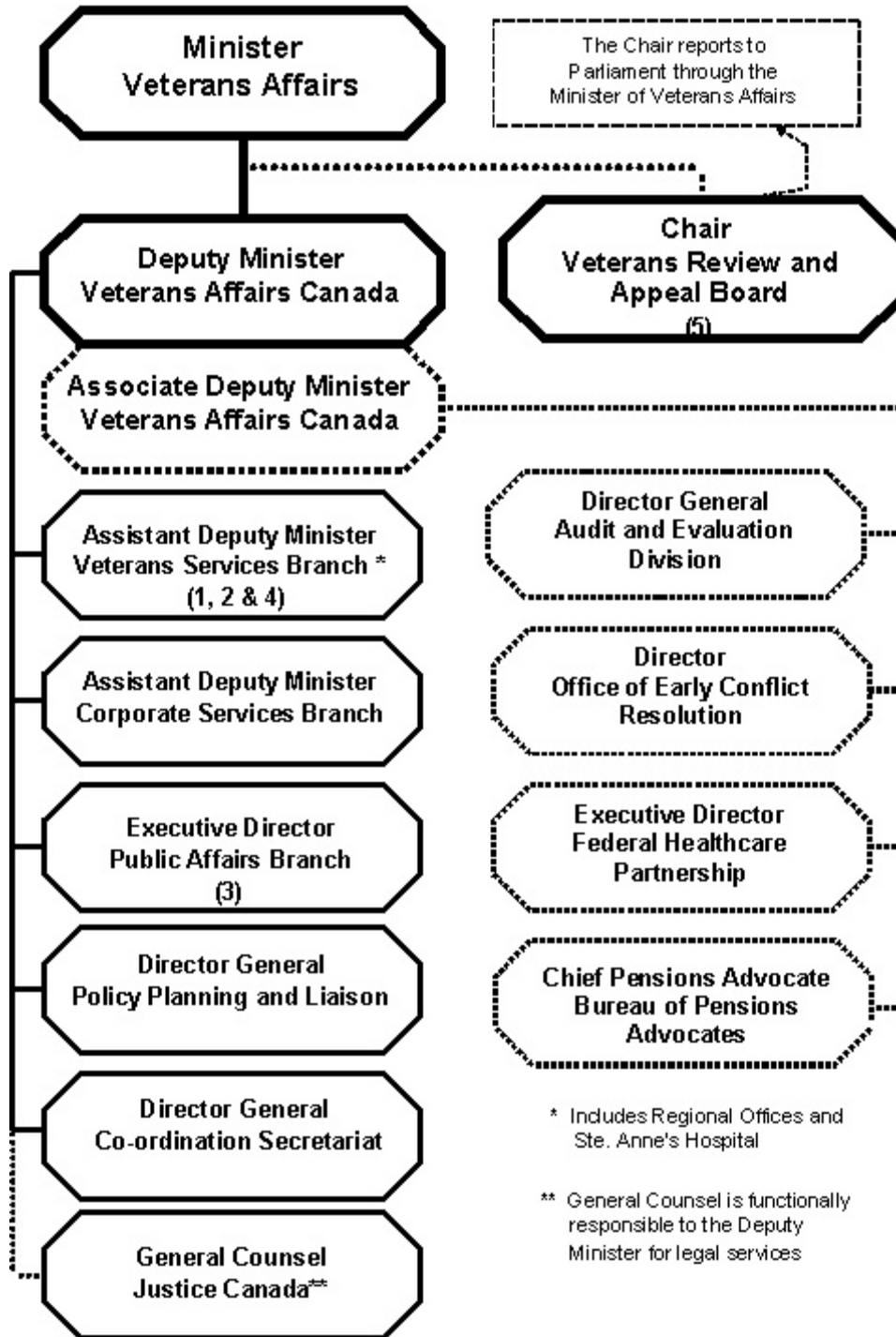
Senior Management Committees

Veterans Affairs Canada's Senior Management Committee is the Departmental Executive Board (DEB).

The table below provides the planned expenditures and associated full-time equivalents for each of the program activities for Veterans Affairs. Corporate Services costs and full-time equivalents have been allocated to these program activities. The organization charts on the following pages illustrate how Veterans Affairs is structured, keeping in mind that the Deputy and Associate Deputy Ministers have overall responsibility for the Department. The Chairperson has overall responsibility for the Veterans Review and Appeal Board.

Program Activity	2005-2006	
	Planned Expenditures (\$ millions)	Associated Full-Time Equivalents
Veterans Affairs Program		
(1) Pensions and Allowances for Disability and Death, and Economic Support	1,724.3	361
(2) Health Care Benefits	945.8	1,219
(3) Canada Remembers	73.9	151
(4) Program Delivery for Pensions and Health Care	109.1	1,691
Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program		
(5) Veterans Review and Appeal Board	12.9	141
Total	2,866.0	3,563

Veterans Affairs Canada Organization



Veterans Review and Appeal Board Organization

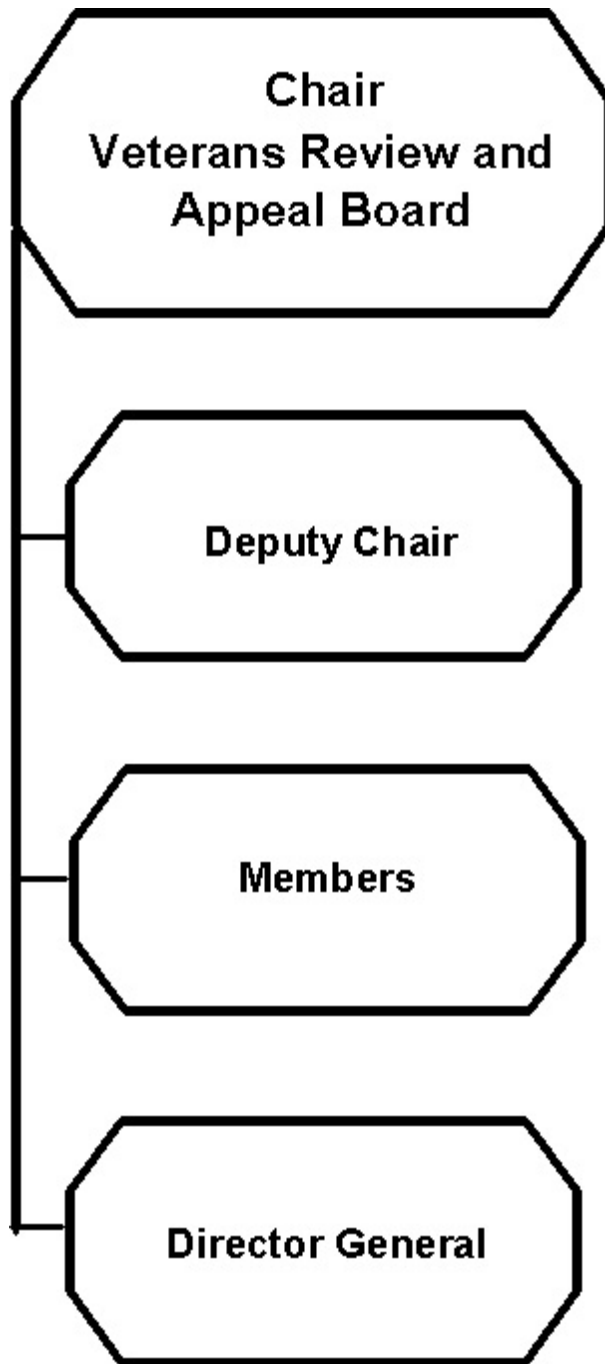


Table 1: Portfolio Planned Spending and Full Time Equivalents

	Forecast Spending	Planned Spending	Planned Spending	Planned Spending
(\$ millions)	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Pensions and Allowances for Disability and Death, and Economic Support	1,698.1	1,724.3	1,770.4	1,781.5
Health Care Benefits	910.4	948.9	993.5	1,014.0
Canada Remembers	55.1	58.8	50.8	45.6
Program Delivery for Pension and Health Care	110.7	108.2	116.9	117.1
Veterans Review and Appeal Board	13.4	12.9	12.8	12.8
Budgetary Main Estimates (gross)	2,787.7	2,853.1	2,944.4	2,971.0
Total Main Estimates	2,787.7	2,853.1	2,944.4	2,971.0
<i>Adjustments:</i>				
Supplementary Estimates:				
Operating budget carry forward (horizontal items)	9.7	--	--	--
Incremental funding to celebrate the 60 th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the Year of the Veteran, and to strengthen the Remembrance Program	7.3	8.7	--	--
Funding of legal costs associated with a class action lawsuit concerning the administration of Veterans' accounts (Authorson litigation)	5.2	--	--	--
Funding to extend, for life, to qualified primary caregivers those Veterans Independence Program housekeeping and/or grounds maintenance services provided to the Veteran at the time of his/her death or admission to a health care facility, from April 7, 1981 forward	2.3	1.1	0.7	0.7
Critical capital for Ste. Anne's Hospital and the restoration and rehabilitation of Canada's First World War European Monuments	1.9	1.7	--	--
Other miscellaneous Supplementary Estimates items (1)	7.3	--	--	--
Gross Amount:	33.7	11.5	0.7	0.7
<i>Less: Spending authorities available within the Vote</i>	(1.6)			
<i>Less: Spending authorities available from another Vote</i>	(16.8)			
Net Amount:	15.3	11.5	0.7	0.7

	Forecast Spending	Planned Spending	Planned Spending	Planned Spending
(\$ millions)	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Budget Announcement:				
Planned Procurement Savings (2)	--	(1.4)	--	--
Expenditure Review Committee (ERC) Reductions (3)	--	(3.2)	(6.4)	(9.3)
Funding for future Commemoration activities (4)	--	6.0	6.0	6.0
Other:				
Employee Benefit Plan (EBP)	0.5	--	--	--
<i>Total Adjustments</i>	15.8	12.9	(0.3)	(2.6)
Total Planned Spending	2,803.5	2,866.0	2,944.7	2,968.4
Less: Non-Respendable revenue	20.1	18.7	18.4	18.4
Plus: Cost of services received without charge	26.3	30.9	30.9	30.9
Net cost of Program	2,809.7	2,878.2	2,957.2	2,980.9
Full Time Equivalents	3,500	3,563	3,554	3,550

- (1) A description of each item included in the Veterans Affairs Supplementary Estimates can be found on the Treasury Board Secretariat web site at <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/est-pre/estime.asp>
- (2) This reflects the reductions to the Department's Planned Spending as a result of initiatives designed to improve performance in Government procurement.
- (3) This reflects the reductions to the Department's Planned Spending as a result of the ERC exercise, which was announced in the 2005 Budget.
- (4) Budget 2005 provided new funding of \$6 million per year for future Commemoration activities so that the sacrifices and contributions of Canada's Veterans will never be forgotten.

The above Planned Spending trend reflects increases related to annual price indexation adjustments for some benefits, regular inflationary pressures on the costs of goods and services provided to clients, and increases in the number of clients, particularly Canadian Forces Veterans.

Table 2: Program by Activity

2005-2006										
(\$ millions)	Budgetary						Non-Budgetary	Total Main Estimates	Adjustments	Total Planned Spending
	Operating	Capital	Grants and Contributions	Gross	Revenue	Net	Loans, Investments and Advances			
Program Activity										
Pensions and Allowances for Disability and Death, and Economic Support	40.1	-	1,684.2	1,724.3	-	1,724.3	-	1,724.3	-	1,724.3
Health Care Benefits	651.8	20.0	277.1	948.9	-	948.9	-	948.9	(3.1)	945.8
Canada Remembers	20.7	12.3	25.8	58.8	-	58.8	-	58.8	15.1	73.9
Program Delivery for Pension and Health Care	108.2	-	-	108.2	-	108.2	-	108.2	0.9	109.1
Veterans Review and Appeal Board	12.9	-	-	12.9	-	12.9	-	12.9	-	12.9
Total	833.7	32.3	1,987.1	2,853.1	-	2,853.1	-	2,853.1	12.9	2,866.0

Table 3: Voted and Statutory Items listed in Main Estimates

(\$ millions)		2005-2006	
Vote or Statutory Item	Truncated Vote or Statutory Wording	Current Main Estimates	Previous Main Estimates
1	Veterans Affairs Canada - Operating expenditures	788.3	771.8
5	Veterans Affairs Canada - Capital expenditures	32.3	33.3
10	Veterans Affairs Canada - Grants and contributions	1,986.8	1,934.8
15	Veterans Affairs - Veterans Review and Appeal Board - Operating expenditures	8.7	8.7
(S)	Re-Establishment Credits under Section 8 of the <i>War Service Grants Act</i>	-	-
(S)	Repayments under Section 15 of the <i>War Service Grants Act</i> of compensating adjustments made in accordance with the terms of the <i>Veterans' Land Act</i>	-	-
(S)	Returned Soldiers Insurance Actuarial Liability Adjustment	-	-
(S)	Veterans Insurance Actuarial Liability Adjustment	0.2	0.2
(S)	Minister of Veterans Affairs salary and motor car allowance	0.1	0.1
(S)	Contributions to employee benefit plans	36.7	38.6
	Total Department or Agency	2,853.1	2,787.7

The current Main Estimates amount of \$2,853.1 million is \$65.4 million higher than the Main Estimates of the previous year. The increase relates primarily to cost increases for: Disability Pensions, services provided to clients under the Veterans Independence Program, and goods and services purchased on behalf of Veterans to meet their health needs. These cost increases are the result of annual price indexation adjustments and normal inflationary pressure, increases in client numbers, and an increase in the number of transactions per client to meet the health needs of an aging clientele.

Table 4: Net Cost of Department for the Estimates Year

2005-2006			
(\$ millions)	Veterans Affairs Program	Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program	Total
Total Planned Spending	2,862.6	10.2	2,872.8
<i>Plus: Services Received without Charge</i>			
Accommodation provided by Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC)	14.2	0.7	14.9
Contributions covering employers' share of employees' Insurance premiums and expenditures paid by TBS (excluding revolving funds)	14.0	0.6	14.6
Worker's compensation coverage provided by Social Development Canada	0.6	-	0.6
Salary and associated expenditures of legal services provided by Justice Canada	0.8	-	0.8
<i>Less: Non-responsible Revenue</i>	18.7	-	18.7
2005-2006 Net cost of Department	2,873.5	11.5	2,885.0

Table 5: Summary of Capital Spending by Program Activity

(\$ millions)	Forecast Spending 2004-2005	Planned Spending 2005-2006	Planned Spending 2006-2007	Planned Spending 2007-2008
Veterans Affairs Canada Program				
Pensions and Allowances for Disability and Death, and Economic Support	-	-	-	-
Health Care Benefits	15.5	20.0	21.5	-
Canada Remembers	2.9	12.3	4.8	-
Sub-total	18.4	32.3	26.3	-
Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program				
Veterans Review and Appeal Board	-	-	-	-
Sub-total	18.4	32.3	26.3	-
Total	18.4	32.3	26.3	0

Table 6: Sources of Respendable and Non-Respendable Revenue

Non-Respendable Revenue

(\$ millions)	Forecast Revenue 2004-2005	Planned Revenue 2005-2006	Planned Revenue 2006-2007	Planned Revenue 2007-2008
<i>Veterans Affairs Canada Program</i>				
Health Care Benefits				
Ste. Anne's Hospital: In-Patient Charges to the Quebec Provincial Plan (Regulatory Service)	15.6	14.4	14.1	14.1
Ste. Anne's Hospital: Dietary Meals (Other Goods and Services)	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Ste. Anne's Hospital: Domiciliary Care (Regulatory Care)	4.1	3.9	3.9	3.9
Total Non-Respendable Revenue	20.1	18.7	18.4	18.4

Table 7: Planned Spending by Branch or Sector

2005-2006						
(\$ millions)	Pensions and Allowances for Disability and Death, and Economic Support	Health Care Benefits	Canada Remembers	Program Delivery for Pension and Health Care	Veterans Review and Appeal Board	Total
Veterans Services Branch	1,684.4	919.3	–	109.1	–	2,712.8
Public Affairs Branch	1.6	1.4	68.8	–	0.1	71.9
Corporate Services Branch	23.4	19.5	4.0	–	2.0	48.9
Executive Branch ¹	14.9	5.6	1.1	–	0.6	22.2
Veterans Review and Appeal Board	--	--	--	--	10.2	10.2
TOTAL	1,724.3	945.8	73.9	109.1	12.9	2,866.0

¹ Executive Branch includes Executive Services, Audit and Evaluation, General Counsel, Office of Early Conflict Resolution and Policy Planning and Liaison.

Table 8: Major Regulatory Initiatives

Regulations	Expected Results
Executive legislation to govern a modern-day Veteran’s Charter for Canadian Forces Veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New regulations implementing a comprehensive and modernized suite of programs and services to support Canadian Forces Veterans, and their families, in their transition from military to civilian life • Consequential amendments to several existing regulations • Set out terms and conditions for new disability awards, rehabilitation services, earnings loss support, job placement assistance, and health benefits programs • Availability of a suite of modern programs to meet the changing needs of Canadian Forces Veterans
<i>Memorial Cross Orders</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review eligibility criteria for the Memorial Cross • Review and modernize the provisions of the <i>Memorial Cross Order (First World War)</i>, the <i>Memorial Cross Order (Second World War)</i>, and the <i>Memorial Cross Order (Peacekeeping)</i> • Integrate and harmonize the three Orders into one text
<i>Veterans Health Care Regulations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify terms and conditions of Veterans’ health care programs, and make other technical changes

Table 9: Details on Project Spending

<u>2005-2006</u>	(\$ millions)
1. Ste. Anne's Hospital Renovation (projected)	20.4
2. European Monument Restoration	13.0
<u>2006-2007</u>	
1. Ste. Anne's Hospital Renovation (projected)	21.9
2. European Monument Restoration	5.1
<u>2007-2008</u>	
1. N/A	
2. N/A	

For further information on the above-mentioned projects see <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/est-pre/estime.asp>

Table 10: Details on Transfer Payments Programs

Over the next three years, the Department of Veterans Affairs will manage the following transfer payment programs in excess of \$5 million:

2005-2006 (\$ millions)

1. Pensions for Disability and Death	1,657.9
2. War Veterans Allowance / Civilian War Allowance	21.2
3. Last Post Fund	16.3
4. Commonwealth War Graves Commission	8.6
5. Veterans Independence Program	277.1

2006-2007

1. Pensions for Disability and Death	1,706.2
2. War Veterans Allowance / Civilian War Allowance	19.8
3. Last Post Fund	16.3
4. Commonwealth War Graves Commission	8.6
5. Veterans Independence Program	292.1

2007-2008

1. Pensions for Disability and Death	1,718.5
2. War Veterans Allowance / Civilian War Allowance	18.6
3. Last Post Fund	16.3
4. Commonwealth War Graves Commission	8.6
5. Veterans Independence Program	304.8

For further information on the above-mentioned transfer payment programs see <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/est-pre/estime.asp>

Table 11: Horizontal Initiatives

Horizontal initiatives are defined as significant initiatives in which partners from two or more organizations have received program funding and have formally agreed to work together to achieve shared outcomes. Veterans Affairs Canada is the lead department for the Federal Healthcare Partnership (FHP) which was established in 1994.

This partnership was struck to develop and implement a strategy to coordinate federal government purchasing of health care services and products for federal government clients at the lowest possible cost. These clients (more than one million), include Veterans, Canadian Forces members, RCMP, First Nations living on reserve, the Inuit, inmates of federal institutions, immigrants, and landed refugees. Ten departments and agencies with common interests formed this partnership to maximize efficiency and minimize duplication in their delivery of health care programs, while maintaining or improving the quality of the services they provide.

The core program areas covered by the partnership are audiology, dental care, oxygen therapy, pharmacy, vision care, and special equipment recycling. Other areas being explored are health and professional services, pain management, information and communications technologies in health, health care professional services, mental health, orthotics, health promotion, and representation at meetings of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial working groups and similar bodies. With the inclusion of these new areas of involvement, further potential savings should be achieved through the securing of new agreements.

Over the next three years, Veterans Affairs Canada will continue in its lead role as host of the FHP Secretariat which supports the partnership. VAC's Associate Deputy Minister will continue to serve as Chair of the FHP Secretariat. The operational costs of the FHP Secretariat continue to be funded by VAC.

On November 23, 2004, the Auditor General of Canada tabled the results of her audit, entitled "Management of Federal Drug Benefit Programs." This Value for Money audit reviewed six federally-managed drug benefit programs, including VAC's. Although VAC was recognized for its Drug Utilization Review Process, the Auditor General noted that there was much room for improvement for all six departments in the management of drug benefit programs. Under the direction of the Deputy Heads of its six partner departments, the Federal Healthcare Partnership was tasked with leading the development and implementation of a formal action plan to respond to the Auditor General's recommendations. This action plan will be coordinated with the National Pharmaceuticals Strategy (NPS) initiative. Interdepartmental activities are currently underway to develop and coordinate specific details and timings. It is expected that the majority of program management and policy changes will be in place in all departments by fall 2006. This work will also position the federal departments to play a strong supporting role to its development in the federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions. The NPS is part of the First Ministers' 10-year plan to strengthen health care as agreed at the September 2005 First Ministers Meeting, and outlines various strategies to provide affordable access to drugs, to increase efficiencies, and to monitor safety.



Web Site Access

Federal Health Care Partnership

http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rma/eppi-ibdrp/hrdb-rhbd/fhp-pfss/description_e.asp

Section IV - Other Items of Interest

The Corporate Services Branch of Veterans Affairs Canada assists in the internal administration of the Portfolio. It is comprised of organizational units responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient use and protection of the Portfolio's resources. Support services are provided in the areas of finance, human resources, materiel resources, information and technology access, security and information management. Many of the government-wide priorities are directed from this Branch and are discussed below. Total corporate services resource requirement spending for 2005-2006 is \$71.1 million.

HR Modernization

Human Resources (HR) Modernization, a continuous improvement initiative, is a priority within VAC's Strategic Plan. Our expected result over the next three years is to align our strategic human resource initiatives with the goals of the organization and aspirations of our staff. The changing external and internal environments necessitate that we adapt our management style to one that is more involved in the management of human resources, including anticipating the impact on resources when devising and implementing new and current objectives. This priority will be driven by the *Public Service Modernization Act* which will be enacted by December 2005.

Information and Technology Services

Advancement of our information technology is necessary to expand and improve access for Canadians to Veterans Affairs Canada's programs, services and information. Our younger CF clients like a great number of Canadians, rely on the Internet to contact the Department and to access information. While expanding our computing capacity, we must ensure that all modes (Internet, phone, mail, in-person) are available and fully supported for Canadians. With an increasing demand for electronic programs, services, and information, there is a growing requirement for VAC to increase its electronic storage capacity as well as enhance the speed and availability of telecommunications networks for Canadians. There is a considerable challenge to ensure that client information in each channel is accurate, accessible, consistent, secure and is handled according to privacy legislation.



Web Site Access

Information and Technology Services

http://dm.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=workplace/it_site

Government On-Line

The Government On-Line initiative is a multi-year project that grew from a commitment made in the 1999 Speech from the Throne. The objective is to enable Canadians to access key government information and services on-line. To support this initiative, Veterans Affairs Canada continues to focus on its three key services.

The first is the Pensions and Allowance and Health Care Key Service which covers the delivery of benefits and services contributing to the independence, quality of life and standard of living of our clients. Under this service, the Benefits and Health Services On-Line project will continue implementation of E-Health Assessments and E-Pension Applications in partnership with the federal roll-outs of Government of Canada Public Key Infrastructure and Secure Channel. VAC will develop a status inquiry for clients in partnership with the "My Account" personalizations of several other government departments. Other deliverables will include an interactive interview process and a linkage of health services to "My Account".

The second is the Canada Remembers Key Service which involves the *Canadian Virtual War Memorial*, information on community engagement, national and international memorials, Canada's Books of Remembrance on-line, medals, and public information and research. Planned enhancements include reflecting the redeveloped learning and commemorative materials on-line, and building on the "Heroes Remembered" partnership with the Military History Gateway. VAC will also host students across Canada to an "Interactive Field Trip" to the Netherlands as part of the 60th Anniversary of the liberation of that country.

The third key service is the Seniors Cluster Horizontal Service. Its vision is to enhance the ability of seniors, their families, caregivers and supporting service organizations to access cross-jurisdictional government information, services and transactions. Under the auspices of the Canadian Seniors Partnership, Seniors Cluster will be working over the next several years to connect seniors' portals across the country. VAC hopes to capitalize on the success of the launch of Brockville, Ontario's Collaborative Seniors Portal by bringing all levels of government and volunteer organizations together to identify service delivery priorities; by studying the technical requirements of making the Collaborative Seniors Portal an electronic service channel; and by collaborating on pilot projects that examine integration of selected services among multi-jurisdictional partnerships as these develop.

Canadians have been downloading material from all three key services in steadily increasing volume over the past several years and, in 2005, will begin to experience more personal interaction with the Pensions and Allowances, and Health Care Key Service.

Integral to the success of our Government On-Line initiatives is the collaborative efforts and assistance of our many partners, which include other federal government departments and agencies, provincial governments, municipalities, as well as volunteer organizations.



Web Site Access

Government On-Line

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=department/golrep/gol04>

Canadian Virtual War Memorial

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=collections/virtualmem>

Seniors Cluster Horizontal Service

<http://www.seniorsinfo.ca/scripts/english/ON/brockville/index.asp>

<http://www.seniors.gc.ca/scolPortSearchScreen.jsp?lang=en>

Management Accountability Framework

The Department

VAC's Management Accountability Framework (MAF) consists of 10 elements monitored by a series of complex indicators and measures for sound management. VAC's progress towards MAF is still a priority and we are continuing our efforts to achieve the commitments set out in modern management practices. VAC's expected results over the next three years are to complete and align our Framework to support the strategic outcomes outlined in the Veterans Affairs Canada's strategic plan. However, MAF is a complex initiative consisting of projects at various stages of completion. It is also a process of change. Therefore, VAC will continue to evolve its modern management practices to meet the present and future needs of our clients.

The Board

As the MAF continues evolving to encompass additional reporting requirements and expectations, the Board is improving its capacity to integrate modern management practices, performance information, and risk factors in business decisions and plans. The Board's expected result over the next three years is to ensure the improvement of its management infrastructure capacity for strategic and business planning. An action plan and performance measurement strategy are in place and progress report meetings are held on a quarterly basis. As well, a risk awareness and assessment session is held annually to educate and communicate risk concepts throughout the Board.



Web Site Access

Management Accountability Framework

http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/maf-crg/index_e.asp

Service Improvement Initiative

Veterans Affairs Canada is one of many departments participating in this government-wide initiative to achieve significant, measurable and sustainable improvement in the level of Canadians' satisfaction with the federal government's programs and services. As part of VAC's Service Improvement Initiative, national client satisfaction surveys were conducted in 2001 and 2003, and a comprehensive *2002-2005 Departmental Service Improvement Plan* was developed. VAC's overall rating of client satisfaction increased from 85% in 2001 to 87% in 2003. A third national survey is scheduled for April 2005. Once the results have been analyzed, the departmental service improvement plan will be updated accordingly.

Sustainable Development Strategy

Progress toward sustainable development is a Government of Canada priority and our approach is one that strives to encompass the visions and expectations of our clients and all Canadians. Commitment, financial and human resources, and creativity of all sectors of society is essential to make sustainable development a practical reality.

Our third *Sustainable Development Strategy* (SDS) 2004-2006 advances and further develops the four themes from our previous two strategies: Sustaining the Health and Well-Being of Our Clients; Sustaining the Health and Well-Being of Our Staff; Sustaining Knowledge and Information; and Sustaining Government Operations. Our objectives will be realized over a seven-year period and will demonstrate that the health and well-being of the Veterans Affairs' family of clients has been sustained by their satisfaction with the benefits and health services they receive from Veterans Affairs, and their contributions to and sacrifices on behalf of Canada are widely recognized by their fellow Canadians. They will continue to receive exemplary service from Veterans Affairs Canada staff who work in a safe, healthy and supportive environment that balances work and family life.

Performance related to the targets set out in our *Sustainable Development Strategy* is measured semi-annually. Internal reviews on the overall performance of the strategies will be completed in the final year of the current strategy (2006) and prior to writing the next strategy. In the spring 2007, Veterans Affairs' Audit and Evaluation Division will conduct an internal audit of the 2004-2006 SDS on behalf of the Auditor General.



Web Site Access

Service Improvement Initiative

<http://dm.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=workplace/projects/sii>

Sustainable Development

http://dm.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=who_vac/dept_reports/sds2004

General Enquiries

If you wish to make a general enquiry about Veterans Affairs Canada, its programs or services, please call 1-866-522-2122. If you wish to make a general enquiry about Veterans Review and Appeal Board, please call 1-800-450-8006.

Portfolio Publications

The Portfolio produces a variety of publications on its programs and services. Copies of these publications can be obtained from your nearest Veterans Affairs Canada district or regional office.

Our staff in Policy Planning and Liaison are responsible for coordinating the development of this report, the associated Performance Report, as well as a number of other departmental reports. These are available on-line at <http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=department/reports>. For more information or if you have any questions, please contact:

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