



Monster Government Solutions

Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance

Pre-Budget Consultations – Federal Budget 2017

Monster Government Solutions is asking the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance to recommend the Government of Canada fund the creation of a Military Skills Translator – an algorithmic tool which translates the skills and experiences of Canadian Forces members and veterans into civilian terminology – helping address a barrier to veterans’ unemployment and underemployment. This request fulfills the question posed by the committee: What federal measures would help Canadians maximize their contributions to the country’s economic growth. This request is consistent with the Standing Committee on Finance’s recommendation in December 2014 to “maintain its strong support for veterans by providing key investments and services, and by exploring new ways to connect veterans with jobs after their service, such as a military skills translator.”

Overview

Monster Government Solutions [MGS], a leading provider of complete workforce solutions for government and education, is recommending that the Government of Canada invest in a Military Skills Translator, to help veterans transition to the civilian job market and therefore maximize their contribution to Canada's economic growth.

Such an investment has already received multi-partisan support from two different Committees during the 41st Parliament:

- Recommendation 47 of the December 2014 Report of the Standing Committee on Finance, *Towards Prosperity: Federal Budgetary Priorities for People, Businesses and Communities:*

That the Government of Canada “maintain its strong support for veterans by providing key investments and services, and by exploring new ways to connect veterans with jobs after their service, such as a military skills translator.”

- Recommendation 32 of the June 2014 Report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, *Caring for Canada's Ill and Injured Military Personnel:*

That the Government of Canada “develop a comprehensive, algorithmic, military skills translation software tool to facilitate Canadian Forces members to obtain civilian employment upon release.”

Investment in a Canadian Military Skills Translator complements, and enhances, existing programs such as Canada Company's Military Employment Transition Program and Helmets to Hard-hats, as well as provides additional depth to the DND Military Occupational Specialties-National Occupation Code crosswalk.

The committee asked that in submitting to the pre-budget consultations we consider what federal measures would help Canadians maximize, in the manner of their choosing, their contributions to the country's economic growth. Investment in a Military Skills Translator is strictly aligned with this objective by supporting the complementary aims of transitioning veterans to civilian life and facilitating their ongoing contribution to Canadian economic growth post-military service. We hope to have the opportunity to discuss the benefits of a Military Skills Translator, and how investment is consistent with the government's motives, in detail by appearing at a Committee meeting in Ottawa.

Monster's Proven Experience

MGS has created the only proven, cost effective and world-leading Military Skills Translator in the United States. Originally built for U.S. veterans and made available via www.military.com, over 2.6 million U.S. veterans used the Military Skills Translator in 2015 to aid their transition.

MGS' Military Skills Translator uses a world-leading algorithm which literally takes every documented skillset that a service member has been trained and certified in, and translates that into matching civilian skill sets used by human resource departments to code open jobs. The Military Skills Translator also factors in criteria such as years of service and rank to better match a service member to future

employment. This set of data is compared against open jobs to provide immediate feedback on potential opportunities, helping the job seeker concretely see where their skills meet current available positions.

To use the tool, job seekers input service branch, pay grade and military job title. A candidate profile is created which updates in real time as the veteran adds and subtracts relevant information. With the basic inputs, suggested civilian skills begin populating the profile, many of which might not have been immediately obvious. For example, if a job seeker identifies as an Army helicopter crew chief, the Military Skills Translator adds logical civilian skills such as Aircraft Maintenance and Crew Operations.

More importantly, however, are the additional skills that are a part of the candidate's profile, which include Message Processing Procedures, Project Management and Teaching/Instruction. The candidate has the option to delete these civilian skills – if they aren't relevant – or to add additional civilian skills from the database. As they do this, their job seeking profile continues to adapt in real time, creating a holistic profile that reflects the tapestry of an individual's military experiences by military occupation but also by secondary and tertiary skills – an ability not shared by any other skills translator.

Additionally, as the job seeker adds and deletes relevant military and civilian skills, education and qualifications, they are automatically presented with a list of current job openings that accordingly match their skills. These results are displayed on the very same page, with the capability to submit applications instantaneously. The Military Skills Translator can also be configured to build a resume from the profile they create.

The U.S. Military Skills Translator has been integrated into the recruitment portals of over 50 private companies, including The Home Depot, as well as a number of veteran support organizations' and trade associations' websites. There has already been interest from a number of companies here in Canada in adopting the translator should the Government invest in it.

The Benefits of the Military Skills Translator:

1) Supporting Veterans Transition to Civilian Life

Veterans Affairs Canada's mission is "to repay the nation's debt of gratitude toward those whose courageous efforts have contributed to our growth as a nation." A part of this includes a stated priority to "help Veterans and releasing military personnel make the best possible transition to civilian life." Similarly, the Chief of Military Personnel at the Department of Defence is tasked with the responsibility to "help [Canadian Forces' members] transition after military service."

While the desire to meet these goals is there, we are far from meeting them. The most recent annual Nanos Research survey, which examines challenges facing vets after military service, shows that 63% of Canadians believe the support veterans receive after they leave the Canadian Armed Forces is 'inadequate or somewhat inadequate.'

Veterans have a tremendous skill set to bring to the table, as well as personality traits such as self-discipline, teamwork, executing orders, staying calm under stress and readiness to accept a challenge. However, transitioning service members face many obstacles as they move from military jobs to civilian jobs: communicating their military skills and experience to the civilian workforce; switching from military processes and structures to corporate ones; and in some cases, managing physical and/or emotional trauma in a work environment. Because of these challenges, veterans who find jobs often settle for roles

or positions for which they are over-qualified.

By translating military terms, skills and experience into terms that can be more easily understood by corporate organizations, the Military Skills Translator directly removes one of these significant barriers to meaningful employment.

2) Helping Employers Find Skilled Candidates

Equally, a Military Skills Translator directly benefits employers who would be able to better reach veterans seeking employment. A Veterans Transition Advisory Council study conducted in August 2013 which surveyed 850 Canadian employers showed most lacked an understanding of how to best utilise veterans' skill sets. So while 45% of employers agreed that hiring a veteran would reflect well on their business, and 51% agreed that a veteran's comfort level in high-pressure situations would be an asset to their company only 13% said that their human resources departments knew how to correctly read the resumes of military applicants.

With many industries facing a skills shortage, these results demonstrate a clear need for action to facilitate veterans' employment for both veterans and employers' benefit. We believe a Military Skills Translator is part of the solution to help veterans not only prepare for the job market but also better understand what skills they already have that employers are looking for. Awareness of key differences among veterans can help employers gain a needed advantage when considering placement of veterans in the workplace.

With approximately \$700 million spent each year on education and training for service personnel, the investment in a Military Skills Translator would pass these benefits on to the broader Canadian economy once service personnel leave the military.

3) Supporting the recruitment and retention of service personnel

A Military Skills Translator supports not only veterans, but also future and current military personnel. The Translator does not only show what careers are currently open to users, but also shows which skills a user is missing. Using integrated training and promotion requirements, the Military Skills Translator is able to show a user how to fill those gaps within the Canadian Forces, through specific training or advancement. This feature actually encourages current service personnel to stay in the Forces to acquire and develop these skills.

Additionally, if Canadians are made aware that this type of support is available to military personnel and veterans, they are able to better understand that successful civilian careers are available after – and advanced through – time spent in the Forces. As such, more Canadians are likely to consider a military career.

Costing

We understand that the Government of Canada may not wish to award such a contract without competition, and we are happy to compete via a RFP, open tender or other procurement method.

To provide an estimate of the cost, MGS can provide a fully functional Military Skills Translator for \$2.267 million in upfront costs, followed by \$533,000 in annual operational costs for the first three

years. This annual operating estimate covers ongoing management of the tool, as well as updating the algorithm to reflect any changes consistent with the Department of Defence's training and promotion requirements. Final costing can vary depending on the formal, detailed requirements of the Government of Canada. This ROM (Rough Order Magnitude) costing has been estimated on an assumption of high level requirements and the current CDN/USD currency rate among other factors. Local Hosting is not included in this ROM costing.

MGS' program is fully developed, and requires only reconfiguration to match the Department of Defense's training and promotion requirements before it could become operational. It is important to note that an accurate, effective skills translator requires a large amount of research to incorporate all the nuances relating to specific promotion requirements and training courses taken by an individual. This is necessary in order to ensure that military skills are properly matched to civilian career paths. MGS would require access to these requirements in order to complete the reconfiguration.

Monster's Military Skills Translator is powered by the same award winning best of breed technology used to deliver accurate translations and matches to the private sector. As a result, the existing infrastructure and global experience of Monster ensures that every nuance and variable is accounted for, and addressed with precision and accuracy. By building on Monster's proven success, Canada can guarantee a fully functional product utilizing the wealth of veterans' employment research that MGS carries out.

The investment cost would be offset in the short-term through reduced requirements on government support and assistance programs as well as increased tax revenue resulting from Canadian veterans who join the workforce.

Conclusion

Canada's veteran pool of talent is unique and skilled, and would be a significant asset to Canadian employers if it could be fully utilised. The Military Skills Translator will help change the current recruiting circumstances, by contributing a self-guided tool for service members to understand, and apply to their individual transition process.

A Military Skills Translator would provide significant support to the current transition process, benefiting veterans, military personnel and employers. It is a tool that has already been utilized successfully in a number of other jurisdictions to show support for veterans and their families, and we hope that the federal government will follow this lead to ensure Canadian veterans have access to the best transition services possible.