



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs

EVIDENCE

NUMBER 033

Monday, January 30, 2023

Chair: Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg



Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs

Monday, January 30, 2023

• (1535)

[*Translation*]

The Chair (Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.)): I call this meeting to order.

As we are beginning a new year, I wish you all a happy new year. Thank you for being here to do work on veterans' behalf.

Welcome to meeting number 33 of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs.

[*English*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) and the motion adopted on Monday, October 3, 2022, the committee commences its study on a national strategy for veterans' employment after service.

[*Translation*]

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format, pursuant to the House order of Thursday, June 23, 2022. This means that members can participate remotely, like Darrell Samson.

Before you speak, please wait for me to recognize you by name. If you are participating by video conference, click on the microphone icon to activate your microphone.

I remind you that all comments from members and witnesses should be addressed through the chair.

In accordance with our routine motion regarding connection testing, I wish to inform the committee that all witnesses have completed the required connection testing prior to the meeting.

[*English*]

Now, I would like to welcome our witnesses.

From the Department of Veterans Affairs, we have Steven Harris, assistant deputy minister, service delivery branch; Jane Hicks, acting director general, service delivery and program management; Lieutenant-Colonel (Retired) Chris Hutt, CD, director, transition and program support, service delivery branch; and Nathan Svenson, director, research.

[*Translation*]

I will now turn the floor over to the first witness.

Mr. Harris, you are a regular on our committee. Unfortunately, I don't have my coloured cards today, but I will signal to you when you have a minute left and then when your time is up.

[*English*]

I know. I'm so sorry.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Harris, you have the floor for the next five minutes.

[*English*]

Mr. Steven Harris (Assistant Deputy Minister, Service Delivery Branch, Department of Veterans Affairs): Thank you.

Mr. Chair and members, it is my pleasure to be here today to speak about the work our department is doing to support Canada's veterans in securing employment in their post-military life.

On average, 8,500 Canadian Armed Forces members release from service every year. Among this population, approximately 4,000 to 4,500 seek second careers. Statistically, the population of unemployed veterans is comparable to the Canadian average: about 6.6% for Canadians and about 4.5% for veterans. Unfortunately, veterans are more likely to report under-employment and dissatisfaction with not being employed to their full potential.

We know veterans develop many skills throughout their military careers, including leadership, analytical skills, problem-solving and strong communication. We want to support them and provide them with services and tools to realize their career goals. Of course, we know that any workplace transition can be difficult and that veterans can struggle with adapting to the civilian workplace culture.

[*Translation*]

Veterans Affairs Canada is committed to a whole-of-government approach in developing a comprehensive strategy to improve employment opportunities for veterans, promote their well-being, and contribute to their success as they transition to civilian life.

The transition experience is most successful when veterans are able to thrive in various areas of life. Therefore, Veterans Affairs Canada has established a framework for monitoring veteran well-being, which considers seven domains of well-being, including health, life skills, social integration, cultural and social environment, housing and physical environment, and financial security, which is an important goal.

The life after service studies program of research is a partnership between Veterans Affairs Canada and Statistics Canada that began in 2010. The information collected is used to measure the level of well-being among veterans and to inform policies and programs. The program has provided a wealth of information on the health and well-being of veterans and the factors that contribute to adjustment to civilian life. Statistics Canada conducted surveys in 2016 and 2019. The information obtained allows us to better understand veterans' experiences and needs.

The National Census of Canada will also provide Veterans Affairs Canada with valuable information. In 2021, for the first time in 50 years, veterans were identified in the Statistics Canada census. Statistics Canada data released in the fall of 2022 will provide Veterans Affairs Canada with a comprehensive view of the employment situation among the veteran population.

● (1540)

[English]

There are many partners involved in supporting veteran employment: stakeholders, employers, advocates, non-governmental organizations, and municipal and provincial governments. The aim of our strategy is to bring many of these components under a unified vision that best serves veterans and their families. We currently support veterans by easing their transition and maximizing opportunities for employment in the public service, private sector or through self-employment.

I'd like to give you some examples of the work that the department has undertaken with respect to supporting veteran employment. Our veterans employment unit is dedicated to supporting veteran employment and career transition. We provide professional career transition support, which includes one-to-one career counselling that helps veterans find work by connecting with potential employers and developing a personalized education or training plan using the education and training benefit.

[Translation]

We are using social media and LinkedIn to connect Canadian veterans with Canadian employers. During the pandemic, we launched a LinkedIn group that, in just over a year, has grown to 3,000 members. About 75% of them are veterans and 25% are employers, recruiters or human resources professionals.

Over the past two years, Veterans Affairs Canada has hosted a series of webinars focused on employment opportunities for veterans and transitioning Canadian Forces members. More than 2,500 people have registered for the series, with an average of 300 people attending each session. More than 100 Canadian employers, including at least a dozen federal departments and agencies, have attended and assisted veterans.

We created a one-stop job bank for veterans—a portal where employers can select candidates—and worked with labour market experts to develop materials to help people.

[English]

I would like to stress that Veterans Affairs is involved in supporting many stakeholders that support veteran employment. All of the support gives veterans options.

We'd be happy to take your questions.

The Chair: Thank you so much, Mr. Harris, for your opening remarks.

We'll now begin the first round of questions. We're going to start with the vice-chair of the committee, Mr. Blake Richards, for six minutes, please.

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Thank you. I appreciate your opening remarks, and I certainly applaud the initiative to try to do everything you can to ensure there are meaningful employment opportunities for our veterans. Obviously, recently, with some of the things that have been going on, we've had a fair amount of disagreement about what's happening at Veterans Affairs, but on this we do not. I'm quite pleased to see the direction going forward.

I also will point out, notwithstanding the fact that on the panel today we have four of you here from Veterans Affairs, we do have one of the four, 25%, who is a veteran himself. Lieutenant-Colonel Hutt, thank you for your service to our country. That doesn't seem to be the norm within the department. One out of four would be quite high, actually, in terms of the number of people employed at the department. I think it's really important to practise what you preach. If we want to see more veterans employed, it seems to me Veterans Affairs would be a great place to start. I know the latest numbers I could find were from 2019, and the numbers were not very good.

I hope you can tell me that it's improved in the few years since then, but what percentage of employees...? Would you have an overall number of employees at Veterans Affairs who were veterans themselves?

● (1545)

Mr. Steven Harris: I don't have a specific number for you at this point in time. We do collect the information with respect to veterans who are part of the department. It is on a voluntary basis, so it would not be a comprehensive number I would be able to give you, as some people choose to declare their past military service and some don't.

Mr. Blake Richards: The numbers I saw were from 2019, and it was 167 out of 3,198 employees, or about 5.2%. It sounds like that may be slightly low, potentially, based on what you just said, but either way, that could be a lot better.

Could you tell us anything about what you're doing to improve those numbers within Veterans Affairs?

Mr. Steven Harris: We certainly prioritize veteran hiring, and not only within Veterans Affairs. We'll talk more about how it's been prioritized in the federal government as well. We prioritized it when we had additional resources given to us to assist in disability adjudication. We prioritized it in all of our posters, essentially, going out and advertising for positions within the department. We continue to recruit folks from past military life and service in order to add their expertise to the work that we do, including in the employment unit. Chris is one representative of our employment unit who's here, but there are others and they also include more veterans and former Canadian Armed Forces members.

Mr. Blake Richards: Okay. I would just encourage you to do everything you can, because if you don't set the example.... When you go to the private sector or when any of us go to the private sector and say that we want to see more veterans employed and it's something we all want to support, then if you can't say that you're leading by example, it makes it that much more difficult, obviously.

The other thing I wanted to ask you about is this. Obviously, in a lot of cases, especially for those who have served for a long period of time in the military or those who have served in very difficult circumstances, there's often a need for services from Veterans Affairs to be able to make that transition and to be able to move to a civilian type of employment. That can sometimes take some time. I think one of the big challenges many veterans are facing now is the length of time it takes to get some of those services from Veterans Affairs. That length of time is a barrier for veterans to be able to be employed. We're hearing that a year or two years is not atypical for those kinds of things.

There was a recent indication from the Auditor General that over the last couple of years.... I think it was 29% a couple of years ago and 42% last year in terms of specific programs intended to assist veterans with that transition from military to civilian life. The number of programs that are actually getting the service standards met is a very low number in terms of veterans getting what they would expect in the length of time that they would expect it. That's a big barrier to moving to civilian life.

What are you doing to improve that so that Veterans Affairs isn't standing in the way of veterans being able to gain meaningful employment?

Mr. Steven Harris: While it's fair to say that we've had some delays in disability benefits processing, we've made some good progress on that. You were just indicating some of it.

In terms of programs that help support veterans with employment and with transition, we actually make a great effort to make sure they get access quickly. They get very quick access to career transition services. They can get access to career transition services before they actually leave the military and continue that afterwards. They can get access to a rehabilitation program quite quickly as well. Again, that helps support a post-military transition to other employment.

Mr. Blake Richards: Can you give me some specific examples of things that you're doing to try to improve that? When you talk about 42% being the number that veterans are being served within the time it's expected in terms of service standards, that's a pretty low number. I would like to hear some specifics on exactly what you're doing to improve those numbers. If we want to see veterans get meaningful employment, the first step has to be getting proper and timely service from Veterans Affairs.

Mr. Steven Harris: That low number doesn't actually apply to most transition programs related to employment.

Jane, I don't know if you want to add anything about career transition services.

Ms. Jane Hicks (Acting Director General, Service Delivery and Program Management, Department of Veterans Affairs): Sure.

With rehabilitation, veterans can apply prior to their release. It's independent and completely separate from disability benefits. They can have a decision prior to their release and then receive the benefits thereafter.

Mr. Blake Richards: Just hold on one second, because the number I'm quoting is actually the percentage of veterans who would agree with the statement, and this is the statement: Because of the veteran family program, I have increased access to programs and services to assist me or my veteran's transition from military to civilian life. They're actually talking about the transition from military to civilian life.

You know, if 42% of veterans are saying they're satisfied, it means that more than half of them are not. Something needs to change there. I would really like to hear what it is you think you could do to make that happen.

• (1550)

The Chair: Mr. Richards, I'm sorry. You are over the time. Maybe you will get that answer next time.

I would now like to invite Mr. Churence Rogers to take the floor for six minutes, please.

Mr. Churence Rogers (Bonavista—Burin—Trinity, Lib.): Thank you, Chair.

Welcome to our guests today.

Folks, in 2021 our government made a mandate commitment to launch a national veterans employment strategy. I'd like you to expand on that a little bit, but more importantly, what's being done now to support veterans who are finishing their careers or are part-way through their careers and want to move on from the military into civilian life? What kinds of supports are out there for them? What is the department doing to make sure that these veterans are aware of these supports?

Ms. Jane Hicks: There are quite a number of supports available for veterans as they transition from the military. There is the rehabilitation program. There are career transition services, vocational rehabilitation. Those are just a few of the services that are available to assist veterans as they transition from the military into civilian life.

In terms of the national veterans strategy, we've been working over the fall on consulting. We've been consulting with veterans, with employers. This month, we'll be consulting with our colleagues to learn more about some of the challenges, the barriers and how we can develop the national employment strategy. It has helped to inform the strategy. We've learned quite a bit over the past few months in terms of some of the challenges that veterans are experiencing.

Is it okay if I continue, or...?

Mr. Churence Rogers: You can, yes.

Ms. Jane Hicks: We've learned that there are some challenges. Particularly, veterans' skills sets and occupations don't translate easily into the civilian workforce. They also sometimes find moving into the public service challenging—the application process. Employers don't always understand their résumés.

There are certainly opportunities for improvement. Those are a few things that we've noticed in particular.

They also don't know where to look. There's so much information out there in terms of employment. With regard to the strategy, obviously what we want to look at is providing a cohesive framework or a portal, so they know where to go to get assistance when they need it, in terms of employment.

Mr. Churence Rogers: The other question on my mind is whether there is any work being done by the department to determine the correlation between meaningful jobs and the mental health of veterans who decide to enter the workforce after they leave the military.

Mr. Steven Harris: There is work under way, on a regular basis, from our research group, in talking about the correlation among all of the elements of well-being. We talked a little bit about them in the opening statement, about seven elements of well-being. They all relate to one another. Your financial security relates to how you might feel about your situation and your circumstance in terms of addressing your transition. Your housing may have an impact on that.

I'll maybe ask Nathan to talk a little bit about some of the work we do in terms of correlating employment, mental health and well-being, and well-being.

Mr. Nathan Svenson (Director, Research, Department of Veterans Affairs): Thank you.

What we found is that the seven different domains of well-being really are interrelated and interconnected. You can't impact one domain without having auxiliary and peripheral impacts on the other domains.

There was a question leading up to this meeting about the life-after-service studies that have been conducted since 2010. That set of surveys covered veterans who were released since 1998. Those are the veterans we had records for. That was the set of the population for whom we understood their well-being or were able to measure their well-being in those seven domains.

Going forward, starting in 2022, thanks to the census question that identified veterans in 2021, we've been able to expand that survey representation to cover the full veteran population. Once we have those results, which we're expecting by the fall of this year, we should be able to report on the well-being of veterans across the seven domains, including in their employment. That's for the whole veteran population across Canada, not just those recently released.

• (1555)

Mr. Churence Rogers: We increased the education and training benefit program from \$40,000 for six years of service to \$80,000. Did you find that many of our vets took advantage of that program after it was introduced? Did it give them an opportunity to prepare for civilian life and a new career?

Ms. Jane Hicks: The uptake has been pretty good. This past year there were just over 2,200 veterans who took advantage of the education and training benefit. There were roughly 50% of those who took advantage of the formal courses, and then about 50% who took advantage of shorter courses.

Mr. Churence Rogers: With regard to the annual retirement numbers you talked about, 8,500, about 4,500 are actually seeking second careers. That's fairly impressive.

I'm assuming that the 4,000 who are not seeking second careers are probably those who have gone through an entire military career and have retired after 25 years of service or 30 years of service. Would that be correct?

Lieutenant-Colonel (Retired) Chris Hutt (CD, Director, Transition and Program Support, Service Delivery Branch, Department of Veterans Affairs): Yes. It's an interesting number, and we don't have the exact demographic breakdown because it would be variable. You're looking at a combination of people who have medical conditions that preclude them from going into the workforce and some who are truly retired, as you mentioned. Then there are a number of them who are reservists and who are already integrated into the civilian labour market, because they are part-time soldiers and they all have civilian jobs already.

The Chair: Thank you so much.

[*Translation*]

I now give the floor for six minutes to the committee's second vice-chair, Mr. Desilets.

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good morning, colleagues. On this January 30, I welcome you back to parliamentary proceedings.

I thank our guests for joining us.

Mr. Harris, first of all, I want to congratulate you; then we'll see.

Some Hon. Member: Ha, ha!

Mr. Luc Desilets: On a more serious note, I would like to point out that the figures comparing the situation of English speakers to that of French speakers have just been released. I am still sorry about the 90-day delay. If it weren't for the delay, we wouldn't have to complain about the government when things are not good and congratulate it when it's not on the right track. The current numbers show a much smaller difference than it used to be, both for the first applications and for the others. So, I thank you for meeting our expectations and requests on that.

Secondly, we certainly can't be against such a strategy, even if it is a little difficult for me to understand the essence of it. I will have questions about it. My main fear, as you may guess, is that it will encroach on provincial jurisdictions. Employment is managed by the provinces.

Concretely, what mechanisms do you plan to put in place to facilitate the transition from military life to employment in another form?

Mr. Steven Harris: I can start answering, and my colleagues will certainly add things.

Concretely, the process is about improving the skills of Canadian Forces members when they leave the service, so that they are better equipped to take on other positions and respond to the workforce situation. Sometimes, it's about their interview skills, as they haven't had an interview in 20 years. Sometimes it's related to education: they need training or certification, for example, to improve their chances in the job market. These are things we can work on with veterans individually to improve their chances in the job market.

We can also work with employers to make sure they are aware of the skills that veterans can bring to the table, the skills they have learned, and the training they have completed as part of their service.

• (1600)

Mr. Luc Desilets: What you are telling me is quite noble. So much the better if progress has been made there. However, aren't these things that already exist at Veterans Affairs Canada?

Mr. Steven Harris: That's part of what we are doing right now. We're working on the strategy right now. We are listening to the witnesses who are appearing before the committee, the employers and the veterans. We are developing the strategy. I can't predict all the concrete things that will be in it because we are in consultations right now.

Mr. Luc Desilets: I will now focus on another aspect. I really enjoyed hearing my colleague talk about this earlier.

We know that very few veterans become employees of Veterans Affairs Canada after their service. That is something that veterans lament. They would love to be able to talk to people in the department who have been through what they are going through. It would make them feel heard and understood.

I understand that it is not easy to prepare someone for a job with Veterans Affairs Canada, but do you have any goals for that? Do you believe in that principle?

Mr. Steven Harris: Yes, we absolutely believe in hiring veterans, not just at Veterans Affairs Canada, but across all federal departments, so that their skills can help us achieve our goals.

We don't have a specific target for hiring veterans, but we always make recruitment efforts to ensure they can join us or other departments where their experience can be useful.

Mr. Luc Desilets: I always like it when concrete answers are provided. I'm not saying that in connection with your answers.

You want to implement a strategy. Have you clearly established goals? Will it be quantifiable? What will it take to determine if this strategy was a success?

Mr. Steven Harris: Once again, we are not at the final strategy. We are still in the strategy development stage. We will be gathering all of the information and feedback that we have received. I can ask Ms. Hicks to tell you a bit about what we have already established.

[*English*]

LCol (Ret'd) Chris Hutt: As Steven just alluded to, we are in the midst of formulating the strategies. It's in the very early stages. We are really analyzing the problem. As for things that we do know, we have to do things to improve the public service hiring

mechanisms, the processes, with the outcome really being more veterans in the public service. We also know that we need to create better linkages between veterans and private sector employers. We also know that we have to better align the supports, both within the government and external of the government, that support veterans as they make that transition.

What exactly all that consists of is yet to be determined. The good news is that it's not a creation problem. It's a problem of aligning the goodwill and action that is largely out there already so it creates a coherent picture and a coherent strategy.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Desilets.

[*English*]

To end this first round of questions, I would like to invite our colleague MP Rachel Blaney for six minutes, please.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Thank you, Chair. Thank you, all, for being here today.

My first question is around the fact that there has been a clearly identified employment challenge for veterans from these particular groups: younger veterans who have less service, and female veterans—partially because they leave before having 20 years of service, which means they have less access to their pensions, and also recognizing that women are more than twice as likely to have part-time jobs—and medically released veterans.

This is very concerning. In 2013 an income study showed that medically released and female regular force veterans experience larger reductions in income, 10 times the average, after release. That is staggering when we think of those numbers. Obviously, there are some significant challenges there that have not been addressed in a meaningful way.

In terms of the public consultation, was there a particular strategy of outreach to those particular groups so that, as this strategy is put together, there is a plan that actually looks at the people who are not getting the best support to make sure that in the future they do?

• (1605)

LCol (Ret'd) Chris Hutt: It's a great question.

There are a couple of things that we have done through the consultation. First, we have used a public forum that we have called “Let’s Talk Veterans”, which had very significant uptake. We had over 1,000 responses from across the veteran community—so, it’s statistically relevant—that identified this. The other opportunity we had was the census results, which, for the first time, had a veteran indicator. That is giving us access to demographic data that can identify some of those areas to which we need to pay attention.

As for what the solutions are, we don’t have those yet. We are still in the analysis phase of identifying those pieces, but we now have the information that can allow us to start identifying what we need to do to create the solutions to address those issues.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Okay.

I hear what you are saying, but what I am really asking is whether there was a specific part of this strategy that reached out to those particular groups. I hear there were 1,000 responses, and I’m happy to hear about the veteran indicator and the statistics process. However, was there a particular outreach to those marginalized groups? How are they going to see the system reflect their specific needs?

Was there anything that was targeted to those groups so that their voices were amplified? Their voices are obviously being silenced.

Ms. Jane Hicks: If I may, the consultation is still under way. We’re still doing the analysis. As we identify additional information from the census survey and from the consultation, then we can do some more focused consultation. However, at this stage, we have not focused specifically on individual groups.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Once you do focus on those particular groups, will you update this committee so that we can see the work that is being done?

I see some nodding of heads, so I am going to take that as a yes.

LCol (Ret’d) Chris Hutt: Absolutely.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you.

LCol (Ret’d) Chris Hutt: I would also add that the intent with the strategy is that it’s going to have an integral performance measurement and follow-up mechanism so that we can do continuous improvement. As we develop this and do the performance metrics to watch those populations you mentioned, the intent would be to introduce measures as part of the strategy to specifically address those issues.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Just to clarify my understanding, does that mean there will be a targeted approach in identifying those marginalized groups and watching them specifically and seeing what outcomes can be measured? Would we as a committee be able to observe those outcomes through the years? Okay.

I don’t know what the 17 questions were in the online consultation. I believe there were 17 questions. Can the committee have access to those questions? I have another round of nods, so I’m going to take that as a yes. That’s fantastic.

One thing that I am curious about is how the education and training benefit is going to fit in with VAC’s national employment strategy. Is there any talk about how those two things will work together?

Ms. Jane Hicks: It is one tool in the tool box. There are a variety of supports and services, and depending on where veterans are in the transition process and what their needs are, that tool is there for them.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: I’m curious about trends in entrepreneurship. Are there any particular pathways that help with veterans who want to be entrepreneurs? For me, the riding that I represent is more rural, and that is a huge need in our area. I’m wondering, because I do understand that the take-up on the education and training benefit is fairly low. Within that context, what supports are there to help in these ways for veteran entrepreneurs? Would the department consider tweaking and changing it so that we could see more wins here?

If the uptake is low, that tells me something is not working. Are there any changes within those two venues to change that?

Ms. Jane Hicks: I’ll talk about the education and training benefit and then turn it over to Chris to talk about entrepreneurship specifically.

We’re monitoring that benefit closely. Recently we’ve actually sent a notice to all post-secondary education institutions across the country to increase awareness of the training benefit, and we’ll continue to do so. We expect that it will continue to grow. It is a fairly new program, implemented in 2018, and we are seeing growth there.

I’ll turn it over to Chris.

LCol (Ret’d) Chris Hutt: Within the ecosystem in veterans employment, there are a number of governmental and non-governmental organizations and for-profit enterprises. One of the ones specific to entrepreneurship is a non-profit organization called the Prince’s Charities. We maintain linkages and communication with that organization, which provides a number of education and awareness programs around entrepreneurship specifically targeting veterans.

That’s one avenue the veterans have that we maintain linkages with. As we analyze this part of the problem for the strategy, the intent is that we don’t want to replace what these third parties are doing. We want to reinforce and support them and create that alignment that I mentioned before, and then identify gaps.

• (1610)

The Chair: Thank you so much.

Thank you, Mr. Hutt.

Now I’d like to go back to MP Blake Richards for five minutes, please.

Mr. Blake Richards: Thanks. We got cut off. Maybe I’ll try this again by being a bit more succinct in terms of what I’m asking, and maybe we can explore it a little bit more.

When medically released veterans were surveyed, they were asked whether or not they agreed with this statement: I have increased access to programs and services to assist me with my transition from military to civilian life.

That's exactly what we're talking about here. Gaining meaningful employment is a huge part of the transition to civilian life. In 2021, 29% agreed with that statement. In 2022, there was a little bit of improvement at 42%. That still says that the vast majority of medically released veterans are saying they are not happy with the access they have to programs and services to assist them in that transition, which says there is something that needs to be done better and differently to help veterans in this area.

Can you give me some specific examples of what you're doing to make that transition better for those veterans?

Mr. Steven Harris: If I understand the data point he's coming from, there is the veteran family program and the military family resource centres, which are managed by our colleagues with the Canadian Armed Forces. We help fund the veteran family program, and clearly there's some work to do with respect to the veteran family program to make sure that awareness is higher amongst all of the participating MFRCs in that particular area. We'll continue to work with them as our partners in terms of that service delivery.

Mr. Blake Richards: Can I interrupt you there?

Mr. Steven Harris: Sure.

Mr. Blake Richards: I'll be honest. I'm getting a little frustrated today, because I keep hearing, "We're going to work on this to try to get better." This isn't a new problem. This committee has looked at this before, and the recommendations coming out of this committee before were saying that this has to be better. There were reports in 2018 and 2019. There were indications from things like this.

I wasn't here in 2018 or 2019 on this committee, but I imagine we would have heard the same thing back then, that you know you have to do better and you're going to do better. We have all these ideas. Can you give me some specific examples of things you're doing? Give me even one example of a specific thing you're doing right now to try to improve this. Also, how do you measure whether you were successful or not?

I'll be honest. I'm getting a little frustrated, because I keep hearing, "We're working on it. We're working on it." What exactly are you doing?

Mr. Steven Harris: I appreciate that. I'd say we've introduced new programs since 2018 to help focus specifically on transition and improving the ability of Canadian Armed Forces members to transition.

We've spoken about the career transition services. That helps veterans—and even, in some cases, their spouses—look for employment, find employment and be prepared to actually go out and seek employment, from CVs, résumé preparation, interview preparation and others.

The education and training benefit, again, helps veterans transition where skills may not necessarily be fully there to allow them to do that. It helps them in that sense as well.

Mr. Blake Richards: Those are two examples, and I appreciate some examples. That's good. I have questions on both of those examples. When were those things put in place, what do you do to measure the results and what have the results been?

Mr. Steven Harris: The two programs were launched in 2018, so they've been in place for a couple of years now—as Mr. Hutt indicated earlier.

We've also added a whole host of things. I mentioned in my earlier—

Mr. Blake Richards: I'm sorry. On those programs, what do you do to measure the results and what have those results been?

Mr. Steven Harris: We actually survey veterans who participate in the career transition services, for example, to get their feedback on what's worked for them and what hasn't worked for them. That's for the number of folks who go through that one.

We mentioned some numbers earlier around the participation in the education and training benefit program and people who go through and complete educational processes and ultimately end up going on to additional employment.

Mr. Blake Richards: Can you give me those numbers in both cases?

• (1615)

Mr. Steven Harris: Yes.

Mr. Blake Richards: I absolutely do not question your commitment to try to be better. I hear that. I understand what you're saying, but I think it's really important that we measure what we're doing to make sure it is actually having an impact and to adjust it if needed. With both those programs you've just mentioned, what did we see in improvements in concrete terms?

Ms. Jane Hicks: Mr. Chair, as part of the—

Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.): I have a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to underline that I believe Mr. Richards is going ahead of our task here. All the work is not done and completed—absolutely not. That's why we're consulting. We're in front of the committee to learn and to have some examples, but this is not an end product. This is a process.

We are consulting and working with our committee and hopefully our report will help with the steps being taken, but he seems to be looking for answers—

The Chair: Mr. Samson, thank you.

Let's go back to Mr. Richards, who would like to respond to that.

Mr. Blake Richards: If I can, Mr. Chair, I think the parliamentary secretary actually makes the very point I'm trying to make. We've had these conversations before in this committee. This committee did reports previously. It's always, "We're just kind of starting. We're going to see what we can do."

The whole point I'm making here is this: How do we measure that what we're doing is having success? We can't keep having the conversation over and over again. I don't really think it's a point of order, so maybe we can go back to the witnesses—

The Chair: I understand, Mr. Richards. I know members are allowed to ask questions.

Excuse me, Ms. Hicks. Go ahead, please. You have 30 seconds.

Mr. Blake Richards: If I can just remind you, what I'm looking for is what the concrete results are of those things. Do you feel comfortable that they've been successful based on the results?

Ms. Jane Hicks: Both the career transition services and the education and training benefit were evaluated in 2021-22. There was a departmental evaluation that was completed, with results. The report was published in 2022. As a result of those, recommendations and actions have been taken to improve communications awareness, so there is some measurement of the two programs.

Mr. Blake Richards: I know that my time is up, Mr. Chair, but I just wanted to ask if they could table the results, because then we could see the numbers.

Could you table that with the committee?

Mr. Steven Harris: It's actually public. It's published on the Veterans Affairs website. We can share it.

Mr. Blake Richards: Could you share it so that we don't have to go looking for it?

The Chair: As he has said, it's public already, so you can have it.

For five minutes, I would like to invite Mr. Wilson Miao for more questions.

Go ahead.

Mr. Wilson Miao (Richmond Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Welcome back to the committee.

I understand that last November, in fact, our minister hosted a veteran employment consultation here in Ottawa. What are the biggest take-aways or what have you been hearing from the round table? More specifically, what are some of the comments you heard from the participants?

LCol (Ret'd) Chris Hutt: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I was part of that consultation process. It was a very robust discussion involving a number of employers and third party organizations that I've mentioned and that we've been talking to.

Some of the key take-aways were with regard to the communication. Call it the ability of veterans to communicate what they are bringing to the table or the value proposition of their skills and experience, and the employers' ability to understand what that value proposition is. The need was to provide tools for both sides of that

equation to understand the skills and experience that veterans have and to be able to communicate that.

In the comments we saw, another one was really on the supports for employers. It's not just about recruiting veterans and getting them in the door. It's about retaining the veteran workforce. It's about creating an environment where veterans are part of the workforce, are integrated and have mentors and a network of practice or a community of practice that supports veterans in the workplace.

The third key take-away was that there really isn't a silver bullet solution. It's going to be a system or a suite of solutions that we have to bring to bear and to provide to meet the needs of both the veterans and the employers interested in operating in this area.

Mr. Wilson Miao: Thanks for sharing.

I understand that Mr. Harris's earlier remark mentioned the outreach for the veteran employment strategy, including through social media and also LinkedIn. Is there any other avenue to reach out to employers and even participants across the nation to better allow them to understand what is available and the communications piece?

• (1620)

LCol (Ret'd) Chris Hutt: It was mentioned that we have the veterans employment unit within Veterans Affairs Canada, and they have an existing network of employers that are actively engaged with them, involved in discussions and participate in our social media, including the "Hire a Veteran" LinkedIn group. They also maintain a dialogue and talk about how they can promote that community practice.

It's an ever-growing network that is actively maintained by our veterans employment unit. In a day long gone, I would have referred to it as the "rolodex", but it exists still. It's the same as that network of veterans that reach out to the veterans employment unit looking to network and to establish that network. Really, as part of the employment strategy, it's something that we need to grow because it's a very small nucleus within the employment unit.

How do we create a veterans network and a veterans employer network that becomes its own entity and lives and generates on its own?

Mr. Wilson Miao: Is there a challenge in reaching out to some of the veterans who don't use this kind of technology in order to help them with the transitional process?

LCol (Ret'd) Chris Hutt: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Yes. We try to use as many channels as possible.

For instance, as someone is going through the transition process, it's not just an electronic or digital process. There's an actual physical series of touch points with the veteran, both while they're serving and immediately after they are serving, where they go through interviews within the CAF and with VAC that provide and align them with the services and supports they need, including those career transition supports. They're physically told.

There are also some educational products that cover transition in general, but specifically targeting those employment aspects of it as well. There are online learning products and some actual lectures they go through while they are serving and have access to while they are not serving. Then there are some communications products: actual releases and things of that nature. There are multiple channels through which we try to make sure the message gets out as broadly as possible.

Mr. Wilson Miao: Thank you.

For some of the veterans who would like to find work in the public service, how is the department helping the veteran with that? Are there any barriers that they will encounter in getting work in the public service?

LCol (Ret'd) Chris Hutt: One of the findings that we found through the consultations is that there are some challenges with getting into it. I wouldn't say there are barriers, but there are challenges and friction to getting into the public service. One of them is the complexity of the application process. Another is the duration of the application process. It's one of those that if you're transitioning out of the military, a long application process to get into the public service isn't necessarily what you're looking for. Those are some of the challenges.

Some of the work that we're doing is.... We are actively partnered with the Public Service Commission, DND and the Canadian Armed Forces, working on ways to better implement the provisions that were made within the Veterans Hiring Act, and to operationalize and smooth out some of those friction areas and challenges within the hiring processes that are done across the public service. That will be integral to the national veterans employment strategy as well.

The Chair: Thank you so much.

Thank you, Mr. Miao.

[*Translation*]

I now turn the floor over to Mr. Desilets for a quick two and a half minutes.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Harris, when do you expect to have the strategy you mentioned earlier completed and in place?

Mr. Steven Harris: It will be in the near future—probably a few months from now.

Mr. Luc Desilets: You stated earlier that priority should be given to hiring veterans when resources are available. That is what I understood.

In your opinion, is a healthy transition from the military to civilian life a question of money and means?

Mr. Steven Harris: I don't think it's a question of money or means. It's a question of communication. You have to know where to find the resources to have support measures that help veterans make the transition they seek. Sometimes, it is a transition towards retirement; sometimes, it is towards part-time or full-time work in a promising area, such as entrepreneurship.

Mr. Luc Desilets: You have the financial resources that you need to carry out this strategy. Is that correct?

Mr. Steven Harris: Yes, we work closely with veterans in order to support them.

Mr. Luc Desilets: You are telling me that you have enough funding to carry out the project.

Mr. Steven Harris: Yes.

• (1625)

Mr. Luc Desilets: I'm happy to hear that.

This morning, there were reports in the newspapers indicating that close to \$1 billion from the 2021-22 budget had not been spent. That is a pretty big chunk of cash. More precisely, there were \$921 million in unspent funds.

I'm trying to establish the link with support services for veterans, for which \$12 million has yet to be spent.

How can this be?

Mr. Steven Harris: I'm not sure I heard the last point that you raised. You are talking about \$12 million?

Mr. Luc Desilets: In the funding envelope for support services for veterans alone, \$12.7 million has not been spent during the financial year. In total, \$921 million remains unspent. I don't understand.

Mr. Steven Harris: I am not the Department of Veterans Affairs' financial expert. However, I can tell you that we have spoken a lot before the committee of the fact that we have funding envelopes for each program within the department. We always ask for more than the amount that we would spend, so as to avoid being in a situation where we don't have enough funds.

Mr. Luc Desilets: If you don't have enough funds, request budget transfers. You have \$921 million that hasn't been spent.

Mr. Steven Harris: The money remains within the department. It is always there in case we need it.

Mr. Luc Desilets: I understand, but it is expected that that money will be spent during the financial year. The remaining funds will be rolled over to the following financial year, but there won't be any increase. More requests will be made, but there will be no increase. That is not the way that budgets are usually managed. I'm not criticizing you personally, but you have funds that are just sitting there doing nothing. That's approximately 15% of your budget.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Desilets.

We now go over to Ms. Blaney who has two and a half minutes.

[*English*]

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you so much, Chair.

Ms. Hicks, I'll come back to you.

You mentioned that the education and training benefit seems to be having a pickup. Can you table stats with the committee, or send us to where we would get that information? That would be helpful.

There are nodding heads. That's fantastic.

My other question is on the potential bias, stigma and discrimination faced by veterans when trying to find employment. I've heard from veterans directly that there's a broad brush that paints veterans: They have mental health challenges. They're suffering from PTSD. They're unstable and difficult to employ.

That's the perception they feel like they're battling out there. I wonder if VAC is taking this into consideration. What are the active steps that VAC is taking to counteract this false narrative?

That's a pretty broad brush to paint every veteran with. It certainly undermines the high level of training and diligence that they had in their service. I wonder how that is being addressed. Will it be addressed more succinctly through this process?

Ms. Jane Hicks: It's something that came up as part of the consultation process. Veterans are not broken. There are a lot of veterans who have meaningful contributions and purpose and who want to be employed.

That's certainly something we're using as we develop the strategy: looking at ways we can get that information out there, and working with CAF to change the narrative.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you for that.

I want to come back—probably to you, Mr. Hutt—to the entrepreneurial stream.

Again, and as I said, I feel this is not being picked up as well as it could be. I understand there are programs like the Prince's operation entrepreneur, but has there been any consideration, at all, to giving out more seed funding in order to help veterans actually open up this door—to look at those funds and perhaps have a bit more grace in the strategy, so they can have the financial resources to start their positions and businesses?

LCol (Ret'd) Chris Hutt: We are looking at that entrepreneurial space as part of our analysis, but we don't know what tools.... We're still trying to figure out if there are, in fact, gaps. We have some of the anecdotal.... In the consultations, we heard some of the same things. There were statements made about barriers or frictions in the entrepreneurial space. We don't have them quantified, so we don't know exactly what levers we need to pull.

When I say “we”, it's not necessarily going to be Veterans Affairs. The strategy has to be national in scope and include both governmental and non-governmental agencies. We need to create some alignment or suite of tools that respond to that need, but we don't know what that is yet.

The Chair: Thank you so much.

I know some members were prepared to ask more questions, but time is running out. I'd like to give two minutes to each of them. I'll start with Mr. Fraser Tolmie, with Mrs. Rechie Valdez after that.

You have two minutes. Please go ahead.

Mr. Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Thank you.

Thank you for joining us today.

Thank you, Mr. Hutt, for your service.

Respectfully, during our conversations today, one comment made was that you're taking surveys of people who have gone through the re-education program and gotten employment. These people have been successful. The problem I have with that is, the metrics should be.... You should be evaluating people who aren't successful and looking for jobs.

I've read through the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates report from June 2019; “A Seamless Transition to Civilian Life for All Veterans: It's Time for Action” from May 2018; and Bill C-27 for vets' employment, which was passed March 31, 2015. What kind of assurance are we going to have? There are 32 recommendations sitting here. We need to hear what you're going to do differently from all those other reports.

• (1630)

Ms. Jane Hicks: If I may, Mr. Chair, I want to clarify a point.

It was an evaluation done by the department. When I talked about the career transition service, and the education and training benefit, it was a random sample. It had nothing to do with the success of the program. It was on those who had applied for the program. That was the survey conducted. We have the results, and we can share those with the committee.

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: To clarify, can you tell me, out of that survey, how many people were successful and how many haven't been successful?

Ms. Jane Hicks: I believe it's part of the evaluation report that we can share with you.

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: Okay.

What are you doing to evaluate people who have not been successful? That's the area we need to focus on.

Mr. Nathan Svenson: There are two areas we focus on when we're measuring. One is the people participating in the programs and services offered by the department, and one is the broader veteran population.

Thanks to the census identification question in 2021, Statistics Canada is now able to identify who those veterans are. We just completed a survey from October to December 2022—the Canadian veteran health survey. It covers a number of these questions: main activity, satisfaction with job and labour market activities. Those should represent veterans, whether or not they are accessing services through Veterans Affairs.

The Chair: Thank you so much.

We'll go to Mrs. Rechie Valdez for two minutes.

Mrs. Rechie Valdez (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to thank the department for joining us today.

We heard about the well-being and mental health of veterans earlier. Through you, Mr. Chair, can the department share how the veteran and family well-being fund has been providing funds to grass-roots organizations that help veterans find employment and upgrade their skills after they serve our country?

Mr. Nathan Svenson: Since its inception in 2018, the veteran and family well-being fund has supported more than 100 community-based organizations. In particular, 14 of those projects have gone towards initiatives that are focused on employment and retraining, totalling almost \$6 million in funding awarded to date. That's a focus.

Every time we hold a round of competitions for the fund, we're specifically looking for the initiatives that will have the most impact in that stated theme and the scope of reach, whether it's across the country or within the community. That's how we rank those applications. We look at both the impact and the scope.

We have some examples of a number of projects that have been funded. We can share a list with the committee of those 14 projects in this theme.

Mrs. Rechie Valdez: That would be great.

Is VAC's education and training benefit meeting its objectives to help transition veterans in upgrading their skills or finding good jobs?

Ms. Jane Hicks: As per the evaluation that was completed, the education and training benefit was meeting its objectives.

Mrs. Rechie Valdez: Thank you.

Could you clarify for us how many veterans are accessing it, or what they are using it for?

Ms. Jane Hicks: Just this past fiscal year, there were approximately 2,200 who accessed the education and training benefit. It's for a whole variety of courses. I don't have it, but we can provide a list of the most frequent courses that are accessed.

Mrs. Rechie Valdez: Thank you.

I think I'm probably out of time to ask another one. Thank you.

• (1635)

The Chair: Exactly.

Yes, go ahead on a point of order.

Mr. Blake Richards: It's a point of information. There were a couple of questions I planned to ask you at the end of the meeting to get updates on a couple of things. I think that, potentially, depending on the response, the witnesses may have something they can help with on this. If you don't mind, I'd like to ask you a couple of quick questions, just to see where we're at with a couple of pieces of committee business.

The first one is with regard to the documents we received, I think it was last Thursday. In the first part of that motion, we asked for all of the internal communications between the minister's office and the department about medical assistance in dying. The department seems to have interpreted that to be within some defined date range. Therefore, some of the information we were seeking is cut off. That does not comply with the motion, Mr. Chair, and I was curious what we're going to do to ensure that we get the rest of the documentation. That's the first thing.

The second one is with regard to the study we just did on the rehab contract. I know we had given some instructions for a report. I understand that we're awaiting the contract, which I understand the department is having translated, and I assume we should have it any day. I wonder when we plan to work on that report.

Those are the two questions. I just thought that maybe I should ask because they may have information that could be helpful. I don't know where we're at with those. Have you followed up with the department on the documents, for example?

The Chair: Thank you for the questions. I know that the clerk is in touch with the department.

Maybe you can help a little bit on those two fronts, please.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Aurée Dallaire): Sure.

I think you're referring to the big motion we had. There were two points, one with a date and the other without any date range. I did ask the chair if the dates that were in the second point would apply to the first one. That's how we got the same range for both of those points in the motion.

As for the second question you had on the rehab contract, as mentioned in the interim letter from the department, it will be coming in mid-February.

I'll leave it to the chair if he has anything to add.

Mr. Blake Richards: Before we go to that part, on the motion, the motion was very clear. There was a date range for the second part. There was not a date range for the first part. There was a very specific reason for that. I don't believe the motion, therefore, has been complied with. I'm wondering if maybe the department officials could answer how quickly they could provide the rest of the documentation that's already overdue now.

I don't know if you can give us any information, Mr. Harris.

The Chair: I'd like to ask Mr. Harris for one minute, if he could, to reply to that, please, about the date.

Mr. Steven Harris: Mr. Chair, we worked with the committee and with the clerk to provide the information that was required. If there's different information required and that request is put in, we'll work to provide the information. We're always interested in helping to support the committee.

Mr. Chair, to you and the committee members, if there are different requests or if it's to be interpreted differently, please communicate that back to us.

The Chair: Thank you.

I will sit down with Mr. Richards and see what the difference is. The clerk will call you or send you a letter about that.

As you know, we have another panel, so I'd like to thank the witnesses who were here with us.

[*Translation*]

I would like to start by thanking the representatives from the Department of Veterans Affairs: Mr. Steven Harris, assistant deputy minister of the service delivery branch; Ms. Jane Hicks, acting director general of service delivery and program management; retired lieutenant-colonel Chris Hutt, CD, director of transition and program support of the service delivery branch, whom I would also like to thank for his service within the Canadian Armed Forces; and Mr. Nathan Svenson, director of research.

On behalf of the committee members, I would like to express our thanks for testifying.

We will take a few minutes' break in order to bring in the next group of witnesses.

• (1635) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1645)

[*English*]

The Chair: We will now proceed to the second panel of witnesses.

This is a quick reminder to all witnesses that, before speaking, please wait until I recognize you by name. If you're on video conference, please click on the microphone icon to unmute yourself.

I would like to welcome our witnesses.

As an individual, we have Ms. Mary Beth MacLean, a Ph.D. candidate at Queen's University, by video conference.

[*Translation*]

We welcome Mr. Serge Blais, executive director of the Professional Development Institute of the University of Ottawa.

[*English*]

I'd like to begin with Ms. MacLean.

You have the floor for five minutes for your opening remarks. Please, go ahead.

Ms. Mary Beth MacLean (PhD Candidate, Queen's University, As an Individual): Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to you about this important topic.

I will be speaking to you today about findings on veteran employment from research I led during my time as a researcher with Veterans Affairs Canada. This research uses data from the life after service studies, or LASS, as well as findings from research conducted by NATO on military to civilian transition.

Employment has been found to be important to the health, well-being and adjustment from military to civilian life for veterans. Fortunately, most veterans are employed after release and are satisfied with their work. Both employment and satisfaction rates grow over time.

Also, while the unemployment rate—that is those actually looking for work—does not differ from that of the general Canadian population, veterans are less likely to be employed and more likely to experience activity limitations at work.

There is also variation in outcomes across diverse groups of the population. This was alluded to in some of your questioning earlier. Those looking for work are more likely than the employed veterans to be younger at release, to have fewer years of service and to have served in the army. Those not in the labour force are more likely to be older and to have had more years of service. They may experience barriers to work, such as ageism and disability.

Satisfaction with civilian employment also varies considerably by military rank, with officers being the most satisfied and privates and cadets being the least satisfied.

The lowest labour market earnings are among those who served in the combat arms. Employment rates are lower among female veterans and among medically released veterans.

There are also gender differences in earnings. Female veterans earn about 58% of what their male counterparts earn. This is not a function of the types of industries women work in, as females earn less than their male counterparts in all industries except for mining.

Changing employers is common among veterans. More than half of veterans changed employers during the first three years post-release. About one in 10 veterans report that their main activity is “disabled” or being on disability in the first year after release. This figure doesn't change over time.

While income and access to benefits and compensation are important for the health and financial security of veterans and their families, having a purpose in work and life provides a sense of identity and social integration that is essential for a successful transition to civilian life. Research suggests that people experiencing disability should be encouraged and supported to remain in or re-enter the workforce as soon as possible. In this regard, a program such as individual placement and support has been found to be more effective than traditional rehabilitation in improving employment rates and earnings among veterans with PTSD and spinal cord injuries.

In a systematic review conducted in Canada of work reintegration among veterans with mental disorders, individual placement and support was highlighted as a promising intervention. Many nations recognize the importance of employment assistance and most have programs available to both transitioning and former members. A few, such as the U.K., have formally evaluated their programs.

What does all this tell us?

First, supports need to account for the different types of employment outcomes experienced by various subject groups of the population.

Second, supports also need to recognize the dynamic nature of the labour market, which necessitates not just supports in the transition to civilian life, but also ongoing supports in maintaining employment and finding more suitable employment.

Third, for those experiencing disability, we need to ensure that evidence-based interventions are in place and are reaching those in need.

• (1650)

This includes work accommodations, multidisciplinary health care and case management, and individuals' placement and support, which combines these elements, plus a set of principles that focus on ability rather than disability.

Finally, we can learn from the successes and failures of other nations.

Thank you for your attention.

The Chair: Thank you so much, Ms. MacLean.

[*Translation*]

I would like to welcome Mr. Serge Blais.

Mr. Blais, you have five minutes to make your opening statement.

Mr. Serge Blais (Executive Director, Professional Development Institute, University of Ottawa): Hello.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to thank Mr. Richards and Mr. Desilets for inviting me here.

[*English*]

I do want to emphasize that Mr. Jeff Musson should have been here today. I know he's watching. Hi, Jeff. He encountered severe

medical issues on the weekend, not life-threatening but his doctor wisely told him not to come, so I'm going to try to do as best a job as I can.

I'm the director of the professional development institute at the University of Ottawa. PDI, as we call it, serves the upskilling, re-skilling and learning needs of about 10,000 people every year. These are people who are beyond the baccalaureate and master's degree programs, so basically professionals. Of the 10,000, a good maybe two-thirds if not three-quarters are from the federal public sector. We like to think that we work at the intersection of academia, government and industry.

The coding for veterans program that I'm describing today is part of that institute, and I will add is probably my pet project.

Coding for veterans helps fill the cyber skill gaps in Canada's tech workforce. We observe that members who have released from the CAF have the skills, the temperament and the aptitudes to perform successfully in cybersecurity. We say that we go from the battlefield to the cyber field, or from deployment to employment, if you will. We have a 90% success rate with all the veterans who take this program, and I'll describe that a bit later.

There are three basic streams. Without going too technical about it, one is on secure software development. Another is network security associate, and then another one is the cybersecurity architect program. Each stream represents about 650 hours to complete, so it is not for the faint of heart. It requires a lot of engagement and commitment. Typically, people will do it over eight months, which essentially adds up to 20 hours or so a week for a duration of eight months.

Completion of one of the streams leads to a certificate of professional development from the University of Ottawa and, very importantly, also prepares graduates to write industry-recognized certificates. That's hugely important for industry, especially in this field. They won't let just anyone come in through the service and stuff like that. They need to show that you have the credentials, and this program prepares them to get those credentials: the CISSP, CCNA and a whole bunch of acronyms like those.

The program is offered 100% online and is self-paced but with tutorial support. We don't let people fend for themselves. They are self-paced, but they have access to real-time tutors. The program, of course, is available across Canada.

• (1655)

[*Translation*]

The program is offered in both official languages. Currently, 50% of our courses are offered in French, but our goal is to offer 100% of our courses in both French and English by the end of this year, as per the University of Ottawa's mandate. We are mandated to offer all of our programs in both languages, apart from a few exceptions. We have made presentations in Quebec and New Brunswick. For example, we went to Valcartier and Bagotville. On October 26, we went to the Aéro Montréal symposium in Mirabel to promote our program.

[*English*]

We do a pre-evaluation. It's important to ensure that people who come in are not set up for failure.

[*Translation*]

We want to make sure that there is a minimum skills set. Even if we don't expect to welcome students who already have some knowledge of computer science, they still need to have certain basic skills. The preselection process includes an interview, because we are looking for people who have the necessary cognitive skills and temperament for the program. As I stated earlier, we have a 90% success rate, which is the envy of many deans at the university. This success rate is far higher than that of many programs at the university.

We work closely with key actors within the industry, such as Cisco, Amazon, LinkedIn and CompTIA to offer the program. We do this because firstly, we want to give our students experience that is real and practical. Secondly, working with the industry increases employability. Often, participants in the program are offered a job before even having finished their studies.

We are also adding a mandatory course in organizational behaviour.

[*English*]

Everybody has to go through an organizational behaviour course in addition to the technical training.

[*Translation*]

In this way, we seek to cover the cultural aspects of the IT world, and cybersecurity in particular.

We also wish to ensure that each participant acquires the necessary skills to be employable.

[*English*]

It's important for our graduates to understand how to prepare a CV and how to develop an online profile, and this is what we do through that course.

[*Translation*]

The average age of our participants is 39 years, which is not very old. That means that they still have many years of service ahead of them: 80% of our participants are men and 20% are women, which is more or less the ratio that exists within the military, I am told.

How much time do I have left, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Unfortunately, your time has run out, but you will be able to answer questions from committee members.

I would also like to remind committee members that at the end of the meeting, we will have to approve the budget for our study. That means that we will only have one six-minute round of questioning. Committee members may share their allotted time so that we can wrap up on time.

[*English*]

I'd like to start with Mr. Fraser Tolmie for six minutes, please.

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: Thank you very much.

I'd like to thank our visitors for their presentations. The first questions I have are discovery questions.

Ms. MacLean, when you were discussing vets who have gotten out of the military, you talked about officers and you broke it down. You said cadets, and then you got into the army. Could you give me a bit of insight into that?

I have a perception that officers, say a pilot, gets out and goes to work for Air Canada or WestJet, or continues in a career in aviation. They have a skilled trade. An officer who may be an administrative officer goes into a business and is able to transfer his or her skills, but when you get to the army....

I don't want to give you the answer, but I'm looking for what your insight is on that.

• (1700)

Ms. Mary Beth MacLean: Officers, as I mentioned, are much more likely to be satisfied with their jobs, and it may be related—actually, it is related—to their use of their skills. That is an important factor contributing to satisfaction with civilian employment. In terms of the army, combat arms in particular is the least transferrable in terms of skills. Those who leave at a fairly low rank, especially, are the least satisfied with their civilian employment.

The span is quite large. I don't have the numbers in front of me, but I think it was over 90% of all officers are satisfied with their jobs, but it was less than half for those who left as privates or cadets.

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: If we were looking at any recommendations for future employment, would you agree that those who have served in army combat roles may need more training and more education—not because they need education but education in a career that they might need to go into?

Is that something with which you would agree?

Ms. Mary Beth MacLean: Yes, for sure.

Whether veterans feel that they are using the skills they acquired in the military in the civilian world is important to their satisfaction, but it's not necessarily related to the occupation. For instance, women are much more likely to be in a transferable occupation with administrative types of tasks or in health care, which are directly transferable to a national occupation, let's say, but they are much less likely than men to agree that their skills are being used.

There is something there that is not directly connected to the military occupation.

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: Do you think this is something that we should have been aware of beforehand? We've done report after report, so I'm sure you've read some of our reports and some of the recommendations that should have been implemented.

Do you not think that this is something that we should have been made aware of and that we should have already been acting on?

Ms. Mary Beth MacLean: Yes, I would say it would be something. All of what I spoke to today is published information in peer-reviewed literature or, for instance, the NATO work was a peer-reviewed, published, edited book.

It would be great if all programs and services were based on the evidence. I'm sure, because I conducted most of this research before I retired from Veterans Affairs, they do have access to this information, and I'm sure it will be part of the strategy.

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: Thank you.

As someone who has sat on this committee for a year, it becomes disappointing that we seem to be failing vets, not only in careers—future careers and future employment—but also in delivering services for their care afterwards. Having over four reports in service, we have three or four now in what we can be delivering in careers and it seems to be there's an obvious answer but a lack of action. After eight years, it gets very disappointing for the people of Canada to be dealing with this.

How much more time do I have?

• (1705)

The Chair: It's over, exactly. You're right on time. Thank you, Mr. Tolmie.

Now let's go to Mr. Sean Casey for six minutes, please.

Sean.

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to come back and maybe breathe a little optimism into the meeting after that last fairly sombre closing remark.

Ms. MacLean, you were involved in the life after service studies. I think you indicated that from the outset. The life after service studies indicated that the post-release income among veterans in those studies reached the pre-release income three years after and continued to rise for the next 10 years. Is that right?

Ms. Mary Beth MacLean: Yes.

Mr. Sean Casey: For those who were in the Veterans Affairs Canada rehabilitation program three-quarters of the participants had their pre-release earnings recovered. Is that right?

Ms. Mary Beth MacLean: I believe so, yes, if my memory serves me. That is a paper I wrote.

Mr. Sean Casey: Okay, thank you.

I want to come to Mr. Blais for a minute and get him into the discussion here.

In the coding for vets program, you said that there are three streams. One is software development, the other is network, and the other is cybersecurity architecture. Is that right? In terms of the employment possibilities within each of the streams, you mentioned some big players like Cisco and LinkedIn. The question that I have is this. The work that Ms. MacLean did indicated that 34% of veterans who transition after service end up in the public service. You highlighted those who go from your program into the private sector. It seemed that you also indicated that the vast majority come from the public service.

I'm interested specifically in the veterans. Does the training that's provided under any of the three streams lend itself to public service? Could that be part of the explanation why the percentage is so high?

Mr. Serge Blais: Yes, I don't have the exact number. We have 400 people in the program right now. We graduated a few, some are still ongoing. They get hired through a variety of sectors: consulting firms, banks, the federal government itself, KPMG defence contractors. I don't have the exact numbers at hand, but they are deployed in quite a variety of sectors.

When I said that two-thirds of the people come to us from the federal government, it's not specific to the coding for veterans program. It's the institute overall.

Mr. Sean Casey: Within Veterans Affairs, we heard the officials earlier talk about the employment and training benefit and the fact that 2,200 veterans a year avail themselves of that benefit. I also read in your materials that the tuition for the coding for veterans program is 100% covered by the federal government.

Mr. Serge Blais: Yes, it is.

Mr. Sean Casey: Is that the sort of thing that comes from the employment training benefit?

Mr. Serge Blais: Exactly, that's where it comes from.

Mr. Sean Casey: Therefore, 2,200 veterans a year benefit from it.

Thank you.

Mr. Serge Blais: Four hundred people at \$15,000 each would be \$6 million, more or less.

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you.

I'll go back to you, Ms. MacLean.

One last thing you said in your opening remarks was that we have an opportunity to benefit from best practices internationally.

Could you expand on that and let us know what the gold standard is in terms of transitioning veterans post-service into employment opportunities?

Ms. Mary Beth MacLean: I wouldn't say that there's a gold standard. As I mentioned, the U.K. has put quite a bit of effort into employment after release. They recently did a few evaluations of their program. One of them showed that they weren't providing a lot of services to probably the most vulnerable, who are those who had very few years of service in the military, because it was based more on eligibility criteria than on need.

What I would say is that, whatever strategy is put in place, it shouldn't require so many years of service in order to provide benefits. As I was saying, the younger veterans with the shorter terms of service are the most likely to be unemployed following release from the military.

• (1710)

Mr. Sean Casey: I want to come back to what the LASS told us. One of the findings was connected to the level of disability. If I understood it correctly, those with a higher disability rating fared better post-employment than those with a low one.

I'll just give you the quote from the summary that we've been given.

Earnings recovery was quite polarized as many with low disability assessments had poor earnings recovery...and many with high disability assessments had high earnings recovery....

That to me seems counterintuitive. Can you help me?

The Chair: Yes, but in 15 seconds, please, Ms. MacLean.

I'm sorry.

Ms. Mary Beth MacLean: That's still true. Earnings recovery is lower among people with high disability ratings. There are quite a few of the population who were at both ends.

It is intuitive.

The Chair: Thank you so much, Ms. MacLean.

[Translation]

We now go over to Mr. Luc Desilets, who has six minutes.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Blais, my questions are for you.

Let me start by congratulating you. I think that your program is a wonderful initiative. Not only does it help veterans make the transition, it also meets an enormous need given the current labour shortage.

You spoke of 400 students. Does that mean you have accepted 400 students since the beginning of the program?

Mr. Serge Blais: That's right. The program was launched about two years ago. We have trained approximately 200 people who are now on the labour market and another 200 students are currently doing the program.

Mr. Luc Desilets: It is an impressive number.

I know that you are working on francophone recruitment. For example, you are going to change your website, and for that I thank you. Will you be increasing your efforts in Quebec to go and recruit francophone students?

Mr. Serge Blais: Indeed, and that is why we went to Valcartier last summer, that is why we went to Bagotville and that is why we go to Mirabel when there are events like the symposium. We actually have a promotions van that we use in Quebec. We also have a big media presence. That is precisely why we are doing these things.

The program has been running for two years now and it is well established. Things are going very well and we have ironed out the wrinkles. We now have to look to Quebec. Part of the University of Ottawa's mandate is to offer services in French, and it is clear that we are going in that direction.

Mr. Luc Desilets: What future do you see for your coding for veterans program? Do you think the number of students will increase each year or will you maintain current levels?

Mr. Serge Blais: We asked Accenture to do a study on our return on investment to see if the program was meeting its goals. We are extremely satisfied with the results: it seems that we are doing things exactly right. We have funding, as well as the education and training benefits, so nothing should keep us from growing.

We were cautious at the beginning, because we did not want to create a frustrating situation for people. But now the program is working well and the outlook is fantastic. We obviously would like to grow.

In fact, the program is a coveted one. There are people who are not in the military who would like to enrol in our program. That is another discussion that we could have.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Do you receive funding from Veterans Affairs Canada?

Mr. Serge Blais: Yes, the education and training benefit program covers the enrolment fees, i.e., \$15,000.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Did you say \$75,000?

Mr. Serge Blais: No. The fees are \$15,000 per participant for each pathway.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Right. That's what I heard earlier.

Your program generates a lot of money for the university.

• (1715)

Mr. Serge Blais: We don't get any additional funding apart from the \$15,000.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Okay.

What is the employment rate for these 400 participants?

Mr. Serge Blais: It is about 100%. The program has a 90% success rate, as I stated earlier. I would also add that unofficially, a good number of our participants are offered a job even before they finish the program. The others quickly find employment.

It's all well and good to have a 90% success rate, but you may ask what about the remaining 10%? These participants are given individual attention. We extend the program by offering them additional support, so that the graduation rate can be as close as 100% as possible.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Do the participants enrol in the program on their own, after having learnt about it, or does Veterans Affairs Canada give them the information?

Mr. Serge Blais: I have been told that Veterans Affairs Canada promotes the program in its information bulletins, for example.

We are also working with the Canadian Armed Forces to promote the program. The program is very new, it has only been in existence for two years, but we can see by the number of visits on our website that growth could almost be exponential.

Mr. Luc Desilets: If demand were higher, could you take in more than 200 students?

Mr. Serge Blais: Yes, we could, especially as the program is set up to be online and self-paced. I wouldn't say that the sky is the limit, but we could take in many more participants without weighing down the program.

Mr. Luc Desilets: You don't require any funding from Veterans Affairs Canada?

Mr. Serge Blais: It isn't necessary, because the program is a self-financing one.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Would other programs for veterans be possible?

Mr. Serge Blais: There are two possibilities, but I would say that there would be a few wrinkles to iron out first.

The first problem is that a potential student can't start the program as long as he or she has not been completely relieved of their duties, even if the request for release from military service has been approved. If the student could start the program as soon as he or she knows that they will be released, there wouldn't be that delay between the last day of service and the first day in a learning environment due to the process that involves submitting an application, a request for funding, and so on. That's the first problem.

The second problem is security clearance. Unless the student starts a job the very next day following his or her release, he or she loses their security clearance. This causes a delay and a problem in terms of employability, because students who have completed the program successfully have to make a new request for security clearance. That process can often take nine or 10 months, even a year. I

have been told that there is a system that allows security clearance to be temporarily extended. It would indeed be useful to extend that clearance while the student takes the course and that another security clearance be issued as soon as the person accepts an offer of employment.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Our committee can help get the message across for this sort of thing.

Mr. Serge Blais: We would appreciate it. Those would be our two recommendations.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Could there be other programs?

Mr. Serge Blais: In your discussions with the previous group of witnesses, you spoke of entrepreneurship programs, for example, for service members that leave the military. We are already offering entrepreneurship programs, and we could absolutely welcome veterans.

[English]

Yes, employability and entrepreneurship—which you were talking about, Ms. Blaney—is something we already do across the country, and we could very well open it up to service members. That's for sure.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Desilets: Thank you, Mr. Blais.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Blais, you finished your answer by speaking to Ms. Blaney, and she will now have the floor for six minutes.

Ms. Blaney, you will be the last one to speak to this group of witnesses.

[English]

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that.

If I could come to you, Ms. Maclean, first of all I want to say how much I enjoyed reading your research. It was very informative, and I appreciate the time you took to do that important work.

My first question is really about the “Let's Talk Veterans” strategy that they use to consult with veterans. I noted and asked a question of VAC when they were here, and they acknowledged that the outreach did not include a specific strategy to do outreach to the groups that you mentioned are really having particular challenges. However, they said they would implement that at a later date.

Do you have any thoughts on what would be the best strategies to outreach? We know that the outcomes for younger veterans, veterans with disabilities, female veterans and medically released veterans are really challenging. It's not working well. Do you have any feedback? Based on your research, based on the things that you learned, what would be the most effective way to outreach to those folks and make sure that this strategy actually includes solutions that will work for those stakeholder groups?

• (1720)

Ms. Mary Beth MacLean: I would be pretty specific about perhaps even doing focus groups with some of those groups, and maybe separately, as well, because there are a few things we don't understand. LASS is a great resource, but it's quantitative research. There hasn't been a lot of qualitative research done with those groups to better understand their satisfaction with their employment and their bumpy road post-release back to parity in terms of earnings, and why they are moving so often between employers in the first few years. I think we need to understand that more qualitatively than we do now. That doesn't usually come from any kinds of open consultations that require people to come forward. The most vulnerable groups are the least likely, in any research or any types of outreach efforts, to come in. They need to be targeted quite specifically.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you for that.

I read some of your research. It talked specifically about the fact that female veterans have been found to experience higher overall disability risk, and it also noted a higher rate of injury in the initial military training.

In the research you have done, does this relate specifically to future employment opportunities?

Ms. Mary Beth MacLean: Yes. One of the areas that are very important in the employment world is work disability. That's very complicated, so I tried to give a little bit about evidence-based interventions to prevent work disability, but one of the things that women, older veterans and those with disabilities experience is ageism, sexism and ableism all combined. A lot of veterans are getting out in their forties and fifties and are still seeking employment, because the pensions don't necessarily take them to the age of 65 or potentially beyond.

Older Canadians and older veterans, I'm sure, as well, experience a lot of ageism and have a harder time finding a job and a longer time finding a job than younger people.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you for that.

One of the things that I struggle with is the fact that we in Canada still have very low numbers of female service members. Those numbers are still low, and no matter what they seem to want to do, it's not actually resulting in more women joining the forces. When I look at the outcomes for female veterans, it seems to me that there might be a cycle here that we should be considering.

We saw in your research that most female veterans do not stay for the 20 years. That means, of course, that when they leave, they do not have that resource to help support them. What I saw in your research is that male veterans would have the 20 years and have their pension plus their employment, which would allow for better outcomes. Female veterans do not have that.

Based on that, is there any information you can give us? Is there a particular trend? Why are women not staying in our service?

Ms. Mary Beth MacLean: That's a great question. I don't know the answer to it, but I think you did allude to their having poorer outcomes. Part of recruitment is about the experiences of others and recommendations to join the military or not to join the military based on their own experiences.

• (1725)

The Chair: Thank you so much.

Before going back to the witnesses, I would like to ask members a question. You know we have a budget for that study, and I would like to have your approval for that.

Mr. Richards.

Mr. Blake Richards: I actually had a question on it. I don't have it in front of me. I wasn't prepared to discuss it, but I had noticed that the amount for the Toronto witnesses seemed quite high.

I would agree we probably shouldn't discuss it now, but if it's just a matter of my getting clarification so we can pass it, I'm okay with that. I did just notice that it was quite a high amount.

The Chair: Yes, we have an explanation for that, but I think Mrs. Wagantall would like to speak.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): It just seems inappropriate that we're discussing that with our witnesses here. We have an opportunity to either ask them more questions or thank them for coming.

The Chair: No. Asking more questions is not possible because it's 5:30, but I want to take just a minute before we adjourn the meeting because we need this approval in order to continue the study.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall: We do need to discuss it. I agree.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

The clerk has answers on it. It's an estimate. Please go ahead.

[*Translation*]

The Clerk: As the chair said, the expenses for Toronto are only presented as a summary based on trips made for other committees. This is a provisional amount and will remain so until we know exactly where the witnesses will be coming from and whether they will be testifying in person or virtually. This is only an estimate. We have provided an amount for each city in Canada. I chose the biggest cities and I provided an estimate based on the number of people on the list of witnesses. This list may change once the witnesses confirm their attendance. The amount indicated is the maximum amount.

[English]

Mr. Blake Richards: I guess I just struggle a little bit. I generally don't get too worked up over these committee budgets, but I do struggle a little bit with that number. When I look at Vancouver at \$2,000, I think, okay, I know flights from Vancouver can be expensive, but for Toronto it is almost the same number and it's a heck of a lot closer and it costs nowhere near \$1,500 to fly to Ottawa from Toronto. I guess there's a night in a hotel in there and whatnot, but I just feel we should try to at least make some effort to be realistic with the numbers. That one seems high. I don't know how this works, but if someone wanted to take advantage of that, they could get a pretty nice suite in a hotel for the evening for that price.

The Clerk: For example, if there is accommodation, we have a capped fee for that, so that's not negotiable if people ask. However, as I said, there is no cap on the flights. It's just a flex flight because sometimes a committee meeting can be cancelled, so that's the recommendation they have.

Mr. Blake Richards: Is there any limitation on the type of fare that someone can use?

The Clerk: There is.

There's a cap, so, for example, it's for economy and not business.

Mr. Blake Richards: The only reason I'm pressing this is that it does seem like a high number.

In that case, what it boils down to is that this is a maximum amount and because there is a cap on the hotel and there's a cap on the fare class, we really wouldn't reach that number unless there was a really good reason for it. Okay.

The Chair: Thank you. I heard that those kinds of things should be discussed in the subcommittee, and I agree.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: I move to support it.

The Chair: You support it too.

Are there any other interventions on that proposal, on that budget?

[Translation]

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt this budget of a maximum \$19,000?

(Motion agreed to)

• (1730)

The Chair: I will now speak to the witnesses.

Do forgive us for that discussion.

I would like to thank you for your contribution to our study and your testimony.

I would remind committee members that this afternoon, we have heard Ms. Mary Beth MacLean, a PhD candidate at Queen's University, and Mr. Serge Blais, the executive director of the Professional Development Institute at the University of Ottawa.

Is it the will of the committee to adjourn the meeting?

Some hon. members: Yes.

The Chair: I would like to thank all the interpreters and technical staff.

The meeting is adjourned.

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>