

Italian Campaign - 75th Anniversary

Issue

In November/December 2019, the Government of Canada will mark the 75th anniversary of the Italian Campaign with national and international activities.

Background

Canada's participation in the Italian Campaign took place over a 20-month period during the Second World War. More than 93,000 Canadians played an important role during this bitter struggle, battling some of the German Army's best troops. The Italian Campaign began on the island of Sicily in July 1943, and moved north up the Italian mainland through to the end of the war in Europe in May 1945. Nearly 6,000 Canadians died in Italy.

Considerations

A high-profile, proactive communications approach will increase awareness of the significance of the Italian Campaign during the Second World War through events, media outreach, social media and a complementary web feature.

Current Status

Veterans' Week 2019 will focus on the Italian Campaign.

Faces of Freedom [Visages de la liberté] is a central theme throughout the 75th anniversary of the Italian Campaign. Messaging will emphasize the connection between current Canadian Armed Forces members and those who fought in Italy 75 years ago by exploring the stories of those who served and sacrificed for our country, as well as those who helped liberate cities and towns in Italy—the Faces of Freedom. Their faces tell the story and their legacy will live on.

A signature event will be held in Ottawa on November 26 in the presence of dignitaries and Veterans, as well as the Canadian Armed Forces contingent before its departure for Italy to participate in various events overseas. The Department's Calendar of Events provides information on events planned in communities across the country; more information to follow on the in-Canada program.

The Minister of Veterans Affairs will lead a Government of Canada delegation to Italy to participate in signature commemorative ceremonies in four regions—Sicily, Cassino, Ortona and Ravenna—from November 28 to December 5.

The overseas delegation will include Italian Campaign Veterans, representatives from Veterans' and Indigenous groups, Canadian youth, and parliamentarians. Canadian

Armed Forces members will travel to Italy to provide ceremonial support and join the official Canadian delegation in commemorative activities.

Free bilingual learning resources, with a particular focus on the Italian Campaign, have been distributed to schools, youth and community groups across the country to complement and support upcoming Veterans' Week and Remembrance Day activities.

Registration is not required for the general public to attend these ceremonies.

A travel subsidy is available for Italian Campaign Veterans who wish to travel to Italy and are not included in the Government of Canada delegation.

Next Steps

- A separate briefing will be arranged for the Minister to review the program.