



Veterans Affairs
Canada

Anciens Combattants
Canada

EVALUATION OF PUBLIC RECOGNITION AND AWARENESS

Commemorative Ceremonies and Events
Commemorative Partnership Program
Learning and Public Information
Memorials

October 2017

Audit and Evaluation Division

Canada 

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Executive Summary

The Evaluation of Public Recognition and Awareness was conducted in accordance with Veterans Affairs Canada's approved Multi-Year Risk-Based Evaluation Plan 2015-20 and with the directive and standards specified in Treasury Board of Canada's *2016 Policy on Results*.

The evaluation covered four components of the Canada Remembers Program: Commemorative Ceremonies and Events; the Commemorative Partnership Program; Learning and Public Information; and Memorials. While each component has different objectives, they are all intended to reaffirm Canada's commitment to remember the sacrifices of the fallen, the Veterans, those who served our country on the home front, and those who served and will continue to serve our nation in the cause of peace throughout the world.

The evaluation findings and conclusions are based on the analysis of multiple lines of qualitative and quantitative evidence.

All five core issues, as identified by Treasury Board, were examined with largely positive results. For example, all four components remain relevant, demonstrate a continued need, and align with Government of Canada priorities and federal roles and responsibilities. The evaluation team identified several shortfalls and areas for improvements in relation to: the achievement of certain outcomes (performance); the adequacy of processes; and efficiency and economy.

The evaluation resulted in the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1

It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration, build on current practices to enhance awareness of commemorative events in Canada.

Recommendation #2

It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration, review and update current practices and procedures to ensure the appropriate maintenance and monitoring of memorial sites in Europe occurs in accordance with annual plans.

Recommendation #3

It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration, develop and implement measures to capture visitor experience feedback associated with Veterans Affairs Canada's memorial sites in Europe.

Recommendation #4

It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration, develop and implement consistent planning and post-mortem documentation requirements for commemorative ceremonies and events.

1.0 Introduction

The *Government of Canada Policy on Remembrance* defines remembrance as “honouring and commemorating the sacrifices, achievements and legacy of those who served in Government of Canada sanctioned wars, conflicts, peacekeeping and aid missions, in both military and civilian capacities”. The objective of the policy is to “reaffirm that Canada will always remember the contributions and sacrifices of the fallen, the Veterans, those who served our country on the home front, and those who served and will continue to serve our nation in the cause of peace throughout the world”. Primary responsibility for implementing the *Government of Canada Policy on Remembrance* resides with the Minister of Veterans Affairs. Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) contributes to achieving these commemorative responsibilities through its Canada Remembers Program.¹

This evaluation of Public Recognition and Awareness was conducted in accordance with VAC’s Multi-Year Risk-Based Evaluation Plan 2015-20. It focuses on the following four components of the Canada Remembers Program: Commemorative Ceremonies and Events; the Commemorative Partnership Program; Learning and Public Information; and Memorials.

The four components were evaluated as a group for a number of reasons: their focus is complementary, they share stakeholders and beneficiaries, and they have the same ultimate outcome. The evaluation examined the relevance, performance, efficiency, and economy of the four components and was conducted in accordance with Treasury Board policy requirements and guidance.

This report provides an introduction to the four components, the evaluation scope, and methodology. Core evaluation questions are discussed in the body of the report, with results and recommendations identified by component-specific sub-headings where appropriate.

1.1 Overview of Components Evaluated

1.1.1. Commemorative Ceremonies and Events

VAC organizes ceremonies and events, both in Canada and overseas, to remind Canadians of the legacy of those who served Canada, and to demonstrate Canada’s leadership in recognizing their service. VAC works closely with federal, provincial and municipal organizations, as well as non-government and international partners on

¹ Through the Canada Remembers Program, Veterans Affairs Canada works to ensure that Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all who served in Canada’s efforts during war, military conflict and peace. Veterans Affairs Canada. (2016). *Budget 2016*, Commemoration.

commemorative events, including Veterans' Week² events and other initiatives that mark significant military milestones.

This is the first evaluation of commemorative ceremonies and events.

1.1.2 Commemorative Partnership Program

Through the Commemorative Partnership Program (CPP), VAC is able to extend its reach in delivering its mandate by providing grants and contributions to organizations that wish to lead remembrance initiatives. The Program supports:

- community engagement projects, including those related to commemorative events and the development of commemorative resources (e.g., learning resources); and
- community war memorial projects, including the construction, restoration and expansion of memorials.

This Program was evaluated as part of the Partnerships Contribution Program (former Program title) evaluation completed in 2013.

1.1.3 Learning and Public Information

VAC engages youth, educators, and the general public through learning and public information resources. Special emphasis is placed on the annual development and distribution of new content for Veterans' Week, the lead up to Remembrance Day. Veterans' Week resources include learning products such as commemoration-themed newspapers, historical information/activity sheets, teacher learning plans, bookmarks, and postcards. A wide array of viewable/downloadable commemoration content is also available year-round on the Remembrance section of VAC's website. For example, the website features an online library of personal recollections of those who served (Heroes Remember), information on memorials, a section for the Valentines for Vets initiative³, and a series of pages dedicated to remembering those who served.

Furthermore, as part of the Learning and Public Information component of the Canada Remembers Program, VAC employs Canadian students as guides year-round in France at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial. Student guides live and work in France for a period of four months and provide tours of the preserved battlefield and underground tunnels in both official

² Veterans' Week takes place in November each year and ends with Remembrance Day. During this week, commemorative ceremonies and events take place across the country to recognize the achievements of Canadian Veterans and the fallen. Canadians also commemorate those who served through other means such as wearing a poppy, posting on social media, and having discussions with Veterans or military personnel.

³ VAC invites Canadian schools, individuals, and organizations to create valentines for Veterans. VAC collects the valentines and distributes them to Veterans in long-term care facilities across the country in time for February 14.

languages. In addition, guides provide information and answer questions from visitors with respect to Canadian military history and points of interest within the region.

The student guide/interpretation portion of this component was evaluated as part of the Memorials and Cemetery Maintenance evaluation completed in 2013. This is the first evaluation of Learning and Public Information.

1.1.4 Memorials

VAC is responsible for 14 memorials in Europe which commemorate the sacrifices made by Canadians and Newfoundlanders during the First and Second World Wars. These memorials are listed in Table 1.

Table 1 – Veterans Affairs Canada Memorials in Europe

Memorial	Location
Courtrai Newfoundland Memorial	Belgium
Hill 62 Canadian Memorial	Belgium
Passchendaele Canadian Memorial	Belgium
St. Julien Canadian Memorial	Belgium
Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial	France
Bourlon Wood Canadian Memorial	France
Canadian National Vimy Memorial	France
Courcellette Canadian Memorial	France
Dury Canadian Memorial	France
Guedecourt Newfoundland Memorial	France
Le Quesnel Canadian Memorial	France
Masnières Newfoundland Memorial	France
Monchy-le-Preux Newfoundland Memorial	France
Canada Memorial at Green Park	United Kingdom

Source: VAC Commemoration Division

The Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial are both designated as Canadian National Historic Sites. Tours are offered to visitors at these two sites.

VAC is also responsible for updating and maintaining the *Books of Remembrance* and the online Canadian Virtual War Memorial. The *Books of Remembrance* commemorate the lives of Canadians who have given their lives while serving Canada in uniform. The books are open to the public and are located in the Memorial Chamber near the base of the Peace Tower⁴. The *Books of Remembrance* can also be viewed on VAC's website. The Canadian Virtual War Memorial (CVWM) is an online registry of the names inscribed

⁴ The Peace Tower, also known as the Tower of Victory and Peace, is a bell and clock tower at the Centre Block of the Canadian parliament buildings in Ottawa, Ontario.

in the *Books of Remembrance*. Each record in the CVWM includes information on the individual's military service, personal data (e.g., birthdate) as well as the location of where they are buried or commemorated, and in many cases, digital images.

In addition, VAC is responsible for the creation of new memorials, such as the National Memorial to Canada's Mission in Afghanistan (under development), and for collaborating with Canadian Heritage on commemorative initiatives, such as commemorative banners along Confederation Boulevard in the Nation Capital Region.

This component was evaluated as part of the Memorials and Cemetery Maintenance evaluation completed in 2013.

2.0 Scope and Methodology

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the directive and standards specified in Treasury Board of Canada's *2016 Policy on Results*. It covers the time frame from April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2016, and was conducted between September 2016 and June 2017. The evaluation covered four components: Commemorative Ceremonies and Events; Commemorative Partnership Program; Learning and Public Information; and Memorials.

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's *2016 Directive on Results* outlines standards to be considered for evaluations of federal Programs: continued need; alignment with Government priorities; alignment with federal roles and responsibilities; performance and efficiency; and economy. Table 2 details how the evaluation covered those issues.

Table 2 – Evaluation Scope

Relevance
➤ Continued need for all programs/initiatives to ensure they are evolving to meet expectations of Canadians/Veterans/stakeholders.
➤ Alignment with Government priorities and Federal roles and responsibilities for all Programs.
Performance
➤ Mechanisms and tools in place to measure performance.
➤ Achievement of immediate, intermediate and ultimate outcomes.
➤ Unintended impacts associated with the programs/initiatives (where applicable).
➤ Adequacy of processes, including identification of duplication/overlap.
Efficiency and Economy
➤ Demonstration of efficiency and economy

The 2017 major ceremonies and events associated with the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge fell outside the period of the evaluation. However, the evaluation team attended national Vimy events in Ottawa during April 2017 to observe/assess how national events are contributing to the public acknowledgement of Veterans and those who died in service.

Construction of a new Visitor Education Centre at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial site was completed in April 2017, outside the scope of the evaluation. The evaluation team did not examine the previous centre that operated during the period of the evaluation as it was scheduled to be decommissioned.

In the upcoming Overarching Evaluation of Commemoration, the overall governance of all commemoration activities will be assessed.

2.1 Multiple Lines of Evidence

The research methodology incorporated multiple lines of evidence, ensuring reliability of collected information and reported results. The lines of evidence used to evaluate each component's relevance, performance, efficiency, and economy are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 – Sources of Information Reviewed During the Program Evaluation

Methodology	Source
Non-departmental document reviews	Key non-departmental documents such as: Parliamentary reports, Federal Budget documents, Speeches from the Throne, and evaluations of commemoration programs in other federal departments.
Interviews and/or work observation	Approximately 50 interviews were conducted with VAC senior management; VAC staff involved in the delivery of commemorative programs; VAC partners and external departments delivering similar programs; and other subject matter experts. Regional and national ceremonies/events were observed as were internal work flows/procedures and external print production.
Departmental documentation and secondary research review	The following types of departmental documents/information were reviewed to gain an understanding of the components, their authorities and requirements, and key issue areas: Memoranda of Understanding and their annexes; previous audits and evaluations; policies; business processes; records of decisions; strategic documents; planning documents, performance reports; research papers; survey results; third-party contracts; invoices; media articles; and complaints.
Statistical analysis	Financial, demographic, gender (Gender Based Analysis +), and operational data collected by VAC for fiscal years 2012-13 to 2015-16 was examined. Financial and operational data for like-Programs delivered by external departments was also examined.
Site visits	Site visits were conducted in Ottawa to observe and speak with VAC staff, program delivery partners, and stakeholders. Site visits also took place to observe national memorials in the National Capital Region (NCR) and to observe Veterans' Week 2016 and Vimy 100 commemorative events in the NCR.
Survey	A survey was completed by 67 VAC staff who self-identified as Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Veterans or still-serving members. The survey (referenced in Annex A) was used to gain feedback on Canada Remembers Program components to determine relevance and effectiveness. The survey response rate was close to 60% (67 responses out of 120 contacted).
File review	A file review was completed using a judgemental sample of 40 Veterans whose deaths occurred during the period of the evaluation and within two years of completion of active duty. The review was conducted to determine whether eligible Veterans were being memorialized in the <i>Books of Remembrance</i> .

2.2 Limitations and Analytical Challenges

The following limitations and challenges were identified:

- The evaluation team did not speak directly with Commemorative Partnership Program applicants nor participants in commemoration events. Where available, the evaluation team used existing public opinion research and recipient feedback forms. The team also observed commemoration events in Ottawa during Veterans' Week 2016 and Vimy 100 in April 2017.
- Limited detailed statistical data was available for the Commemorative Ceremonies and Events component. To mitigate this limitation, the evaluation team utilized interviews and observations to the extent possible.
- The evaluation team did not directly observe overseas events, memorials, or student guides. To the extent possible, the evaluation team observed memorials through photographs and online tours (Canadian National Vimy Memorial Google-tour). Interviews, internal documents, and media coverage were used to form the basis for analysis of the student guides and overseas events.

The above limitations should be considered when reviewing the evaluation findings.

3.0 Relevance

3.1 Continued Need for the Programs

There is a continued need for the programs/initiatives.

There is a continued need for each Canada Remembers Program component evaluated. As confirmed through interviews, public opinion research, feedback evaluations and demand/intake, the components continue to address a demonstrable need.

The components evaluated contribute to Veterans' Week, a key commemorative initiative that takes place every November. The *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week Survey 2016*⁵ reveals that 88% of Canadians believe it is important for Veterans' Week to be held each year.

3.1.1 Commemorative Ceremonies and Events and the Commemorative Partnership Program

Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week surveys completed during the period 2012-2016 show continued support from Canadians for the Canada Remembers Program components evaluated. Table 4 highlights that support has increased between 2012 and 2016 in all areas.

Table 4 – Canadian Support for Commemoration

Percentage of Canadians who report that it is important/very important that the Government of Canada place priority on...	2012 Survey	2014 Survey	2016 Survey
Supporting and leading events that recognize Veterans and important military milestones	80%	80%	87%
Supporting and leading remembrance ceremonies at the National War Memorial.	84%	86%	87%
Providing funds for communities to undertake remembrance initiatives	66%	66%	70%

Source: *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week Surveys* 2012, 2014, and 2016.

In support of this evaluation, a *Survey of Commemorative Initiatives* was completed by 67 self-identified Veterans working at VAC. Respondents identified that it is very important (82%) or moderately important (13%) for VAC to mark military milestones/anniversaries by leading, supporting and promoting ceremonies and events regionally, nationally, and internationally.

⁵ VAC conducts periodic public opinion research to determine trends in public opinion, and attitudes and behaviours with respect to Veterans' Week and remembrance.

While attending Veterans' Week events in Ottawa in November 2016 and events in Ottawa marking the centennial of the Battle of Vimy Ridge in April 2017, the evaluation team observed that these events recognized Veterans' achievements/sacrifices and appeared to engage Canadians, both in person and through social media (see Table 5 for social media participation). Based on the evaluation team's observations and supporting social media statistics, these events contributed to increased awareness of the achievements and sacrifices of Canadian Veterans and the fallen.

Table 5 – Facebook Live Participation in Events Observed by Evaluators

Event	Date	Views	Shares
Candlelight Tribute, Canadian War Museum	2016-11-07	29,233	476
Evening of Remembrance, National War Memorial, Part 1	2017-04-08	48,125	419
Evening of Remembrance, National War Memorial, Part 2	2017-04-08	60,800	545
100 th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, National War Memorial, Part 1	2017-04-09	70,293	714
100 th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, National War Memorial, Part 2	2017-04-09	119,050	1,528

Source: Evaluation Team Review

Evidence of continued need for the Commemorative Partnership Program during the evaluation period is further demonstrated by an increase in annual requests for event funding (further detailed in Section 4.2 *Effectiveness – Achievement of Expected Outcomes*, Table 14 – *Commemorative Partnership Program Expenditures*).

3.1.2 Learning and Public Information

Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week Surveys completed during the period 2012 to 2016 show continued support from Canadians for learning and public information. Results are reflected in Table 6. Support increased during 2016. Most notably, an additional 11% of Canadians reported that it is important/very important to post remembrance-related content on social media.

Table 6 – Learning and Public Information

Percentage of Canadians who report it is important/very important that the Government of Canada place priority on...	2012 Survey	2014 Survey	2016 Survey
Creating and distributing education materials for schools	82%	82%	86%
Broadcasting or posting ads encouraging remembrance on TV and the Internet	75%	72%	81%
Providing promotional materials such as posters and pins	61%	59%	65%
Posting remembrance-related content on social media	62%	62%	73%

Source: *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week Surveys* 2012, 2014, and 2016

In addition to positive feedback from Canadians, the continued need for the learning and public information component was highlighted in interviews with VAC staff and through feedback VAC received from educators. Annual educator evaluation forms (1,800 – 1,900 per year) indicate that over 99% of those surveyed plan to use VAC-produced learning resources again in the future.⁶ The demand for both learning resources and social media content has been increasing and is discussed further in Section 4.2 *Effectiveness – Achievement of Expected Outcomes (Table 11 – Learning Product Demand and Table 12 – Social Media Reach)*.

3.1.3 Memorials

The *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week Survey 2016* highlighted that 91% of Canadians feel it is important that VAC recognize and honour deceased Canadian Veterans and war dead by maintaining memorials, cemeteries and grave markers.

Strong support from Canadians is also evident through the high volume of online visits to the Canadian Virtual War Memorial (1,564,735 site visits in 2015-16) and the online *Books of Remembrance* (216,348 site visits in 2015-16). Further details are available in Section 4.2 *Effectiveness – Achievement of Expected Outcomes (Table 17 – Online Memorial Statistics)*.

This support from Canadians aligns with Privy Council Order 1965-688, which affirms that the Minister of Veterans Affairs:

“...is in the most advantageous position to obtain the co-operation of Canadian veterans and their organizations in matters relating to remembrance and to conduct a continuing information program in this broad field; That responsibility has been assigned to the Minister of Veterans Affairs by virtue of section 5 of the Department of Veterans Affairs Act for: (a) Canadian Overseas Memorials and Vimy Park—Order in Council P.C. 5371 of 5th October, 1951...”

The order also reaffirms that the Minister of Veterans Affairs has been assigned the responsibility for *“(a) National Shrine of Remembrance and National Cenotaph; (b) Books of Remembrance...”*

⁶ Veterans' Week Online Evaluations (2013 through 2016).

3.2 Alignment with Expectations of Canadians/Veterans/Stakeholders

Elements of the components are responding to the needs and expectations of Canadians, Veterans, and stakeholders. An upcoming overarching Commemoration evaluation will further review commemorative initiatives pertaining to CAF Veterans.

The evaluation team assessed the extent to which the components are responsive to the expectations of Canadians, Veterans, and stakeholders. Through interviews, data analysis, document review, and a social media review, the evaluation team found that the components are being responsive by:

- increasing the footprint of commemoration through the use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram);
- developing online tools and other activities to facilitate learning (teacher guides, activity sheets for students, postcards for peace, Valentines for Vets, etc.);
- establishing (in progress) a new national memorial dedicated to the mission in Afghanistan;
- erecting a new Visitor Education Centre at the site of the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in France;
- continuously producing and enhancing learning resources and historical information sheets, both in paper and electronic format, to meet the needs of educators, students, and the Canadian public; and
- leading major ceremonies and events that recognize important Canadian military milestones (e.g. centennial of the Battle of Vimy Ridge).

Key informant interviews identified that there is a need to increase commemoration efforts, including awareness of commemorative initiatives, for CAF Veterans. The need for these efforts was reflected in the *Survey of Commemorative Initiatives* completed by 67 self-identified CAF Veterans working at VAC. The survey respondents indicated that VAC's Canada Remembers Program effectively honours and recognizes traditional war service Veterans⁷, however there was less agreement that VAC's Canada Remembers Program effectively honours and recognizes CAF Veterans⁸. A gender analysis of these results highlighted that female respondents were less likely to see themselves reflected in VAC's commemorative activities.

In addition, during 2017 VAC conducted a National Survey of Veterans and survivors. As referenced in Table 7, CAF Veterans were less likely to be satisfied with VAC's commemorative initiatives.

⁷ War service Veterans are defined as Veterans of the Korean War and both World Wars.

⁸ Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Veterans are defined as Veterans with service post-Korean War.

Table 7 – 2017 VAC National Survey: Satisfaction with Commemorative Initiatives

Percentage of respondents who reported that they are “satisfied with the way VAC’s commemorative initiatives honour those who served our country and preserve the memory of their sacrifices.”	Male	Female	Total
War Service Veterans (n=200)	86%	80%	85%
Canadian Armed Forces Veterans (n=707)	72%	65%	72%

An upcoming overarching Commemoration evaluation will further review commemorative initiatives pertaining to CAF Veterans.

3.3 Alignment with Government Priorities

The components are aligned with Government of Canada priorities and with the strategic outcomes of Veterans Affairs Canada.

The Government of Canada has emphasized its support to Veterans in its commitments to the Canadian public as outlined in recent *Speeches from the Throne* and *Mandate Letters*.

The 2015 *Speech from the Throne* states: “*In gratitude for the service of Canada’s Veterans, the Government will do more to support them and their families.*”⁹ This support for Veterans was also reflected in the October 2013 *Speech from the Throne*, which stated that the Government of Canada “... *will always keep faith with those who have defended Canada with pride. Our veterans have stood up for us; we will stand by them.*”¹⁰

In the Prime Minister’s *Mandate Letter* to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence released in November 2015, it is noted that the Minister’s overarching goal is to:

*“...ensure that our government lives up to our sacred obligation to veterans and their families. I expect you to ensure that veterans receive the respect, support, care, and economic opportunities they deserve. You will ensure that we honour the service of our veterans and provide new career opportunities, make it easier for veterans to access services – including mental health services – and do more to support the families of Canada’s veterans.”*¹¹

⁹ Government of Canada. (December 2015). *Making Real Change Happen Speech from the Throne to Open the First Session of the Forty-second Parliament of Canada December 4, 2015*, p 6.

¹⁰ Government of Canada. (October 2013). *Speech from the Throne to Open the Second Session Forty First Parliament of Canada*, 3. Putting Canada First.

¹¹ [Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence Mandate Letter \(October 4, 2017\)](#)

The components support the Government of Canada's goals through the provision of funding and services to ensure the sacrifices of those who served Canada in uniform are not forgotten.

The components also align with the department's strategic outcomes as presented in its annual *Report on Plans and Priorities*. VAC's 2016-17 *Report on Plans and Priorities* is driven by three basic principles: care, compassion and respect. The document states:

"We will care for the women and men who have served Canada, and through our support for them, assist their families. We will show compassion for their needs and work hard to meet them. We will respect them, and recognize their extraordinary service and sacrifices."

Priorities and planned activities include:

- Recognizing and honouring those who served our country through Canada Remembers Program components.
- Commemorating the achievements and sacrifices made by Veterans and the fallen, and keeping those who served in the hearts of Canadians.

The evaluation finds that the purpose of the components aligns with Government of Canada priorities and VAC's strategic outcomes.

3.4 Alignment with Federal Roles and Responsibilities

The components directly align with federal roles and responsibilities.

The evaluation finds that the components evaluated align with the Government of Canada's Veteran-centric priorities as they promote honour, respect, and recognition of Veterans' service and sacrifices.

Under Section 5 of the *Department of Veterans Affairs Act*¹² and under the authority of Privy Council Order *P.C. 1965-688*,¹³ the Minister of Veterans Affairs is entrusted with the primary responsibility for all matters relating to the commemoration of the war dead and recognition of the achievements of all Veterans. The components contribute to the Department fulfilling these responsibilities.

The Department's second of three strategic outcomes is identified in the *2016-17 Report on Plans and Priorities* as:

¹² Government of Canada, Justice Laws. Section 5 of the Department of Veterans Affairs Act states "*The Governor in Council may make regulations...for providing, maintaining and replacing grave markers and for providing financial assistance towards the expenses of last sickness, funeral, burial and cremation...*"

¹³ Veterans Affairs Canada. *Commemoration Order of 1965; Order in Council of Canada, 1965; P.C. 1965-688*, p 3.

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

The components directly support VAC's commemorative responsibilities and this strategic outcome through initiatives that ensure the sacrifices of those who served Canada in war, military conflict, and peace are not forgotten.

4.0 Performance

4.1 Performance Tools and Measurement

Performance tools are approved and in place.

Performance measurement monitors the progress of programs towards their expected results.¹⁴ A Performance Measurement Strategy is used to regularly measure key indicators and results. This information can be used to assess against expectations and to assist in measuring the effectiveness and success of a program. A Performance Measurement Plan and a program logic model are tools that support the Performance Measurement Strategy.

The evaluation team reviewed each component's Performance Measurement Strategy, Performance Measurement Plan, and associated performance, confirming:

- Performance Measurement Strategies are approved/current;
- Performance Measurement Plans identifying the specific outputs, outcomes and associated performance indicators are in place; and
- Performance results are available, both through operational reporting and strong public opinion research.

During the evaluation period, a new Government of Canada *Policy on Results* came into effect (July 2016),¹⁵ detailing the requirements for departments to clearly identify core responsibilities and associated departmental programs with these respective responsibilities. In support of the new policy, departments will develop Program Inventories and Performance Information Profiles to replace Performance Measurement Strategies. The Commemoration Division is currently in the process of developing these tools. Future evaluations will be informed by the Department's updated performance measures/outcomes.

4.2 Effectiveness – Achievement of Expected Outcomes

Outcomes are the expected changes or differences that result from activities and outputs. Outcomes are described as immediate, intermediate, or ultimate based on the contribution/influence the component has on each outcome. As outlined by the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) guideline, *Supporting Effective Evaluations: A Guide to Developing Performance Measurement Strategies*¹⁶:

¹⁴ Government of Canada. *Supporting Effective Evaluations: A Guide to Developing Performance Measurement Strategies*, section 6.3.

¹⁵ The *Policy on Results* lays out a new system of reporting on performance based on departments' core responsibilities.

¹⁶ Government of Canada. *Supporting Effective Evaluations: A Guide to Developing Performance Measurement Strategies*.

- immediate outcome(s) should equate to a “change in awareness, knowledge or skill;”
- intermediate outcome(s) should equate to a “change in the target population’s behavior;” and
- ultimate outcome(s) should equate to a “change of state in a target population.”

When the above outcomes are met, the evaluated components contribute to the Department’s Strategic Outcome #2: *Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all who served in Canada’s efforts during war, military conflict, and peace.*

This section of the report assesses the extent to which outcomes are being achieved across the four components evaluated.

Immediate Outcome #1: Commemorative Ceremonies and Events **Increased awareness of ceremonies and events that mark Canadian military milestones.**

VAC is utilizing social media to raise awareness of national and overseas events for significant commemorative milestones. However, increased promotion needs to occur with respect to regional and community events.

The evaluation finds that social media is being used effectively to increase awareness of national and overseas events for significant commemorative milestones. The Commemoration Division, in collaboration with the social media team in VAC’s Communications Division, has undertaken significant efforts to increase awareness through various social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Examples of these efforts include:

- advertising/promoting upcoming major events;
- live video streaming commemorative events (e.g., Facebook Live stream of Vimy 100 event);
- youth initiatives (e.g., youth overseas delegation “takeover” of VAC Instagram account); and
- still image social media posts during and post events.

A social media review completed by the evaluation team finds that VAC efforts are reaching a significant number of Canadians and youth (close to one million Canadians through Facebook alone). In addition, a review of posts on VAC social media pages found that overall comments were positive and that VAC sites are a useful channel for Canadians to show their appreciation for Veterans.

Though social media efforts are reaching a significant number of Canadians, and promotion of overseas and national events is quite prominent, promotion of regional and community commemorative events in Canada requires improvement.

According to the *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans’ Week Survey 2016*, the number of Canadians and their families who did not participate in Veterans’ Week

activities due to a lack of awareness has been increasing. Further results are reflected in Table 8.

Table 8 – Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans’ Week Survey Results: Non-participation due to Knowledge/Awareness

Results	2012 Survey	2014 Survey	2016 Survey
Percentage of Canadians and their families who did not participate in Veterans’ weeks that indicated they did not participate due to a lack of knowledge/awareness.	18%	24%	26%

The *VAC National Survey 2017*¹⁷ asked Veterans and survivors to identify what VAC could do to reach more Canadians through remembrance initiatives. Responses were provided by 604 Veterans/survivors. An analysis of the results shows that over 60% of responses indicated a need for greater advertising/information sharing regarding remembrance initiatives. Over 100 of the respondents specifically pointed to the need for VAC to “focus on providing relevant information to Veterans (e.g. upcoming events).”

The primary tool used by VAC to promote regional and community commemorative events in Canada is the online calendar of events.¹⁸ Both VAC’s website and VAC’s National Contact Centre Network (NCCN) refer Canadians, including Veterans, looking to participate in commemorative events/activities to VAC’s online calendar of events. During the period of the evaluation, the annual number of events posted to the calendar of events decreased 33% from 2012-13 to 2014-15.¹⁹ Calendar of events page views show a similar downward trend, decreasing by 25%, from 71,164 visits in 2012-13 to 53,585 in 2015-16.

In addition, the evaluation team reviewed the calendar during the period leading up to Veterans’ Week 2016 and observed that there was a lack of information with respect to regional and community events. This observation held true for events funded in part by VAC (Commemorative Partnership Program) and events being led/supported by VAC. It is estimated that VAC led, partnered, supported and/or participated in close to 700 events per year during 2014-15 and 2015-16. The evaluation team finds there is an opportunity for the department to better inform Veterans and the Canadian public of events in their communities and to highlight VAC’s support of commemorative initiatives.

A review of VAC’s Canada Remembers Facebook page identified limited promotion of VAC’s calendar of events. As this Facebook page has close to one million followers, this

¹⁷ VAC National Survey 2017, page 32

(http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pwgsc-tpsgc/por-ef/veterans_affairs_canada/2017/043-16-e/report.pdf)

¹⁸ The calendar of events highlights commemorative events in Canada that are of interest to Veterans, those with a connection to Canada’s military (past or present), and the Canadian public-at-large.

¹⁹ Statistics for the volume of events/ceremonies added to the calendar of events for 2015-16 are unavailable.

is a missed opportunity to increase awareness of national, regional, and community events that recognize the contributions/sacrifices of Canada's Veterans.

The evaluation team observed that efforts were increased to update and promote the calendar of events via social media in support of Vimy 100 events occurring in April 2017. These efforts were as a result of a temporary dedicated resource. The evaluation team was informed that no changes in processes have occurred that would ensure this approach would continue for future national, regional, or community events.

The evaluation team interviewed Canadian Heritage staff in relation to their Celebration and Commemoration Canada Program (which also offers grants and contributions to Canadian community organizations). The team was informed that processes exist at Canadian Heritage to ensure adequate coverage/inclusion of events being funded across Canada. These processes included internal partnerships with their Information Technology division to have calendars/maps updated based on information obtained through the program's application process.

Based on this information, the evaluation team finds that improvements are required to increase information provided to Canadians, including Veterans, pertaining to community and regional commemorative events in Canada.

Recommendation #1

It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration, build on current practices to enhance awareness of commemorative events in Canada.

Management Response:

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Management Action Plan:

Corrective Action to be Taken	Office of Primary Interest (OPI)	Target Date
The Director General, Commemoration, will implement measures, such as increased utilization and promotion of the calendar of events and social media, in order to enhance awareness of commemorative events in Canada.	Director General, Commemoration	August 2018

**Immediate Outcome #2:
Commemorative
Ceremonies and Events**

Increased appreciation for the efforts of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service to Canada.

The immediate outcome is being met as evidenced through increased public participation on VAC social media platforms and improving results in the annual *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week* survey.

Increased appreciation and interest for the efforts of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service to Canada is evident in the growing following of VAC social media accounts (further details in Table 12 of report). Through social media, VAC engages Canadians and provides a forum for the public to show and share their appreciation and interest in the efforts of Canadian Veterans. The evaluation team confirmed that comments on the Canada Remembers Facebook page are positive, respectful, and appreciative of Canadian Veterans and their sacrifices. VAC-produced content carried through social media, such as Facebook Live events, consistently draws interest from the Canadian public (as previously discussed in section 3.1.1).

Increased appreciation for the efforts of Canadian Veterans from the Canadian public is also evident in the results of the *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week Surveys* conducted during the period of the evaluation (Table 9).

Table 9 – Canadian Appreciation for Veterans and Their Service

Percentage of Canadians who report that ...	2012 Survey	2014 Survey	2016 Survey
They agree/completely agree that Canada's Veterans have made major contributions to the development of our country	86%	83%	89%
They agree/completely agree that Canada's Veterans should be recognized for their service to Canada	91%	93%	96%
They agree/completely agree that they make an effort to demonstrate their appreciation for Veterans	66%	66%	73%

Source: *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week Surveys* 2012, 2014, and 2016

**Immediate Outcome
#3: Commemorative
Partnership Program**

Organizations lead remembrance activities.

The Commemorative Partnership Program is supporting organizations that lead remembrance activities.

The evaluation found that the Commemorative Partnership Program is supporting organizations to lead remembrance activities. During the period of the evaluation,

approximately 95% of requested projects received funding (an average of 227 projects were approved annually). A breakdown of annual funds available for use, the annual funds provided to organizations, and the number of projects funded annually is reflected in Table 10.

Table 10 – Commemorative Partnership Program (CPP) and Community War Memorial Program (CWMP)²⁰ Expenditures 2012-13 to 2015-16

CPP and CWMP Grants and Contributions (Gs and Cs)	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
CPP Grant - funds available for use	N/A	N/A	\$750,000*	\$750,000
CPP Grant – actual expenditures	N/A	N/A	\$654,266	\$653,113
CPP Grant Variance (funds available minus actual expenditures)	N/A	N/A	\$95,734	\$96,887
Number of projects funded through CPP Grant	N/A	N/A	181	167
CPP Contributions – funds available for use	\$2,310,000	\$2,910,001	\$2,548,000	\$3,066,326
CPP Contributions – actual expenditures	\$2,136,169	\$2,140,321	\$1,648,821	\$3,066,326**
CPP Contributions Variance (funds available minus actual expenditures)	\$173,831	\$769,680	\$899,179	\$0
Number of projects funded through CPP Contribution	142	185	58	69
CWMP Contributions – funds available for use	\$1,500,000	\$1,250,000	\$1,252,402	\$286,674
CWMP Contributions – actual expenditures	\$753,989	\$747,598	\$724,166	\$278,366
CWMP Contributions Variance (funds available minus actual expenditures)	\$746,011	\$502,402	\$528,236	\$8,308
Number of projects funded through CWMP Contribution	26	33	31	14
Total: <i>Funds available</i> for CPP and CWMP Gs and Cs	\$3,810,000	\$4,160,001	\$4,550,402	\$4,103,001
Total: <i>Actual Expenditures</i> for CPP and CWMP Gs and Cs	\$2,890,158	\$2,887,919	\$3,027,253	\$3,997,805
Total: Variance all CPP and CWMP Gs and Cs (funds available minus expenditures)	\$919,842	\$1,272,082	\$1,523,149	\$105,195
Total: Number of projects funded through CPP and CWMP Gs and Cs	168	218	270	250
Percentage of funds utilized	75.9%	69.5%	66.6%	97.5%

Source: VAC Finance Division, and the *Public Accounts of Canada*, with analysis by Evaluation Team

* New Commemorative Partnership Grant established in 2014-15 for low-risk projects valued at less than \$10,000

**Contributions under CPP expenditures for 2015-16 include \$1,500,000 for 2017 Invictus Games.

Overall results show that, on average, between 2011-12 and 2015-16:

- \$4,155,851 in annual funding was **available** to fund projects associated with remembrance activities.
- \$3,200,784 in annual funding was **utilized** for funding projects associated with remembrance activities.

²⁰ Contributions through the Community War Memorial Program (CWMP) ended in 2015-16. CWMP Funding for community war memorials is now available through the Commemorative Partnership Program.

While utilization of Grants and Contributions resources for CPP and CWMP ranged from 66.6% to 75.9% in the first three years covered by this evaluation, 97.5% of funds were utilized in 2015-16. Through interviews, observations, and analysis of recent financial data, the evaluation team finds that a high rate of funds utilization will continue.

A review of VAC social media sites completed by the evaluation team found that VAC promotes the Commemorative Partnership Program on the VAC Services and Benefits Facebook page. However, limited promotion is occurring on the Canada Remembers Facebook page. This is a missed opportunity to target the large following that the Canada Remembers page has generated (approximately one million followers).

Immediate Outcome #4: Increased access to learning and historical Learning and Public Information resources, interpretive programs and promotional products about Canada’s military history and remembrance.

The evaluation found that this outcome is being achieved. Efforts are underway to enhance the service experience associated with the online ordering system.

On an annual basis, over four million print products are distributed to Canadians through the Learning and Public Information component. As identified in Table 11, the overall volume of demand has increased by approximately 5.2% between 2012-13 and 2015-16, the period of the evaluation.

Table 11 – Learning Product Demand Fiscal Years 2012-13 to 2015-16

Type of Product	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Veterans’ Week Materials	3,704,533	3,718,496	4,041,812	4,011,212
Veterans’ Week Sample Packs*	132,000	132,000	132,000	132,000
Learning Resources	9,168	10,928	10,407	8,009
Booklets	17,793	16,640	8,891	17,657
Historical Sheets	94,238	109,875	73,387	69,949
Promotional Products (pins, poppy seeds, etc.)	343,449	243,572	301,930	287,265
Total	4,301,314	4,231,511	4,568,427	4,526,092

Source: VAC Commemoration Division

*22,000 sample packs containing six learning products each were distributed annually during the evaluation period.

A statistical analysis of learning resources ordered by geographical location in 2016 indicated that all provinces/territories with the exception of Ontario and Quebec represented a proportion of the learning resources orders within +/-3% of their portion of the Canadian population. The learning resources ordered from Ontario were proportionately 7% higher than its population size, whereas learning resources orders from Quebec were proportionately 14% lower than its population size. Interviews with VAC Education Officers confirmed that efforts are being made to enhance the reach of the learning resources within Quebec.

Learning resources are promoted on VAC's website and through social media. In addition, an e-mail distribution list is maintained for the purposes of informing educators of upcoming product releases. Each year, following Veterans' Week, VAC requests that instructors who received learning resources fill out a voluntary online evaluation form to provide the department with information to be used for performance measurement and continuous program improvement purposes. The evaluation team reviewed comments from educators and also analyzed responses to questions on the evaluation form. The evaluation concludes that Veterans' Week materials are providing increased access to learning and historical resources about Canada's military history and remembrance. During the period 2012-13 through 2015-16, the completed Veterans' Week Online Evaluation forms identified the following:

- 98.5% of educators agreed that *"The student materials were well-received and appropriate for the learning styles in my classroom."*
- 99% of educators reported that *"I would encourage my students to take this material home to share with their families."*

A review of text comments provided by educators through the online evaluation form found overall positive responses; no negative trends or concerns were identified. Evidence indicates that suggestions and recommendations made by educators are noted by VAC Education Officers and taken into consideration when revising material for future years.

Though access to learning resources has increased, and no issues were identified with the quality of VAC print materials, areas for improvement have been identified.

Through interviews and observation, it was identified that the VAC website does not currently have a highly visible, easily accessible section through which to navigate the learning resources (e.g., learning portal). Simplifying the navigation of online learning resources could further increase access to this component.

In addition, the evaluation team was informed through interviews, and was able to confirm through documentation reviews and observation, that issues often arise in relation to the public online ordering website and inventory tracking for learning resources. VAC learning resources are printed and shipped under contract by a third party. The contracted company is responsible for maintaining an online ordering site and for providing up-to-date inventory/statistic reports. Through consultation with Commemoration staff and the print contract project authority, the evaluation team was advised that efforts are underway to correct these concerns.

The evaluation finds that VAC has increased access to learning and historical resources, interpretive programs and promotional products about Canada's military history and remembrance through the use of VAC's social media pages/accounts. As referenced in Table 12, VAC has capitalized on a worldwide trend for utilizing social media for promotion. This has resulted in the media reach increasing dramatically over the course of the evaluation period.

Table 12 – Social Media Reach

Social Media Initiative	March 2013	March 2014	March 2015	March 2016	Change
“Likes” Canada Remembers Facebook Page	680,727	773,133	904,527	987,378	+45%
“Followers” VAC Twitter Account	6,949	18,027	29,747	37,984	+447%
“Subscribers” VAC’s YouTube Channel	845	1,121	2,398	3,447	+308%
“Video Views” VAC YouTube Channel	277,744	342,098	2,487,783	3,676,472	+1,223%

Source: VAC Commemoration Division

With respect to interpretation, VAC’s student guides at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial conducted 6,436 tours for close to 65,000 visitors in 2016. In addition, in April 2017 (outside of evaluation scope), VAC opened a new Visitor Education Centre at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

Immediate Outcome #5: Properly maintained and presented VAC memorials, Memorials cemeteries and grave markers on behalf of all Canadians.²¹

VAC memorials are being maintained and presented.

VAC has responsibility for 14 memorials located in France, Belgium, and the United Kingdom. These memorials are maintained through a contract and memorandum of understanding with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission valued at \$1,975,000 annually.

The evaluation team obtained and reviewed memorial maintenance plans for each memorial site. The plans are used by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to assess the state of maintenance at each memorial and to determine what activities should be undertaken as part of their annual work agreement. The annual work agreements were found to be thorough, with cost breakdowns where applicable.

Through interviews and documentation review, the evaluation team identified that although work agreements are being approved on an annual basis, VAC does not have formalized review practices in place to ensure maintenance is occurring in accordance with these agreements. The evaluation team finds that review requirements should be

²¹ The cemeteries and grave-markers component of this program were assessed in the Evaluation of Commemorative Benefits and Services dated March 2017.

implemented to ensure adequate oversight of maintenance and presentation work. As indicated in Section 2.2 – *Limitations and Analytical Challenges*, on-site observation of memorials in Europe did not occur.

Recommendation #2

It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration, review and update current practices and procedures to ensure the appropriate maintenance and monitoring of memorial sites in Europe occurs in accordance with annual plans.

Management Response:

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Management Action Plan:

Corrective Action to be Taken	Office of Primary Interest (OPI)	Target Date
The Director General, Commemoration, will review and update current practices, and implement measures to ensure memorial site maintenance work is completed in accordance with the priorities and expectations outlined in maintenance plans.	Director General, Commemoration	April 2018

Through in-person observations of the *Books of Remembrance* and the Memorial Chamber, the evaluation team found that these memorials are also being properly maintained. Interviews identified that care is taken to ensure the *Books of Remembrance* are properly handled. Searches were carried out to test the functionality of the online *Books of Remembrance* and the Canadian Virtual War Memorial; no issues were identified. A concern relating to the processes associated with entries to the physical *Books of Remembrance* is highlighted in Section 4.3.4 – *Memorials*.

Interviews in relation to memorials in Europe highlighted that no formal processes exist to collect visitor feedback at memorial sites. Interviews with Parks Canada identified that National Historic Sites in Canada use tools to collect visitor experience feedback. A recommendation associated with visitor experience is included in Section 4.3.3 *Learning and Public Information*.

In addition, the evaluation team was informed that the forestry plan for the Canadian National Vimy Memorial has not been fully acted upon, and that further planning and decisions are required regarding tunnel preservation. Further assessment of VAC’s memorials will occur as part of the upcoming overarching evaluation on Commemoration.

Opportunities for Improvement

Key informant interviews identified that there are opportunities to enhance interpretive information at memorial sites in Europe. It was also brought to the evaluation team’s attention that electronic visitor counters at the Vimy Memorial have not been operational since September 2016, jeopardizing the accuracy of visitation statistics.

The evaluation team reviewed departmental responsibilities in relation to the *Government of Canada Remembrance Policy*. The policy states that VAC is responsible to “*Ensure maintenance, preservation and presentation of Canada’s international monuments and memorials and battlefields.*” The evaluation team reviewed the relevant Performance Measurement Strategy and Performance Measurement Plan and found that the “preservation” component of this responsibility is not referenced. The evaluation team was informed by Commemoration staff that, in support of the *2016 Policy on Results*, a Performance Information Profile for the Memorial component is being developed, and that “preservation” related activities and measures will be included.

Intermediate Outcome #1: Commemorative Ceremonies and Events	Veterans, those who died in service, and Canadian military milestones are publically acknowledged regionally, nationally and internationally.
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Commemorative Ceremonies and Events are contributing to the public acknowledgement of Veterans, those who died in service, and Canadian military milestones.

VAC-led and supported regional, national, and international events contribute to the public acknowledgement of Veterans, those who died in service, and Canadian military milestones.

Interviews highlighted that, each year, six commemorative events are organized by Commemoration staff located at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial in France. These events recognize anniversaries of military significance. In addition, overseas events marking major anniversaries (e.g., 100th and 75th anniversaries) are organized by Commemoration staff located at the VAC Head Office in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Major anniversaries that occurred during the evaluation period are highlighted in Table 13.

Table 13 – List of Major Overseas Events 2012-2016

Year	Overseas Commemoration Event
2012	70 th anniversary of the Dieppe Raid 95 th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge
2013	60 th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice
2014	70 th anniversary of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy
2015	70 th anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands
2016	100 th anniversary of the Battles of the Somme and Beaumont-Hamel

Source: VAC Commemoration Division

The 2017 major ceremonies and events associated with the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge fell outside the period of the evaluation. However, the evaluation team observed national events in Ottawa during April 2017 and confirmed that attendance at such events in-person and on-line contributes to the public acknowledgement of Veterans and those who died in service (see Section 3.1.1 *Continued Need for the Programs, Table 5 – Facebook Live Participation in Events Observed by Evaluators* for figures on ceremony reach).

The evaluation team obtained manual tracking statistics from VAC’s domestic events team for fiscal years 2014-15 and 2015-16. The documentation indicates that:

- on average, VAC led, partnered, supported, and/or participated in 678 events per year;
- 94.5% of events were regional/community-based events; and
- 5.5% of events were national in scope.

Statistics for further years were unavailable, therefore, a trend analysis could not be conducted. As recommended in Section 5.1 of the evaluation, improvements are required to documentation/tracking associated with ceremonies and events.

Intermediate Outcome Canadians participate in remembrance.
#2: Commemorative Partnership Program

The Commemorative Partnership Program provides opportunities for Canadians to participate in remembrance.

The number of Commemorative Partnership Program projects, which provide opportunities for Canadians to participate in remembrance, and the funding provided are shown in Table 14. As identified, the number of funded projects increased from 168 in 2012-13 to 250 in 2015-16 (a 49% increase).

Table 14 – Commemorative Partnership Program Expenditures

Expenditure Area	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Commemorative Partnerships Contributions	\$2,136,169	\$2,140,321	\$1,648,821	\$3,066,326*
Commemorative Partnerships Grants	N/A	N/A	\$654,266	\$653,113
Community War Memorial Contributions	\$753,989	\$747,598	\$724,166	\$278,366
Total Program Funds Utilized – Grants and Contributions	\$2,890,158	\$2,887,919	\$3,027,253	\$3,997,805
<i>Projects Funded</i>	<i>168</i>	<i>218</i>	<i>270</i>	<i>250</i>

Source: VAC Finance Division and *Public Account of Canada*

*2015-16 Contribution Payment expenditures include a one-time payment of \$1,500,000 in support of the 2017 Invictus Games.

The evaluation team analysed data collected from program evaluation forms completed by funding recipients. Over the four-year period covered by the evaluation, 98% of funding recipients identified that their project was engaging to Canadians. In fiscal year 2016-17, the program area began using a new tool that, among other things, compiles data on program reach (e.g., the number of attendees at events, the number of people reached by learning resources, etc.). This information will better support future evaluations to assess the overall reach of the program.

The evaluation team observed a decision-making committee meeting in support of the Community Engagement Partnership element of this Program. The evaluation team found that key factors including geographical reach, diversity and youth impacts were considered during the decision-making process.

Intermediate Outcome #3: Learning and Public Information	Canadians, including youth, have increased knowledge and understanding about the sacrifices and achievements of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service.
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The Learning and Public Information component is contributing to Canadians', including youth, knowledge about the sacrifices and achievements of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service.

The evaluation finds that the public information portion of the Learning and Public Information component is achieving its intermediate outcome. This component is responsible for developing learning resources for Canadians and youth such as Veterans' Week materials, online and social media content, and *Heroes Remember* videos (videos of personal recollections of those who served), and for contributing to student programs such as the student guides in France and Encounters with Canada remembrance-themed weeks.²²

Veterans' Week online evaluation forms completed by educators who ordered VAC learning resources during the period of the evaluation indicate that:

- 99% of teachers agree that Veterans' Week learning resources "...contributed to student's understanding and appreciation of remembrance."; and
- 99% of teachers agreed that "*The learning material increased youth knowledge and understanding of the sacrifices and achievements of Canada's Veterans and those who died in service.*"

Further evidence that VAC initiatives foster increased knowledge and understanding about the sacrifices and achievements of Canadian Veterans is revealed in student

²² Encounters with Canada is the country's largest youth forum. Funded by Historica Canada, the program provides students aged 14 to 17 the opportunity to visit Ottawa to participate in themed weeks, to discover Canada, and to explore various career pathways. Approximately 120-140 students attend the VAC-sponsored remembrance-themed week each November.

evaluation forms completed by youth participating in Historica Canada’s Encounters with Canada Program.²³ VAC collaborates with Encounters with Canada/Historica Canada to offer a one-week remembrance-themed program to youth during Veterans’ Week each year.²⁴ Of the youth that participated in this program between 2014 and 2016:

- 87% reported that “As a result of the Canada Remembers theme week, I am likely to tell my friends about what I now know about Remembrance.”
- 97% reported that “After my experiences this week, I better understand the sacrifices and achievements of those who have served Canada during times of war and peace.”

The impact of the work of student guides on visitors could not be fully assessed due to a lack of visitor experience feedback. Additional performance feedback is required in order to assess the impact of guided tours and interpretation at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial. This finding is further reviewed in Section 4.3.3 *Learning and Public Information* of this evaluation.

**Intermediate Outcome
#4: Memorials**

Canadians support properly maintained VAC memorials, cemeteries and grave markers.

Canadians support properly maintained VAC memorials, cemeteries, and grave markers.

VAC measures this outcome through its *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans’ Week Survey*. The survey asked participants if it is important that “VAC honour deceased Canadian Veterans and war dead by maintaining memorials, cemeteries and grave markers.” The results, as identified in Table 15, confirm that the vast majority of Canadians surveyed agree it is important for VAC to do so.

Table 15 – Canadian Support for the Maintenance of VAC Memorials

Percentage of Canadians who report that ...	2012 Survey	2014 Survey	2016 Survey
It is important that VAC honour deceased Canadian Veterans and war dead by maintaining memorials, cemeteries and grave markers.	88%	89%	91%

Source: *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans’ Week Surveys* 2012, 2014, and 2016.

²³ Historica Canada is the largest independent organization devoted to enhancing awareness of Canadian history and citizenship.

²⁴ An additional remembrance-theme week was added in 2017 (outside of the scope of this evaluation) that focuses on the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

Public support for Veterans and Canada’s war dead is also evident in a November 2015 poll released by the Historica-Dominion Institute (now Historica Canada), which measured Canadians’ attitudes on remembrance and found that:

- Most (91%) Canadians ‘agree’ that Canada should do more to honour its Veterans; and
- Nine in ten (90%) ‘agree’ that Canadians should do more to honour those who fought and those who have died in war.²⁵

Further support for VAC memorials is evident in visitation rates at Canadian memorials in Europe. As Table 16 shows, there are high volumes of visitation to the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial. Visitation fluctuates on a yearly basis and can be influenced by major military milestones. VAC staff estimate that 15%-18% of visitors are Canadians.

Table 16 – Visitor Statistics Major Memorials

Memorials	2013	2014	2015	2016
Canadian National Vimy Memorial	687,389	775,759	790,878	460,096*
Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial	133,457	223,279	179,045	181,425
Total	820,846	999,038	969,923	N/A

Source: VAC Commemoration Division

*Data available until end of August only due to on-site automated counter failure

Canadians’ support for memorials is also evident through the high volume of online visits to the Canadian Virtual War Memorial and the online *Books of Remembrance*. Requests for copies of pages from the *Books of Remembrance* received by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms of the House of Commons have also increased over the period of the evaluation²⁶ (see Table 17).

Table 17 – Online Memorial Statistics

Channel	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Number of visits to Canadian Virtual War Memorial	206,995	1,411,518	1,539,133	1,564,735
Number of visits to online <i>Books of Remembrance</i>	58,946	108,596	356,112	216,348
Number of print requests for pages from the <i>Books of Remembrance</i>	1,215	N/A*	4,126	3,893

Source: VAC Commemoration Division

*Page print request volumes unavailable for 2013-14.

²⁵ Historica Canada. (November 9, 2015). *Most (82%) Canadians Think Remembrance Day is as Relevant Today as When it First Began Nearly 100 Years Ago*, p 3.

²⁶ Requests for copies of individual pages of the *Books of Remembrance* are received and actioned by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms of the House of Commons, on behalf of VAC.

Ultimate Outcome: All Programs	Canadian Veterans and those who died in service are honoured and the memory of their achievements and sacrifices is preserved.
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The ultimate outcome is being achieved.

The evaluation concludes that the components are contributing to the ultimate outcome of ensuring Canadian Veterans and those who died in service are honoured and the memory of their achievements and sacrifices is preserved. The components evaluated complement other Commemoration components such as the Funeral and Burial Program, Cemetery and Grave Maintenance, and Honours and Awards.

Public opinion research is the main line of measurements used by VAC to determine the ultimate outcome is being achieved. In VAC's 2010 National Client Survey, the vast majority (88%) of VAC program recipients reported that they are satisfied with how the Department is delivering its remembrance program.

In addition, both the *Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week Survey 2016* and the *Veterans Affairs Canada National Survey 2017* reveal that 76% of respondents feel VAC's remembrance program "...effectively honours Veterans and those who died in service, and preserves the memory of their achievements and sacrifices", exceeding the 70% target. A further breakdown of the *Veterans Affairs Canada National Survey 2017* results is referenced in Table 18. As indicated, 85% of War Service Veteran respondents were satisfied with VAC's commemorative initiatives, however, CAF Veterans, especially female Veterans were less likely to be satisfied.

Table 18: 2017 VAC National Survey - Satisfaction with commemorative initiatives

Percentage of respondents who reported that they are "satisfied with the way VAC's commemorative initiatives honour those who served our country and preserve the memory of their sacrifices."	Male	Female	Total
War Service Veterans (n=200)	86%	80%	85%
Canadian Armed Forces Veterans (n=707)	72%	65%	72%

4.3 Does VAC have adequate/appropriate processes in place to ensure the Programs are administered as intended?

4.3.1 Commemorative Ceremonies and Events

Process changes are required to determine if domestic ceremonies and events are being administered efficiently.

Planning and post-mortem documents for overseas events were shared with the evaluation team. A review of the documents indicated that opportunities for further

process improvements (lessons learned) are considered. Although documentation is compiled for overseas events, it is not always completed in a consistent and/or formal manner.

The evaluation team found that process changes are required in order to determine if the domestic ceremonies and events portion of this component is being administered as intended. The evaluation team observed domestic events during Veterans' Week 2016. Although the events were found to be contributing to the components' outcomes (raising awareness and recognizing Veterans' achievements/sacrifices), follow-up reports documenting resources used, opportunities for improvement, and lessons learned were not consistently completed for all events.

The evaluation team would like to acknowledge that interviews also highlighted that there are challenges regarding administrative requirements and that there are no consistent tools available to track success. There is an opportunity for the program area to utilize a "final activity report" tool similar to the report currently required for funding recipients through the Commemorative Partnership Program. It is important that the activity report highlight reach of the event (in-person and online participation), resources utilized for the event, successes of the event, and any opportunities for improvement that should be considered in the future. A recommendation in this regard is identified in Section 5.1 *Commemorative Ceremonies and Events*.

As previously stated in Section 4.2 *Achievement of Expected Outcomes, Immediate Outcome #1: Commemorative Ceremonies and Events*, the evaluation team found that process improvements are required for promoting domestic events.

Opportunity for Improvement

Key informant interviews highlighted that additional clarity is required with respect to roles and responsibilities for individuals (VAC Commemoration/Communication staff) organizing/supporting these events.

4.3.2 Commemorative Partnership Program

Processes are in place to ensure this Program is administered as intended. However, changes to delegated authority and internal documentation procedures would make the Program more efficient.

Through key informant interviews and workload observation, the evaluation team found that processes are in place to ensure the Program is administered as intended. The team determined that decisions on funding proposals less than \$10,000 (grants) for the Community Engagement element of this Program, are approved at the Assistant Deputy Minister level upon recommendation by the program officer, manager, director, and director general. Decisions for projects receiving more than \$10,000 are recommended by a decision-making committee prior to final sign-off by the Assistant Deputy Minister. All funding proposals through the Community War Memorial element of this Program are

recommended by a decision-making committee prior to final approval at the Assistant Deputy Minister level.

Analysis of the approved projects during 2015-16 revealed that 65% of the projects were funded through a grant. Although these projects were determined to be low risk and were of low dollar value (less than \$10,000), approval was still required at the Assistant Deputy Minister level. The evaluation team was informed through interviews with Canadian Heritage's Celebration and Commemoration Program, that signing authority is delegated to the Director General level for projects funded through the grant portion of their program.

Opportunity for Improvement

Though current service standards are being met (*Table 22 – Service Standards Commemorative Partnership Program*), removing decision layers would further reduce wait times for funding recipients and improve program efficiency and cost effectiveness.

Duplication/Overlap

Processes are in place to ensure that funding provided through the Commemorative Partnership Program is not duplicated between VAC and other government departments (e.g., Canadian Heritage).

4.3.3 Learning and Public Information

VAC produces high quality learning resources. Feedback from visitors is required to determine if the experience offered at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial meets their needs and expectations.

Through key informant interviews and observation, the evaluation team confirmed that:

- during the development of learning resources, VAC's Education Officers ensure Canada's cultural diversity is appropriately reflected and that learning resources take into consideration identity factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, and geography (Gender Based Analysis +);
- processes exist between the Department of National Defence and VAC to ensure the historical accuracy of VAC learning resources and to ensure appropriate historical training is provided to VAC student guides at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial; and
- effective processes are in place for posting content to social media that define the roles of key players such as VAC's Communication Division.

Through interviews, the evaluation team determined that social media processes that determine workflows between Commemoration and Communications staff are working effectively. The evaluation team also reviewed the social media plan prepared by Commemoration Education Officers and Communication's social media team and finds

that comprehensive efforts are being made to ensure social media activities are effectively recognizing Veterans, including anniversaries and other milestones.

As previously noted in Section 4.2 *Effectiveness – Achievement of Expected Outcomes, Intermediate Outcome #3: Learning and Public Information*, the impact of the services provided by student guides on visitors could not be fully assessed due to a lack of visitor experience feedback. Interviews with employees currently involved with VAC’s student guide services as well as interviews with former student guides identified that new processes are required to ensure visitor experience information is captured/monitored. A document review of the Performance Measurement Strategy associated with the component confirmed that visitor experience information is not being collected in a meaningful way (currently paper-based guest book). Visitor feedback is essential to answer questions such as:

- Are VAC guides achieving the correct balance between interpretation and guiding?²⁷
- Do visitors feel the tours are well organized and readily available?
- What elements are meeting visitor expectations and what elements need improvement?

The evaluation team interviewed employees from other federal organizations with similar Programs, including Parks Canada, Canadian Heritage and the Parliament of Canada (Parliamentary Guide Program). The evaluation confirms that these organizations are using or adopting updated processes/tools to collect visitor experience feedback (e.g. Parks Canada uses visitor surveys, Canadian Heritage outfits guides in the National Capital Region with tablets to record visitor experiences, etc.).

The evaluation team concludes that VAC should model the assessment of offerings at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial in France on best practices in use by other federal organizations.

Recommendation #3

It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration, develop and implement measures to capture visitor experience feedback associated with Veterans Affairs Canada’s memorial sites in Europe.

Management Response:

Management agrees with this recommendation.

²⁷ Interpretation refers to an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, whereas guiding is generally considered the simple communication of factual information.

Management Action Plan:

Corrective Action to be Taken	Office of Primary Interest (OPI)	Target Date
The Director General, Commemoration, will develop and implement an approach to capture feedback from visitors to Veterans Affairs Canada's memorial sites in Europe.	Director General, Commemoration	December 2018

Opportunity for Improvement

Key informant interviews highlighted that the recruitment/hiring/training process associated with student guides is resource intensive and could be impacting the efficiency of the initiative. Currently, groups of students are hired for four-month terms (there are three four-month terms annually). Consideration is being given to proceeding with two six-month terms per year to help reduce resources needed for recruitment, hiring, and training. Longer work terms would also provide the benefit of allowing guides to gain additional experience and to further grow into their roles.

Duplication/Overlap

Interviews with partners from external government departments, including Canadian Heritage and the Department of National Defence, highlighted positive/productive working relationships with VAC staff contributing to the Canada Remembers Program components evaluated. Roles between departments are defined and complementary; there is no evidence of duplication of effort.

4.3.4 Memorials

Processes are in place to ensure memorials are maintained. Improvements to processes are required to ensure that the *Books of Remembrance* are updated in a timely manner.

VAC's 14 memorials in Europe, which include monuments and surrounding terrain, are maintained through a contract and memorandum of understanding with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Through interviews, and a review of the memorandum of understanding, the evaluation team confirms that appropriate processes exist with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in relation to the maintenance work on these memorials. The evaluation team obtained and reviewed maintenance plans prepared for each memorial. These plans were updated and approved in 2014. The evaluation team found that VAC/Commonwealth War Graves Commission is utilizing these plans when assessing annual maintenance requirements.

Through interviews and observation, the evaluation team has determined that appropriate processes are in place to ensure commemoration banners are erected along the Confederation Boulevard ceremonial route in Ottawa. Roles and responsibilities are

clear between VAC and Program partners (Canadian Heritage administers the banner initiative) and processes are in place for banner storage after use.

The evaluation found that processes for determining inclusion in the *Books of Remembrance* require improvement. For actions arising from a Matter-of-Right (death attributable) decision, the department does not have standards against which to measure.²⁸ Current processes are contributing to delays and, as revealed in a file review, in certain circumstances, *Books of Remembrance* entries are being missed. The evaluation team noted the missing entries to the work area responsible for correction in future updates. This finding is directly linked to recommended improvements identified in the recent VAC *Evaluation of Commemorative Benefits and Services* – Recommendation #3.²⁹ The evaluation team received agreement from program staff that processes associated with the *Books of Remembrance* are being included as part of the actions required to address the findings in the *Evaluation of Commemorative Benefits and Services*.

²⁸ Matter-of-Right definition: when a Veteran's death is related to military service due to a condition for which VAC provided a disability benefit.

²⁹ Evaluation of Commemorative Benefits and Services (<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/pdf/deptReports/2017-evaluation-commemorative-benefits-services/evaluation-commemorative-benefits-services2.pdf>)

5.0 Efficiency and Economy

5.1 Commemorative Ceremonies and Events

Consistent planning and post-mortem documentation is required for Commemorative Ceremonies and Events.

The Commemorative Ceremonies and Events component is delivered using operating funds. The total administration cost of this component cannot be fully analyzed due to insufficient cost breakdowns. In 2015-16, VAC's Finance Division began allocating salary versus operating and maintenance costs to the sub-program level. However, there is no earlier data available for comparison/trend purposes.

Total component costs utilized by year are reflected in Table 19.

Table 19 – Total Costs: Commemorative Ceremonies and Events

Costs	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Administrative (Salary + Operations & Maintenance)	\$5,558,680	\$4,651,274	\$5,481,039	\$6,423,634

Source: VAC Finance Division

Funding for this component varies on an annual basis and can be impacted by major milestones/anniversaries. In addition, the funding allocation model used for distributing costs within Commemoration attributes a portion of the costs for the new Visitor Education Centre to ceremonies and events.

Primary resources dedicated to this component and associated roles and responsibilities include:

- Domestic Events Team (Senior Program Officers located throughout Canada)
 - leads domestic events;
 - supports domestic events that are being led by partners; and
 - participates in domestic events on behalf of VAC and/or the Government of Canada.
- Overseas Events Team (located in Canada)
 - leads the planning, coordination and implementation of overseas events for major anniversaries/milestones.
- European Operations (located in France)
 - leads/participates in annual European events; and
 - provides on-site support for major anniversaries/milestones.

In addition to Commemoration resources contributing to this component, Internal Service – Communications resources also support ceremonies and events. The Communications Division dedicates resources to social media activities related to events (e.g., promotion, Facebook Live, etc.). Communications experts with the Public Affairs team are also involved in all events that include the participation of the Minister of Veterans Affairs.

5.1.1 – Overseas Ceremonies and Events

The evaluation team found that documentation, including action plans, letters of agreement, and post-mortems identifying lessons learned are prepared for overseas ceremonies and events. This documentation was shared with the evaluation team, and the team was able to verify the existence/use of this information through a document review. The documents reviewed provided evidence that opportunities for further process improvements (lessons learned) are considered. Although documentation is compiled for overseas events, it is not being completed in a consistent and/or formal manner.

Opportunity for Greater Efficiency/Economy

Key informant interviews highlighted issues with the current planning practices for major events, including delays in planning activities, approvals, and funding decisions. This is impacting the efficiency of VAC's Commemorative Ceremonies and Events. These delays are resulting in urgent actions being required by program staff, and could be increasing the costs of the Commemorative Ceremonies and Events component due to overtime requirements. The evaluation team finds that efforts are required to ensure the Integrated Business Planning process is followed by timely decisions allowing for the advance planning of events including associated expenditures. An upcoming Audit of Overseas Ceremonies and Events will further review these issues.

5.1.2 Domestic Ceremonies and Events

The evaluation team found the domestic ceremonies and events aspect of this component is lacking appropriate documentation in order to determine whether it is being delivered efficiently or economically. The evaluation team observed that there is a lack of consistent planning and post-mortems documentation to identify event objectives, resource commitments, or if intended results were achieved.

Interviews also highlighted that there are resource challenges with respect to administrative requirements and identified that there are no standardized tools available to track the success of events. Overall, the evaluation team finds that improved documentation and tracking is required in order to adequately ensure this portion of the component is being delivered effectively and efficiently. Documentation could highlight reach of the event (participants in person/online), resources utilized for the event, successes of the event, and any opportunities for improvements/cost savings that should be considered in the future.

Recommendation #4

It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration, develop and implement consistent planning and post-mortem documentation requirements for commemorative ceremonies and events.

Management Response:

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Management Action Plan:

Corrective Action to be Taken	Office of Primary Interest (OPI)	Target Date
The Director General, Commemoration, will build on current best practices to establish and implement official documentation requirements for the planning and post-mortem review of commemorative ceremonies and events, thus ensuring consistency and quality of information for planning, evaluating and reporting purposes.	Director General, Commemoration	April 2018

5.2 Commemorative Partnership Program

In a 2013 *Program Evaluation of the Partnerships Contribution Program* (former Program title), it was recommended that efforts be made to modify the service delivery model for the Program in order to improve cost effectiveness. In response to the evaluation, a revised delivery model for low-risk projects with funding less than \$10,000 was implemented in 2014-15 as part of a new Commemorative Partnerships Grant. The current evaluation finds that this new delivery model could be contributing to reduced administrative costs as reflected in Table 20. The administration costs during the evaluation period have decreased by \$556,189 between 2012-13 and 2015-16, whereas during the same time period, the volume of projects receiving funding has increased. As the workload activity has increased while the administrative costs have decreased, this leads the evaluation team to find that cost efficiencies are being realized.

Table 20 – Total Expenditures – Commemorative Partnership Program

Expenditure	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Commemorative Partnerships Contributions	\$2,136,169	\$2,140,321	\$1,648,821	\$3,066,326*
Commemorative Partnerships Grants	N/A	N/A	\$654,266	\$653,113
Community War Memorial Contribution ³⁰	\$753,989	\$747,598	\$724,166	\$278,366
Total Grants and Contributions	\$2,890,158	\$2,887,919	\$3,027,253	\$3,997,805
Total Administration Cost	\$1,486,175	\$1,243,570	\$1,465,417	\$929,986
Total Program Expenditure	\$4,376,333	\$4,131,489	\$4,492,670	\$4,927,791
Administrative Cost as a % of G&C Utilized (rounded to 10 th)	51.5%	43.1%	48.4%	23.3%
Administrative Cost as % of total program cost (rounded to 10 th)	34.0%	30.1%	32.7%	18.9%
# of Projects Funded	168	218	270	250
FTEs Utilized	9.5	7.3	6.9	7.3
Average Administrative Cost per Project	\$8,846	\$5,704	\$5,427	\$3,720

Source: VAC Finance Division and the *Public Accounts of Canada*, with analysis from the Evaluation Team

*2015-16 Contribution Payment expenditures include a one-time payment of \$1,500,000 in support of the 2017 Invictus Games.

Primary resources dedicated to this Program and associated roles and responsibilities include:

- Junior Program Officers
 - provide support/guidance to applicants and assess applications for eligibility requirements; and
 - undertake outreach to groups/individuals that have identified projects that may qualify for funding.
- Senior Program Officers located throughout the country
 - provide direct support/guidance to groups/individuals who may qualify for funding; and
 - provide outreach aimed at increasing awareness of the Program.
- Management/Senior Management
 - participate in decision-making committees to determine eligibility for projects requesting more than \$10,000 in funding.

³⁰ Contributions under the Community War Memorial Program ended in 2015-16. Funding for community war memorials is available through the Commemorative Partnership Program.

Commemorative Partnership Program funding recipients are required to submit final activity reports detailing the projects' success, reach, and challenges. These final activity reports are used by program staff to support additional future requests for funding from the same organization and to facilitate reporting on program outcomes.

Results obtained through program evaluation forms completed by funding recipients are reflected in Table 21. Overall, the results highlight:

- high levels of satisfaction with the effectiveness of staff supporting this Program, during all years of the evaluation period; and
- high levels of satisfaction with the efficiency of decisions/funding for applications during the 2015-16 fiscal year, with lower levels of satisfaction during fiscal years 2013-14 and 2014-15.

Table 21 – Percentage of funding recipients who reported that they were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with aspects of the Commemorative Partnership Program

Criteria	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	4 year total
Knowledge of staff	96.6%	90.2%	89.4%	96.0%	93.0%
Accessibility of Staff	95.8%	88.6%	88.4%	95.2%	91.9%
Timeliness of decisions	80.5%	66.9%	66.7%	86.4%	75.0%
Timeliness of funding	74.2%	61.3%	78.9%	89.4%	76.6%

Source: Commemorative Partnership Program Final Activity Reports

Service standard results over the past four years are reflected in Table 22. These results align with the feedback received from funding recipients and reflect that there were timeliness issues with decision-making in 2013-14 and 2014-15. Interviews identified that funding and approval challenges impacted the application process during the 2013-14 and 2014-15 fiscal years. Results have improved and exceeded targets during the 2015-16 fiscal year.

Table 22 – Service Standards – Commemorative Partnership Program

Service Standards	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Community Engagement Partnership Fund – % of Decisions within 12 weeks of posted quarterly application deadline (Target – 80%)	85%	59%	91%	92%
Cenotaph Monument Restoration Program – % of Decisions within 12 weeks of posted quarterly application deadline (Target – 85%)	100%	58%	38%	100%

Source: VAC Commemoration Division

The evaluation team observed staff manually entering project application data into three different databases. Interviews confirmed that the current databases are not being used

to their full potential for tracking/monitoring purposes. In addition, automated processes are not in place to route approved projects to VAC's Finance Division for payment.

Based on information gathered through key informant interviews and workload observations, it is the evaluation team's opinion that the program area should consolidate documentation to 1-2 required databases and work with other areas within VAC (Information Technology Information Management Division) to increase reporting functionalities. In addition, VAC should continue consulting with other federal organizations, notably Canadian Heritage, to determine best practices and options associated with tracking tools for grants and contributions programs.

5.3 Learning and Public Information

The Learning and Public Information component is delivered using operating funds. The total administration cost of this component cannot be fully analyzed due to insufficient cost breakdowns. In 2015-16, VAC's Finance Division began allocating salary versus operating and maintenance costs to the sub-program level. However, there is no earlier data available for comparison/trend purposes. Future evaluations will have additional information to support trend analysis. Total costs by year are reflected in Table 23.

Table 23 – Total Costs – Learning and Public Information

Costs	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Administrative (Salary + Operations & Maintenance)	\$5,404,272	\$4,522,072	\$5,328,788	\$6,999,715
Government Advertising	\$3,415,821	\$3,912,831	\$3,984,082	\$3,402,353
Total Costs (Administrative + Government Advertising)	\$8,820,093	\$8,434,903	\$9,312,870	\$10,402,068

Source: VAC Finance Division

Annual funding for this component varies and can be impacted by unique events/projects. During 2014-15 and 2015-16, funding was increased in support of constructing a Visitor Education Centre at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial site. Outside of the funding associated with the new Visitor Education Centre, the ongoing expenditures for Learning and Public Information have remained relatively stable.

Primary resources dedicated to this Program include:

- Education Officers
 - develop learning resources (including educational social media content, online lesson plans, and activities);
 - promote awareness of VAC learning resources;
 - participate in learning events (e.g., Encounters with Canada); and
 - liaise with the Department of National Defence regarding accuracy of historical information.
- Distribution Unit
 - oversees the distribution of learning resources;

- monitors the print contractor's performance, especially during Veterans' Week distribution period; and
- maintains inventory on site for distribution during other periods during the year.
- Web Content Team
 - develops remembrance materials for VAC's website (veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance);
 - produces *Heroes Remember* interviews that recount the personal recollections of Canadian Veterans;
 - maintains the online Canadian Virtual War Memorial;
 - maintains the online database for the National Inventory of; Canadian Military Memorials; and
 - digitizes information of historical value to preserve for future generations.
- Student Supervisors and Program Officers
 - recruit and hire students three times per year for four-month terms;
 - coordinate student training in conjunction with the Department of National Defence; and
 - supervise students on a day-to-day basis (develop works schedules, assignments, arrange accommodations, etc.).
- Student Guides
 - provide guided tours and visitor services at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial, both located in France.

In addition to Commemoration resources contributing to this component, Internal Service – Communications resources also support Learning and Public Information. The Communications Division dedicates resources to VAC's Canada Remembers social media activities, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Communications resources are also responsible for managing the departmental print contract, which includes learning resources.

Every September, VAC distributes 22,000 sample packs containing Veterans' Week learning resources to educators and service groups. Sample packs are distributed to raise awareness that new learning resources are available for Veterans' Week. Follow-up reminder e-mails are sent in early September to prompt educators to order materials online.

Opportunity for Greater Efficiency/Economy

Key informant interviews questioned the value of providing sample packs and indicated a need to re-visit this process. In reviewing the results of the 2016 Veterans' Week evaluations completed by 1,918 individuals (primarily educators) who received materials, the evaluation team found that 28% (533 respondents) reported that they "*heard about the learning materials*" through a VAC sample pack. However, further analysis revealed that 87% (463) of those indicating they heard about the learning resources through a VAC sample pack also reported that they heard about the resources through other channels (e.g., VAC website, VAC email, fellow educators, etc.).

Due to the need for manual preparation, sample packs are relatively high-cost items compared to regular commemoration print products (approximately \$85,000 including tax, annually for 22,000 units based on invoices provided for 2016)³¹.

This analysis leads the evaluation team to conclude that the program area should explore various approaches to determine and implement the most effective means of promoting commemorative learning resources.

5.4 Memorials

The Memorials component is delivered using operating funds. The total administration cost of this component cannot be fully analysed due to insufficient cost breakdowns. In 2015-16, VAC's Finance Division began allocating salary versus operating and maintenance costs to the sub-program level. However there is no earlier data available for comparison/trend purposes.

Total costs by year are reflected in Table 24.

Table 24 – Annual Expenditures – Memorials

Expenditure Type	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Commonwealth War Graves Commission Contract for Maintenance of Memorials in Europe	\$1,975,000	\$1,975,000	\$1,975,000	\$1,975,000
Contract with French Nationals for On-site Security/Maintenance	\$825,000	\$825,000	\$825,000	\$825,000
Combined – Expenditures for Salary & EBP associated with Memorial and Cemetery Maintenance + O&M Expenditures (including Capital Expenditure projects)	\$2,507,700	\$1,500,787	\$2,404,608	\$1,675,245
<i>Total Expenditures for Memorials (including administration portion of Cemetery Maintenance)</i>	<i>\$5,307,700</i>	<i>\$4,300,787</i>	<i>\$5,204,608</i>	<i>\$4,475,245</i>

Source: VAC Finance Division and VAC Commemoration Division

A review of the combined costs shows that overall expenditures have fluctuated between \$4.3 million and \$5.3 million during the evaluation period. Overall cost fluctuations can be attributed to changes in operating costs as a result of different funding allocation models used for this component during the evaluation period.

³¹ Cost does not include the cost for learning materials in sample packs (e.g., fact sheets, newspapers, postcards, bookmarks, etc.).

Primary resources dedicated to this initiative include:

- European Operations
 - Memorial maintenance and associated contract with Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The evaluation team obtained and reviewed maintenance plans prepared for each memorial and found these plans are useful tools for VAC/Commonwealth War Graves Commission when assessing maintenance requirements on an annual basis. The plans are thorough, with cost breakdowns where applicable.

6.0 Conclusion

The evaluation covered activities from April 2012 to March 2016. Recent overseas events, such as the centennials of the Battle of Vimy Ridge and the Battles of the Somme and Beaumont-Hamel, did not fall within the evaluation timelines. However, action plans and post mortems were reviewed to determine if adequate processes were in place. Observations regarding domestic events during Veterans' Week 2016 and Vimy 100 events in April 2017 were made by the evaluation team to determine component need and reach, but were not evaluated in and of themselves.

Relevance

Uptake and expenditures and positive public reaction demonstrates a continued need for the components. The components align with federal government priorities as well as VAC's mandate and strategic outcomes.

Achievement of Outcomes

VAC is achieving the ultimate outcome and most of the immediate and intermediate outcomes associated with these components. However, the evaluation found areas for improvement with respect to the achievement of:

- the immediate outcome of the Commemorative Ceremonies and Events component; and
- the immediate outcome of the Learning and Public Information component.

Adequate Processes

Commemorative Ceremonies and Events

- Process changes are required in relation to domestic ceremonies and events.

Commemorative Partnership Program

- Changes to delegated authority and internal documentation procedures would make the Program more efficient.

Learning and Public Information

- Feedback from visitors at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial is required to determine if their needs are being met.

Memorials

- Changes to processes are required to ensure that the *Books of Remembrance* are updated in a timely manner.

Efficiency and Economy

The evaluation identified improvements that could be made to enhance efficiency and economy for the Commemorative Ceremonies and Events component and the Learning and Public Information component.

Annex A – Survey of Commemorative Initiatives

Veterans' Week

Veterans' Week takes place in November each year and ends with Remembrance Day. During this week, commemorative ceremonies and events take place across the country to recognize the achievements of Canadian Veterans. Canadians also commemorate Veterans through other means such as wearing a poppy, posting to social media, and having discussions with Veterans or military personnel. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statement.

Question 1

Veterans' Week initiatives recognize the achievements and sacrifices of Canadian Veterans.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Are there additional initiatives you feel could enhance Veterans' Week? Please do not include any personal or identifying information in your response.

Type Here

Ceremonies and Events

As part of VAC's Ceremonies and Events Program, VAC leads, supports and promotes ceremonies and events that mark Canadian military milestones regionally, nationally and internationally. Examples of recent and significant milestones include the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge (April 9, 2017), and the 100th anniversary of the Battles of the Somme and Beaumont-Hamel (July 1, 2016). Upcoming events include the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Passchendaele and the 75th anniversary of the Dieppe Raid.

Question 2

In your view, how important is it for VAC to mark military milestones/anniversaries?

- Not important at all
- Not very important
- Neither important nor unimportant

- Moderately important
- Very important

Question 3

Thinking about ways of recognizing the achievements and sacrifices of Canadians during wartime and in peacetime operations, how important is it for the Government of Canada to focus on each of the following remembrance initiatives? Please rate the following initiatives on a scale of 1-5 where:

- 1 = Not important at all
- 2 = Not very important
- 3 = Neither important nor unimportant
- 4 = Moderately important
- 5 = Very important

	1	2	3	4	5
Regional events that recognize those who served and important military milestones	<input type="radio"/>				
National events that recognize those who served and important military milestones	<input type="radio"/>				
International events that recognize those who served and important military milestones	<input type="radio"/>				
Ceremonies at the National War Memorial	<input type="radio"/>				
Providing funds for communities to undertake remembrance initiatives	<input type="radio"/>				
Creating and distributing education materials for schools	<input type="radio"/>				
Providing promotional materials, such as posters and pins	<input type="radio"/>				
Broadcasting or posting ads encouraging remembrance on TV and the Internet	<input type="radio"/>				
Posting remembrance-related content on social media (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, blogs, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>				

Question 4

Are there any additional ways you feel the Government of Canada should recognize the achievements and sacrifices of those who served during wartime and in peacetime operations? If so, could you provide additional context? Please do not include any personal or identifying information in your response.

Type here

Question 5

Veterans Affairs Canada's remembrance Program effectively honours and recognizes Traditional/War Service Veterans.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Question 6

Veterans Affairs Canada's remembrance program effectively honours and recognizes Modern Day/Canadian Armed Forces Veterans.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Question 7

You see yourself reflected in VAC's commemoration activities.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Veterans Affairs Canada has a mandate to care for certain overseas memorials, the cemeteries of Canada's war dead, and graves of eligible deceased Veterans. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Question 8

It is important that Veterans Affairs Canada recognize and honour deceased Canadian Veterans and war dead by maintaining these memorials, cemeteries and grave markers.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree

- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Question 9

In your opinion, is there anything additional that Veterans Affairs Canada can do to reach more Canadians through remembrance initiatives? Please do not include any personal or identifying information in your response.

Type here

Question 10

Do you have any additional comments? Please do not include any personal or identifying information in your response.

Type here

Question 11

Are you:

- A former CAF Member
- A current CAF Member
- Prefer not to answer

Question 12

Approximate start date of service:

- 1960s
- 1970s
- 1980s
- 1990s
- 2000s
- 2010s
- Prefer not to answer

Question 13

Approximate end date of service:

- 1960
- 1970s
- 1980s
- 1990s
- 2000s
- 2010s
- Prefer not to answer

Question 14

Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to answer

Question 15

Age:

- < 30 years old
- 30-39 years old
- 40-49 years old
- 50-59 years old
- 60+ years old
- Prefer not to answer