

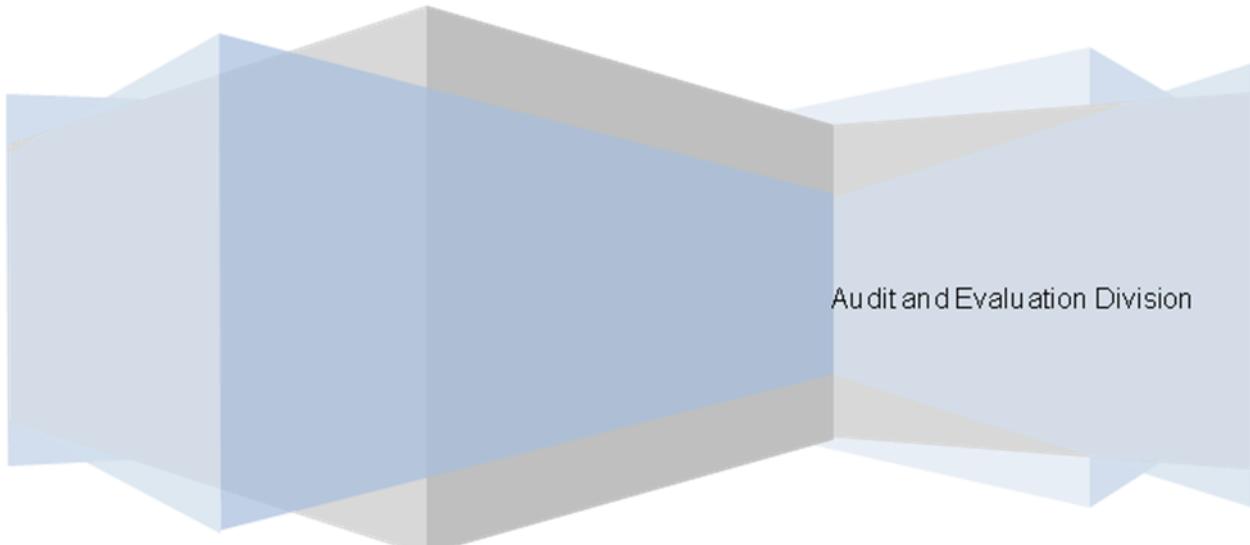


Veterans Affairs  
Canada

Anciens Combattants  
Canada

# **Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program Evaluation**

**Final: February 2013**



**Canada** The logo of the Canadian government, featuring the word 'Canada' in a serif font with a red maple leaf icon above the letter 'a'.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## List of Acronyms

<b>ABMC</b>	American Battle Monuments Commission
<b>ADM</b>	Assistant Deputy Minister
<b>CF</b>	Canadian Forces
<b>CM</b>	Cemetery Maintenance
<b>CRGTS</b>	Canada Remembers Grave Tracking System
<b>CVWM</b>	Canadian Virtual War Memorial
<b>CWGC</b>	Commonwealth War Graves Commission
<b>DFAIT</b>	Department of Foreign and International Affairs
<b>DND</b>	Department of National Defence
<b>EO</b>	European Operations
<b>FTE</b>	Full time equivalents
<b>GoC</b>	Government of Canada
<b>LPF</b>	Last Post Fund
<b>MCGMP</b>	Memorial and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program
<b>MCMP</b>	Memorials and Cemetery Draft Performance Measurement Strategy
<b>NCC</b>	National Capital Commission
<b>NOK</b>	Next of kin
<b>O&amp;M</b>	Operations and Maintenance
<b>OAWG</b>	Office of the Australian War Graves
<b>OGDs</b>	Other Government Departments
<b>PCC</b>	Policy, Communications and Commemoration
<b>PMS</b>	Performance Measurement Strategy
<b>PWGSC</b>	Public Works and Government Services Canada
<b>UNMCK</b>	United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Korea
<b>VAC</b>	Veterans Affairs Canada

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## Executive Summary

In accordance with the Veterans Affairs Canada Evaluation Plan (2011-2016) approved by the Departmental Evaluation Committee, the Audit and Evaluation Division was tasked with conducting the evaluation of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program.

The Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program preserves the memory of deceased Canadians who served their country during war and peace by maintaining symbols of remembrance in perpetuity. This includes responsibility for the 14 memorials to the First and Second World Wars in Europe, the graves of Canadian war dead all over the world, the graves of Veterans and some others buried at the expense of Canada located throughout the world, and two departmental Veterans' cemeteries in Canada. Two unique memorials to those who died in service to Canada, the Books of Remembrance and the Canadian Virtual War Memorial (CVWM) are also maintained through this program.

The evaluation examined the relevance, effectiveness/success, efficiency and economy of the program, and was conducted in accordance with Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) requirements and guidance material.

This evaluation was based on a non-experimental design and the evaluation's findings and conclusions are based on the analysis of multiple lines of qualitative and quantitative evidence.

## Findings

### **Relevance**

Canadians are generally satisfied with the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program but more detailed information is required to assess if this satisfaction reflects their opinion on the different components that make up the program.

The majority of Canadians indicated awareness of VAC's efforts in the maintenance of memorials and war graves but less than half were aware of VAC's maintenance activities of Veteran cemeteries and graves.

### **Effectiveness/Success**

The cemeteries and grave markers in Europe are in good condition. The memorials are more costly to maintain; some are in need of more repair than others. Increasing repair and restoration costs may soon force the Department to prioritize which memorials will continue to be maintained annually and to what level. Maintaining Veteran graves in Canada is a complex task as a result of shared responsibilities with external organizations. Widely dispersed burials and unique individual cemetery standards and practices will continue to present the Department with maintenance challenges.

## **Efficiency and Economy**

Going forward, VAC, in conjunction with its key stakeholders, should explore the increased use of columbaria<sup>1</sup> and designated 'Fields of Honor' for Veterans' burials.

VAC's historical approach to the burial of its post-war Veterans, is different from the more efficient approaches adopted by the other countries used for comparison purposes in this evaluation. This has made it more difficult for VAC to maintain, a high standard of grave and marker care, and in general, a more efficient operation.

## **Recommendations**

- R1 It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration Division initiate activities to increase public awareness of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program, and to better measure this awareness. (Essential)
- R2 It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration Division, develop appropriate outcome measurement tools for the program's Performance Measurement Strategy. (Important)
- R3 It is recommended that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy, Communications and Commemoration ensure that:
  - 3.1 Measures are put in place to effectively capture visitor information for Memorials in Europe.
  - 3.2 Enhancements are implemented to improve the visitor experience to European Operations sites.
  - 3.3 European Operations staff have the resources available to them to: assess proposals for repair work to the memorials; review the completed work ensuring value for money or contract the necessary expertise as required.
  - 3.4 A Letter of Understanding or MOU between VAC and Les amis du monument canadien de Vimy be established.
- R4 It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration Division, develop a comprehensive Business Case that outlines and presents options for the best approach to providing effective operation and maintenance of the 14 memorials in Europe, as well as the grave and cemetery maintenance for those Veterans buried by Canada. (Important)

(See Appendix A –Significance of Recommendations)

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<sup>1</sup> A **columbarium** is a place for the public storage of cremation urns, i.e. urns holding a deceased's cremated remains.

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Overview

The evaluation of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program (MCGMP) was conducted in response to the requirement for full evaluation coverage of all ongoing programs of grants and contributions, as per the *Financial Administration Act* and Treasury Board's 2009 Directive on the Evaluation Function.

The evaluation report is structured to provide an introduction to the programs, including the background, objectives and outcomes as well as the evaluation scope and methodology. Findings of the evaluation are presented by issue area: relevance, effectiveness/success, efficiency and economy. A summary of conclusions and recommendations is found at the end of the report. Several relevant documents have been annexed for reference.

### 1.2 Program Profile

#### 1.2.1 Background

The evaluation examined two distinct components of the program, namely a) the memorials and cemetery/grave maintenance of Canada's war dead around the world and b) cemetery/grave maintenance of Veterans' graves in Canada. Both of these program components operate under the direction of the Deputy Minister, through the Assistant Deputy Minister of Policy, Communications and Commemoration and the Director General, Commemoration Division. These program components have the same mandate, similar functions, objectives and purpose of commemorating Canadians who have served their country in war and peace. The components, however, have different foci and program criteria.

The memorials component of the Commemoration Division is managed by European Operations (EO) and is responsible for the management and maintenance in Europe of the 14 memorials and cemeteries/graves of the war dead after World War I and II.

See Appendix B for a detailed description of the MCGMP and Appendix C for the legislative authority.

#### 1.2.2 Objectives and Expected Outcomes

As stated in the 2011 Memorial and Cemetery Draft Performance Measurement Strategy (MCMP), "*The program objectives of Memorials and Cemetery Maintenance are to maintain and present VAC memorials, cemeteries and grave markers throughout the world, to enhance visitor experience at European memorial sites and to ensure that*

*current and future generations of Canadians can access and take pride in these symbols of remembrance.”*

Expected Outcomes of the MCMP as detailed in the 2011 Draft Performance Measurement Strategy (PMS) are:

Immediate Outcome –	It is expected that as a result of the activities and outputs, particularly the respectfully maintained memorials, cemeteries and grave markers, Canadians will feel pride.
Intermediate Outcome –	Because of the pride they feel in VAC memorials, cemeteries and grave markers, they will begin to appreciate their significance and understand the importance of maintaining them.
Ultimate Outcomes –	The memory of the achievements and sacrifices of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service is honored and preserved.

These outcomes are linked to VAC’s strategic outcome that *“Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all those who served in Canada’s efforts during war, military conflict and peace.”* The MCGMP is situated under VAC’s Program Activity Architecture (PAA) 2.1, Commemoration and sub-activities 2.1.2 National and International Memorials and sub-sub-activity 2.1.2.2 Cemetery and Grave Maintenance and Memorials.

During the conduct of this evaluation the Performance Measurement Strategy (PMS) was under development with a proposed finish date of March 2012. A draft logic model can be found in Appendix E.

### **1.2.3 Program Management, Key Stakeholders and Beneficiaries**

The European Operations and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance sections operate within the Commemoration Division reporting to the Director General, Commemoration Division, which is a part of the Policy, Communications and Commemoration (PCC) Branch that reports through the Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM), PCC to the Deputy Minister, Veterans Affairs Canada.

As per Order in Council 1965-688, VAC is mandated to manage the care and maintenance of the graves, and grave markers of Veterans buried at the expense of Canada, and the Canadian overseas cemeteries and memorials of Canada’s war dead.

To achieve this, the Department works in conjunction with the Other Government Departments (OGDs) namely:

- the Department of Foreign and International Affairs (DFAIT),
- the Department of National Defence (DND),

- Parks Canada (PC),
- the Canadian War Museum (CWM), and
- Public Works Government Services Canada (PWGSC).

The largest external organization the Department works with is the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. To a lesser degree, the Department works with the United Nations Memorial Commission in Korea to ensure that graves of the Canadian War dead in Korea are well maintained. Other key stakeholders include Veterans and their families, Veterans organizations and service providers.

Ultimately, the key beneficiary of the program is the Canadian public, including Veterans and their families, who directly benefit from the investment in Canadian commemorative events/initiatives.

#### **1.2.4 Program Resources**

The European Operations (EO) program has a staff complement of eight full-time equivalents (FTEs), five of whom are deployed to France, and three at Head Office in Charlottetown. The group is led by an EX 01 Director, three PM-05 Managers, one PM-04 Manager, one PM-02 Project Officer, and two PM-01 Support officers.

In addition, 45 Canadian students are hired every year to work (15 at a time for a period of four months) as tour guides in France and to be the 'face of Canada in Europe'. European Operations also manages two contracts with local companies for clerical support and maintenance and security.

The Cemetery/Grave Maintenance (CM) group is managed by a PM-05 manager (50 percent) who is also responsible for the Funerals and Burials Program; one PM-04 Senior Program Officer, one PM-02 Program officer, and one CR-04 Administrative Assistant.

The Seven Books of Remembrance, the Canadian Virtual War Memorial, and responsibilities related to the National War Memorial and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier engage the following resources: two PM-06 at ten percent each, a PM-04 at eighty percent and one full-time CR-04.

## **2.0 Evaluation Approach**

### **2.1 Evaluation Scope and Timing**

Based on the Terms of Reference cited in VAC's Multi-Year Risk-Based Evaluation Plan for 2011 - 2016, the evaluation is intended to inform the Department's officials of the relevance and performance of the program.

Previous audit and evaluation work by VAC's Audit and Evaluation Division related to this evaluation includes: the 2003 European Operations Assessment, the 2004 Repair,

Restoration and Rehabilitation of Canada's First World War Memorials in Europe Audit Report, and the 2009 Evaluation of the Funeral and Burial Program.

The evaluation examines the relevance, success/effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program for the period April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2011. Queries were conducted using the entire content of the Canada Remembers Grave Tracking System (CRGTS) database which goes back to 2005-06.

The focus of the evaluation consists of: the 14 World War memorials in Europe and the graves of the Canadian war dead; and, the graves of Veterans buried at the expense of Canada. To a lesser degree, the evaluation examines the activities associated with the Books of Remembrance, located in the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill; the National War Memorial, located in Ottawa; and the Canadian Virtual War Memorial housed on the VAC Website.

Field research for the evaluation was carried out from November 2011 to January 2012 and the site visits were limited to cemeteries in Canada.

The evaluation methodology is outlined in Appendix C.

The Terms of Reference for the evaluation was approved on March 15, 2011 by the Departmental Evaluation Committee (see Appendix F).

## **2.2 Evaluation Issues and Objectives**

In accordance with the approved Terms of Reference, the evaluation focused on the following objectives to address the core evaluation issues:

### **Relevance**

**Objective 1** - Assess the extent to which the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program continues to address a demonstrable need and is responsive to the needs of Canadians.

**Objective 2** - Assess the linkages between the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program and (i) federal government priorities and (ii) departmental strategic outcomes.

**Objective 3** - Assess the roles and responsibilities for the Commemoration Division and respective partners in delivering the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program.

## Effectiveness/Success

**Objective 4** - Assessment of progress toward expected outcomes with reference to performance targets and program reach, program design, including the linkage and contribution of outputs to outcomes.

## Efficiency and Economy

**Objective 5** - Assessment of resource utilization in relation to the production of outputs and progress toward expected outcomes.

### 3.0 Evaluation Findings - Relevance

#### 3.1 To what extent are Canadians satisfied with the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program?

**Key Finding:** Recent surveys show a mixed to positive response from Canadians on satisfaction with the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program.

For the first time, VAC's performance in maintaining grave markers, cemeteries and memorials of Canada's war dead and Veterans was included in the Ipsos Reid *Attitudes Towards Remembrance & Veterans' Week 2010 Omnibus Survey*<sup>2</sup>. This survey was drawn from a nationally representative sample of Canadian adults, 18 years of age or older. Survey participants were asked if they were satisfied with how VAC recognizes and honors deceased Canadian Veterans and war dead with memorials, cemetery and grave maintenance, and funeral and burial assistance. Respondents were then asked to rate their satisfaction using a scale of '1 to 5' where '1' means completely disagree, and '5' means completely agree. The results indicated that 59 percent were satisfied with how VAC recognizes and honours deceased Canadian Veterans and war dead and 26 percent provided responses in a neutral range.

Clients of VAC were asked a similar question in the VAC *National Client Satisfaction Survey*<sup>3</sup> in May 2010 using the following survey question: "The following is a list of some of the remembrance programs and activities conducted by Veterans Affairs Canada. Please tell me your level of satisfaction with how Veterans Affairs Canada is delivering these programs and activities: Maintaining grave markers, cemeteries and memorials of Canada's war dead and Veterans". Clients chose from a five point scale ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied. Nearly nine in ten clients (88 percent) were satisfied

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<sup>2</sup> The Ipsos-Reid survey was a national poll commissioned by VAC. The survey was conducted over the phone November 16-18, 2010 with 1,002 Canadians and has a 95 percent confidence level and +/- 3.1 percent margin of error.

<sup>3</sup> The National Client Survey was conducted over the telephone from April 30 to May 1, 2010 (pre-test), and then from May 6 to May 22, 2010. The sampling technique for this survey produced a random sample with equal probability of respondent selection within each recipient group (e.g., war-service Veteran, survivors, RCMP, etc.). Results are accurate to within +/- 2.6 percentage points, 19 times in 20.

with VAC's performance in maintaining grave markers, cemeteries and memorials of Canada's war dead and Veterans.

Although Canadians support and generally indicate satisfaction with this program area, less is known about perspectives of the individual components that make up the program. The surveys described above combined different program components in the questions and the questions were asked of two different Canadian populations. Canadian adults in the first survey and VAC clients in the second. Additionally, the *2010 Attitudes Towards Remembrance & Veterans' Week 2010 Omnibus Survey* included funeral and burial assistance as part of the question which was not a component in the *VAC National Client Satisfaction Survey*. These variances could explain the differences in the satisfaction levels recorded.

VAC maintains two types of graves; 1) War graves – graves of service personnel who died during one of the World Wars, and 2) Veterans' graves – graves of Veterans who died after the wars. War graves are maintained to a very high standard by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) in partnership with allied countries. Customer satisfaction levels with the CWGC remain very high with a satisfaction index of 89.9 percent<sup>4</sup>. Veterans' graves, on the other hand, are maintained by VAC where the graves and markers are provided through the Last Post Fund and can be found in over 6,100 cemeteries throughout the country.

VAC has identified 28 cemeteries with designated departmental plots where Veterans are buried in a specific section of the cemetery and the commemoration of their service is more visible. The majority of Veterans' graves, however, are dispersed throughout cemeteries in Canada and, in some cases, there may only be a single Veteran grave in a cemetery. How Canadians feel about grave maintenance for this program component is not as clear. VAC's efforts to maintain these graves and headstones have received positive comments from individuals and families as evidenced by telephone call logs and interviews with VAC district staff.

### **3.1.1 To what extent are Canadians aware of the work done through the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program?**

**Key Finding:** The majority of Canadians indicated they were aware of VAC's efforts in the maintenance of memorials and war graves but less than half were aware of VAC's maintenance activities with respect to Veterans' cemeteries and graves.

The 2010 VAC *Canadian Awareness, Engagement & Satisfaction with Remembrance Programming*<sup>5</sup> Survey found that 61 percent of Canadians were aware of VAC's efforts in maintaining memorials and monuments. Awareness of maintaining Veterans' grave

<sup>4</sup> CWGC Annual Report

<sup>5</sup> VAC Canada Remembers commissioned Phoenix to conduct two surveys: one of Canadian general public [1,006] and one for Canadian youth age 13-18 [514]. The surveys were conducted via telephone in March 2010. The general public survey has an error margin of +/- 3.2 percent (19 times out of 20). The youth survey used non-probability sampling therefore it is not representative of the youth population in Canada. However, efforts were taken to ensure that the sample approximated the distribution of Canadian youth in terms of region, language and gender.

markers/cemeteries was slightly lower with approximately 50 percent of Canadians aware of this activity. Youth awareness of overseas war memorials was less than half, (49 percent); however, 69 percent were aware of war cemeteries.

The survey findings highlighted that 46 percent of Canadians were engaged in remembrance in the past year and 36 percent indicated they attended remembrance ceremonies. When asked what they did to acknowledge the services of Canada's Veterans, the majority indicated they attended remembrance ceremonies, wore a poppy or donated to a remembrance-related charity.

Awareness of the two VAC cemeteries, Fort Massey in Halifax, NS and Veterans' Cemetery in Esquimalt, BC, was not the subject of any survey or public opinion research based on the evaluation team's literature review. Based on interviews with regional staff and the evaluation team's participation in stakeholder meetings for the Veterans Cemetery in Esquimalt, awareness of VAC's efforts in commemoration and maintenance in these cemeteries is higher among Canadians who live near the cemeteries; who have family members interred; who have an interest in the historical preservation of the cemeteries and who are members of Veterans' organizations.

These cemeteries, and the physical grave markers there, are used as teaching tools for youth and assist in making the history of sacrifices made by previous generations more tangible for young Canadians. Activities such as school tours and candlelight ceremonies are now ongoing in some cemeteries.

At both VAC-owned cemeteries, there is a lack of appropriate signage. The evaluation team noted that funding for signage at the two departmental cemeteries was allocated but the associated work was not done.

### **3.1.2 To what extent is there a continued need for or interest in, the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program in Canada?**

**Key Finding:** Canadians are interested in and support VAC's efforts to recognize and honour deceased Veterans and the war dead.

Survey findings indicate that 88 percent of Canadians support VAC's efforts to recognize and honour deceased Canadian Veterans and war dead as reported in the *Attitudes Toward Remembrance & Veterans Week Survey* completed in November 2010.

The Canadian Virtual War Memorial is the most visited page on the VAC Website. Visitor traffic to sites like Vimy and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial are increasing annually with over a million visitations to all sites reported (see Section 4.1). The majority of visitors are from the United Kingdom and France. These visit numbers are increasing and this trend is expected to continue leading up to the centenary anniversary of the First World War.

As significant anniversaries of battles from the First World War are celebrated, there is increased promotion by the Department and an increased interest and pride by Canadians in the programs as demonstrated by participation in the commemorative tours and print and television coverage of the events.

The need to maintain Canada's war graves and memorials is also supported by Canadians based on the *VAC-Canadians' Awareness, Engagement & Satisfaction with Remembrance Programming 2010 Survey* results. This survey reported that 53 percent of the respondents felt that maintaining grave markers/cemeteries was very important and a further 26 percent felt it was important.

Canada has a binding commitment to maintain the memorials and cemeteries of the war dead through the Royal Charter with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and its legislative mandate. As a result, there is a need to continue the programs as mandated. In addition, poorly maintained Canadian graves and memorials would risk portraying a negative image of Canada to Canadians and citizens of Europe and other nations.

Based on school teachers' feedback, media reports and interviews with the student guides, the Department's commemorative initiative of developing comprehensive kits for teachers and students in grades 7 to 12, guided tours and visits to memorials and cemeteries has contributed significantly to the continued need and interest in the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program. These sources report that young Canadians appear to become more engaged in learning about Canada's contribution to WWI and WWII when given the opportunity to examine the events from the perspective of an individual soldier who often was not much older than themselves when serving during these conflicts. This can result in increased pride in Canada's contributions and a better understanding of the history of the period.

Canadians who are interested in their family genealogy and history are utilizing the information found in the Canadian Virtual War Memorial (CVWM) to a significant degree. The CVWM contains a registry of information about the graves and memorials of the more than 116,000 Canadians and Newfoundlanders who gave their lives for their country. The registry also contains digital images of photographs and personal memorabilia about individual Canadians. Interviews with staff in regional offices indicate that when Canadians call VAC offices with questions on locating the graves of the war dead, they appreciate the registry's detailed information on grave and cemetery location and find this information useful in preparing for trips to visit these sites in person.

In 2004, to provide more appropriate care for Veterans graves, VAC developed a data base to track the identification and condition of all the graves in Canada for which it was responsible. To date this data base, known as the Canada Remembers Grave Tracking System, has recorded the identification of over 192,928 Veteran graves and prepared a condition report on each of them. This demonstrates the interest of the department and key stakeholders in maintaining and documenting the history of Veterans buried at the expense of Canada.

### **3.1.3 To what extent does the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program align with federal priorities?**

**Key Finding:** The Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program aligns closely with federal priorities.

The federal government's priorities are identified each year in the Speech from the Throne. The Speech sets out the broad goals and directions of government initiatives it will undertake to accomplish those goals. The 2011 Speech from the Throne confirmed the importance of sharing Canada's history and recognizing the important anniversaries and milestones for Canadians.

The Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program contributes to this priority by maintaining the physical aspects of this history overseas and at home, sharing it through visits and guided tours to the memorials and cemeteries dedicated to lost service members, and a multi-media approach to continuing education here at home. Memorials and Cemetery Maintenance is reported under the Social Affairs Committee with an outcome of "a vibrant Canadian culture and heritage". Program activities which aim to support Canadian culture and enhance knowledge of Canada's history and heritage, such as military history and national heritage sites are reported under this outcome. VAC's remembrance mission "*to keep the memory of their (Veterans and those who died in service) achievements and sacrifices alive for all Canadians*" is reflected in this outcome. Tangible, well maintained and promoted reminders of the contributions of Veterans and those who died in service assist in engaging Canadians and contribute to a vibrant Canadian culture and heritage.

### **3.1.4 To what extent does the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program align with VAC's strategic outcomes?**

**Key Finding:** The Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program (MCGMP) aligns with the Department's strategic outcomes.

VAC's Strategic Plan 2009-2014 lists five priorities in the area of remembrance. The MCGMP aligns with three of these priorities as listed below:

- Increase the focus on in-Canada remembrance activities while maintaining international commitments with an international presence;
- Take remembrance activities to Canadians rather than taking Canadians to remembrance activities through effective use of partnerships and technology; and
- Build on activities aimed at youth and develop and strengthen a youth involvement strategy.

The maintenance of international memorials and an international presence continues to be a priority in the program. They are tangible reminders of the contribution of Veterans and those who have died in service. Such reminders will preserve the history and help pass the torch of remembrance to future generations.

The programs are successful in taking remembrance to Canadians by employing the use of technology to inform and engage Canadians through programs such as the Canadian Virtual War Memorial. Canadian youth are engaged through the Student Guide Program in France at Vimy and Beaumont Hamel national sites, and at home through programs developed by the Department with, and for, schools.

Two departmental cemeteries, as well as some of the larger “Fields of Honour” are encouraging school tours and in the Veterans’ Cemetery in Esquimalt, a group comprised of Veterans organizations and other key local stakeholders have started Candlelight ceremonies in the spring to augment the regular November 11 ceremony.

### **3.1.5 To what extent are the roles and responsibilities relevant to the program’s delivery within the Commemoration Division?**

**Key Finding:** European Operations: for the most part the roles and responsibilities of VAC staff are relevant to the program delivery, however, there is a gap that needs to be addressed in the area of technical supervision of repairs needed and completed, and the development of the annual maintenance plans.

The EO Directorate is responsible for the management of the 14 Memorials and cemeteries in Europe. They are also responsible for establishing and maintaining relationships with regional and local governments, hosting VIPs from Canada and around the world at the sites, being the face of Canada in Europe, providing guided and interpretative tours of the two largest sites, and planning and managing the work of the CWGC regarding the maintenance of the memorials and cemeteries in Europe.

To fulfill their responsibilities, the EO has a staff complement of eight FTEs, five situated in France, with an additional 45 student guides (employed 15 at a time) over four-month periods. The positions are those of an Executive Director, two Managers of Commemorative Sites, two Support Officers, and 15 Guides, ten at Vimy, and five at Beaumont-Hamel. Three staff members work from the Charlottetown Head Office (two Program Advisors and one Program Officer) and are responsible for the staffing of the summer student guides program, preparing reports, scheduling visits and maintaining the archives. In addition, security and maintenance staff are hired locally through contracts paid out of the O&M budget allocation (see Appendix B, Program Description, Table 1). Also paid from the O&M budget is the agency contract with the CWGC for the horticultural care and general upkeep of the memorials.

The roles and responsibilities of the EO staff are sufficiently delineated and well conducted. This is confirmed by the feedback from visitors to the sites on the ‘Comment cards’ provided to them (although there is no formal survey conducted of visitors), and the increasing number of visitors each year as recorded by the numbers captured by the guides and reported monthly.

The evaluation identified challenges impacting roles and responsibilities, including unreliable visitor count processes. At Beaumont-Hamel, visitor counts are reasonably

reliable, but at Vimy because of the many unmanned entry and exit points and the distance between the Monument and the Visitor's Centre, counts may be under- or over-estimated. Table 1 below shows the number of visitations during the last two years as reported by the guides.

**Table 1: Visitation - 2010 & 2011**

Site	Visitation 2010	Visitation 2011
Vimy Memorial	98,029*	107,588*
Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial	113,108	125,242

\*Represents visitors to the Visitors' Center only

In 2010, the Visitors Centre at Vimy recorded 98,029 visitors, with 44 percent taking guided tours. Beaumont Hamel received 113,108 visitors, with 17 percent taking a guided tour. In 2011, the Visitor's Centre at Vimy recorded 107,588 visitors of which 41.4 percent were given a guided tour. Beaumont Hamel received 125,242 visitors, and 12.8 percent received a guided tour.

Parks Canada, working with VAC, recently introduced an automated system for counting traffic at Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel. Their reports based on preliminary data collected over a six-month period, and still under review, show that if traffic were to remain the same for a twelve-month period, annual visitation to Beaumont-Hamel would be in the range of 185,000 to 190,000 per year, and for Vimy, in the vicinity of 630,000 per year. They added that these numbers could vary by as much as 100,000 when final numbers are tallied. The work to fine tune the automated counting system is ongoing.

The present guide program was introduced to the sites at Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel in the 1970s, to create a broader information base for visitors. The guides are drawn from a pool of applicants, all university students recruited by VAC. They must be bilingual and show an interest in history of the sites of the war, and of Canada's emergence into nationhood. These guides receive a week of intensive training and become the face of Canada to visitors at the sites during their three-month stay. They are the front-line staff, presenting the site and its historic messages to Canadian, French and international visitors.

An interview with the guides (representatives from both sites with more than one tour of duty as a guide) revealed that, despite the comprehensive nature of the training, it is done before they are familiar with the sites and that additional follow-up training three or four weeks later would be very beneficial to their knowledge of the site, and in relating the history of the site to visitors.

The guides are responsible for conducting tours. All tours are pre-booked and visitors cannot make reservations for tours with groups of less than ten people. They state that most tours are for British and French school children. There are also a number of tours by private companies. While Canadians only represent 15 percent and 3 percent of

visitors at Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel respectively, they have high expectations when they visit the site(s), and are sometimes disappointed when they don't have reservations for tours and are forced to wait or cannot be added to existing tour groups.

The challenges faced by staff at Vimy are different from those at Beaumont-Hamel in respect to the number of different tours available and the logistical challenges that exist there. Another difference between the sites is the distance from the memorial to the Visitors Centre. Guides and management report that sometimes visitors go to the monument and are not aware of the Centre, or of the availability of the guided tours. It is only when visitors stop at the Centre that the visit is recorded.

There are other previously documented problems; the 2008 Vimy Management Plan stated *"The first challenge for today's visitors to Vimy is understanding how to get there. The patterns are not easily understood. Some arrive at Arras by train, expecting the site to be within walking distance or serviced by bus. Others use local trains to get to the Vimy train station, expecting the site to be at this location. Signage for private car and bus access is not clear. Local taxi service from the Arras train station is generally good but not without cost."* The guides also report they have no options to offer visitors regarding the transportation difficulties.

**Key Finding:** VAC staff lacks the technical expertise to develop comprehensive maintenance plans and review repairs done by CWGC for the Memorials and Park properties.

While the monuments and cemeteries of the war dead are generally well maintained, a report prepared in 2008 for the Department entitled the '*Vimy Management Plan*'<sup>6</sup>, outlined a series of shortcomings in the grounds and areas now closed due to security reasons.

The consultants acknowledge the restoration of the Vimy monument, which reopened with a rededication ceremony on Monday, April 9, 2007. The report stated *"The site reopened with a restored monument, a modified monument landscape, a relocated Visitors Centre, a reconfigured parking system, and a heightened national and international profile"*. The report went on to further state that *"The need for a Site Development Plan is heightened by the approaching 100-year anniversary of the battle of Vimy Ridge, in 2017. That occasion, and related ceremonies marking the centenary of the Great War, will bring increased visitation to Vimy, and heightened visitor expectations."*

Below is a partial list of areas identified by the report and confirmed through interviews with staff that need immediate attention:

- directed research activities to support planning initiatives;
- development of a new primary visitor service and park administration node;

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<sup>6</sup> Authored by Julian Smith & Associates, Architects, Greg Smallenberg – Phillips Farevaag Smallenberg, Jacqueline Huck – Consulting Historian, and Mark Laird, Consulting Landscape Historian.

- provisions for food services and related visitor amenities, to allow longer stays and better enjoyment of the site's resources; and
- a framework for partnerships between Veterans Affairs Canada and other federal departments, local communities and various interest groups.

Interviews with EO management, supported by the literature review, indicate that a number of monuments are in need of repair with at least two needing immediate attention. They are Green Park (VAC currently spends approximately \$100,000 a year in maintenance there) and Monchy le Preux (the base of the memorial is built on an old basement structure which is crumbling).

Still others in need of repair include: Bourlon Wood where the fencing needs replacement (estimated cost of approximately 40,000 Euro) and Courtrai (issues regarding structure). There is also ongoing damage to the Battlefield terrain, and at Beaumont-Hamel, where there is damage to the German trenches.

Each year, maintenance plans are prepared by CWGC and submitted to VAC for approval and funding. Based on the Vimy Management Plan and interviews with staff, VAC lacks the expertise to comprehensively review and prioritize the proposed plans. In addition, when work is completed by CWGC or their contractors, VAC lacks the skills necessary to review the quality of work completed to assure value for money. And finally, the money allocated for ongoing maintenance is proving to be insufficient to preserve the memorials and battlefields.

**Key Finding:** Program Operations' roles and responsibilities assigned to staff working with Cemetery/Grave Maintenance for Veterans are in transition with recent changes to the regional operations and the increased role assigned to CWGC.

Annual funding for the upkeep of Veterans' graves was reduced in 2003. Part of the reason for the 2003 reduction was that the Department was not able to provide evidence that it was delivering the program effectively. For example, the Department was generally reactive in responding to grave maintenance requests, could not account for how many Veterans' graves it was responsible for, and in addition, was not making use of all the funds available. In 2004, to provide more appropriate care for Veterans' graves, VAC initiated a project to develop a data base, identify and track all the graves in Canada it was responsible for. To date, this data base, known as the Canada Remembers Grave Tracking System (CRGTS), has recorded the identification of 192,928 Veteran graves and offers a condition report on each of them.

The evaluation found that prior to March 2011, Program Operations had 4.5 FTEs in Head Office and staff in the regions who were responsible for the management of the cemetery maintenance, for contracts up to \$5,000, all enquires, and for following up on maintenance repairs. The resources allocated were .5 of a FTE for each region.

The success of the program delivery varied by region due to factors such as the need for the resource to perform other duties, the ability to keep the position staffed and occasionally, the challenge in finding contractors to do identified repairs. Budget constraints also limited the staff from visiting cemeteries to do follow-up work.

In 2010-11, the Department contracted CWGC to continue with the graves identification program (expansion of prior contract assignment) to inspect all Veterans' graves within a twelve-year cycle and to do repairs totaling \$310,000, with no single repair project to exceed \$15,000 (the Department continued to do the repairs in excess of \$15,000).

As a result of the CWGC contract, the regional positions (together totaling 2.5 FTEs) were eliminated. Under the new contract, CWGC is responsible for inspection and maintenance of graves, assessing the level of effort required to repair or restore, and posting information in the Graves Database (there is still a component of the contract that requires them to identify previously unrecorded Veterans' graves). Since VAC is also responsible for conducting inspection and maintenance work in areas outside the existing scope of the CWGC contract, there are some elements of overlapping functions. However, the work is never duplicated.

As the CWGC and VAC develop project maintenance plans for the upcoming year, they will consult with each other on priorities and projects to ensure that each organization's work plans complement the planned projects of the other. This ensures maximum coverage geographically, maximizes the use of contractors and allows work to be efficiently completed across the country while avoiding duplication.

**Key Finding:** Unlike some other Commonwealth countries and the U.S. where Veterans and their families are encouraged to bury the Veteran in a national or state cemetery dedicated for this purpose, in Canada, Veterans buried at the expense of the Crown, are buried in the cemetery of their choice.

A large number of the Veterans graves for which the Department is responsible have only recently been identified and most are located in private/public cemeteries. One problem now faced by the Department, as reported by regional staff and stakeholders is that, as rural churches close, there is a risk that their cemeteries will fall into disrepair. Many Veterans are buried in these cemeteries. Additionally, the impact of aging on members of Veterans' organizations and the Royal Canadian Legion is compounding the challenge of maintaining Veterans' graves, as they traditionally played a significant role in the ongoing maintenance of Veterans' graves in their local areas. This loss of volunteer support is placing more responsibility on the Department.

In an attempt to address these problems, the Department contracted CWGC to inspect and maintain Veterans' graves through single contracts up to \$15,000. VAC was able to find some efficiencies and gave up its regional resources. VAC has also implemented a 12-year inspection cycle for the graves recorded in the database. In comparison, CWGC has a six-year inspection cycle. It has already been stated that the care and maintenance of the graves and cemeteries under the care of the CWGC, far

exceeds that of the departmental plots, graves and cemeteries managed by VAC. As noted, the Department has suffered a reduction in funding for the maintenance at a time when it is in a position to clearly identify and justify the need. Given the current budget constraints, the Program Operations Directorate must carefully examine priorities and develop prudent choices in cemetery and grave repair maintenance options to ensure that it can respond to enquiries and complaints within a defined budget, so that the program reflects well on the Department and Canada and is adequately funded.

### **3.1.6 To what extent are the contractual and other Government of Canada relationships relevant in the delivery of the program(s)?**

**Key Finding:** European Operations - The contractual and other GoC relationships are very relevant to the extent that they are employed and monitored.

The work performed by the CWGC regarding the memorials and cemeteries of the war dead could not be undertaken by the Department in its present configuration. The body of knowledge and level of expertise, as well as the world-wide reputation of the CWGC could not be replicated or easily replaced by the Department. In addition, because the work covers graves of war dead in 74 different countries, it would not be cost-effective or efficient for the Department to undertake this work.

The relationships with other government departments and agencies are equally important. DFAIT is involved and assists in some matters regarding operations overseas. DND is usually involved in the ceremonies and events and provides assistance with the training of the guides. PWGSC coordinates all the procurement and contracting needs while Parks Canada provides professional advice regarding the maintenance of the National Historic Sites at Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel. This relationship could be enhanced as VAC staff would benefit from the technical expertise of Parks Canada as previously stated here to review the work of CWGC in Europe.

The EO also has a relationship with a group called Les amis du monument canadien de Vimy. This group is made up of approximately 100 local volunteers who run a book sale from the site and have a donation box. Funds collected are dispersed to purchase items that the site needs for the guides' homes, hosting VIP ceremonies, etc. Each year, they publish a report outlining their revenue and expenditures. A copy is shared with the Department and was reviewed by the evaluation team.

A review of similar relationships between Parks Canada and 'Friends of the Park' is generally formulated around a Memorandum of Understanding. An enquiry by the evaluation team with Justice has confirmed that VAC does not require such a formal relationship, "*a less restrictive letter of understanding may be sufficient for the purpose of giving some structure as to how matters are approved and understood*"<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Department of Justice e-mail dated 1-19-2012, advice re need for MOU.

**Key Finding:** Cemeteries/Graves Maintenance (CM) has a number of very relevant agency contracts with CWGC to maintain the cemeteries of the South African war dead and other overseas war dead; identify, inspect and repair Veterans' graves.

Interaction with and coordination of key Veterans' organizations and community stakeholders are critical to the maintenance program of Veterans' graves in Canada.

Participating in a meeting and a video-conference with some of VAC's key stakeholders regarding the future of the Veterans' Cemetery, demonstrated to the evaluation team the importance of contractual and other OGD relationships in meeting the CM program objectives.

Some of the necessary relationships are with DND, Canadian Force members, Veterans organizations, community archivists and historians. *"Their observations of the condition of memorials, cemeteries and grave markers serve as an indication of the level of recognition/appreciation for those who have gone before them and provide insight into how the memory of their own service may be honored"*<sup>8</sup>.

The CM staff work closely with local Veterans' organizations, archivists and historians to ensure that the history of the Veterans buried here in Canada is not forgotten.

## 4.0 Evaluation Findings – Effectiveness/Success

### 4.1 To what extent are local and International Canadian memorials and cemetery and grave markers well maintained and promoted?

#### MAINTENANCE:

##### A) European Operations

**Key Finding:** Cemeteries and memorials to and for the war dead are well maintained by the CWGC in Europe and Canada.

The performance targets for the two programs under review are not fully developed. The program design and linkage to outputs and outcomes are stated in high level terms and not easily measurable. In addition, no specific processes are in place to measure the program outcomes.

Interviews with staff, CWGC personnel, literature and video documentary reviews all speak to the high level of care and respect associated with the maintenance of the cemeteries and Memorials in Europe. The CWGC is responsible for the maintenance and their reputation is excellent. Each grave (covered under 'The Charter') is inspected on a regular cycle of maintenance to ensure that it presents well.

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<sup>8</sup> Memorial and Cemetery Maintenance Performance Measurement Strategy 2011 - draft, page 7

VAC is mandated to do memorial and cemetery maintenance through PC Order 1965-688. As detailed in Section 3.1.5 regarding the roles and responsibilities, a plan is prepared every year by the EO staff to ensure that the minimum maintenance to preserve and protect the monuments, as well as to ensure staff and visitor safety, is implemented. Despite the ongoing maintenance, a natural deterioration of the memorials continues.

Vimy was refurbished and rededicated in 2007. Every year a maintenance plan for each memorial is developed, costed and submitted to senior management for approval to ensure that at least the minimum amount of work to upkeep the properties is undertaken. Over the last three years, the EO has received an annual budget of \$1.5M to carry out these repairs.

The UNMCK in Korea is reported to be exceptionally well maintained by the Government of Korea. Canada makes a small contribution annually to this maintenance.

The other sites, (see Appendix B - Program Description) are maintained by the CWGC and are reported to be very well maintained by CWGC and VAC staff.

The intermediate outcome of Canadians appreciating the significance and understanding the importance of maintaining memorials, cemeteries and grave markers is best measured by the surveys conducted to assess this factor.

A number of surveys were reviewed by the evaluation team. (See results detailed in Section 3.1.1 - Findings.)

## **B) Cemetery/Grave Maintenance of Veteran graves in Canada**

**Key Finding:** The widely dispersed burials of Veterans will continue to present the Department with maintenance challenges.

The CM is responsible for the maintenance of all Veterans' graves and markers provided by the Government of Canada. The Last Post Fund (LPF) is a non-profit organization with the primary objective of ensuring that no Veteran is denied a dignified funeral. Throughout the course of its 100 years of history, the LPF has arranged funerals and, where necessary, burial and grave markers for more than 137,000 Veterans. This number is supplementary to those that were interred by various federal government organizations, including Veterans Affairs Canada, the Canadian Pension Commission, the Privy Council and the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment. In total, it is estimated that approximately 250,000 Veterans were buried by these government organizations for which VAC now has the responsibility to maintain the grave and markers in perpetuity.

With more than 250,000 Veterans buried in Canada and only a small fraction of that number interred in the two departmental cemeteries, the problems of ensuring a

comparable level of maintenance for all Veterans' graves in Canada is challenging for the Department. These problems are further complicated by the fact that Veterans are buried in over 6,100 cemeteries across the country with a wide range of climatic conditions and with individual cemeteries setting their own grave marker standards. The CRGTS currently has 192,928 of these graves identified and recorded in the electronic database. The breakdown of the grave numbers by province and the percent of graves recorded by province are presented in the following table.

**Table 2 - VAC Graves by Province**

Province	Number VAC Graves by Province	Percent of Graves by Province
Alberta	25,370	12.63
British Columbia	33,044	17.10
Manitoba	16,489	8.54
New Brunswick	10,912	5.65
Newfoundland	2,653	1.37
Nova Scotia	15,329	7.90
Ontario	56,766	29.40
Quebec	17,681	9.16
Saskatchewan	12,592	6.52
Prince Edward Island	3,027	1.50
Northwest Territories	39	0.02
Nunavut	1	0.00
Yukon	65	0.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>192,928</b>	<b>100</b>

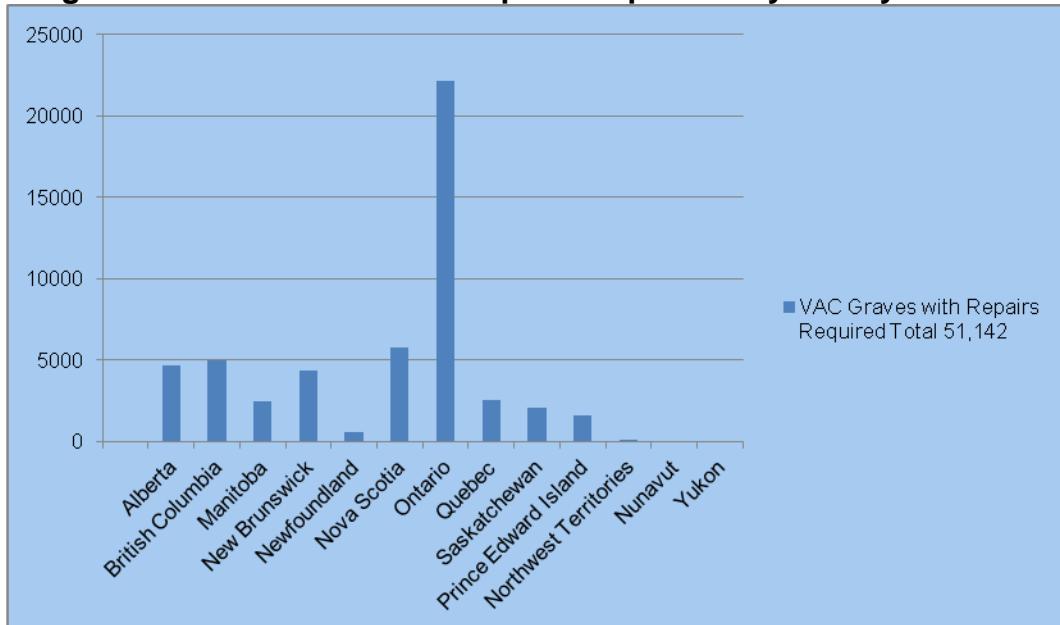
The condition of these grave markers varies considerably. Age of the marker alone cannot be used as an indicator of condition or possible maintenance requirements. The CRGTS database also records a condition report for each grave marker in the database as observed during the initial grave identification or during inspection.

As previously mentioned, not all of the Veterans' graves are located on land controlled by VAC or in designated 'Fields of Honour'. As a result, locating and inspecting these graves is a labour intensive project. Through an Agency Services Agreement with the CWGC, Veterans' graves that are located in cemeteries where there are also war graves were identified, inspected and recorded in the CRGTS. This work was completed in March 2009. The original Agency Services Agreement was extended for two additional years, beginning in 2009-10, allowing CWGC to research and document other cemeteries and graves outside the original scope of work, to include cemeteries where there are no war dead buried. It is important to note that 192,928 Veterans' graves have been identified to date and an additional 50,000 are estimated to exist.

Repairs to grave markers are categorized in the CRGTS into seven repair types. These include: replacing the marker, aligning the marker, repairing the foundation, cleaning, surfacing, illegible and other. There were 51,142 grave markers requiring repairs as of

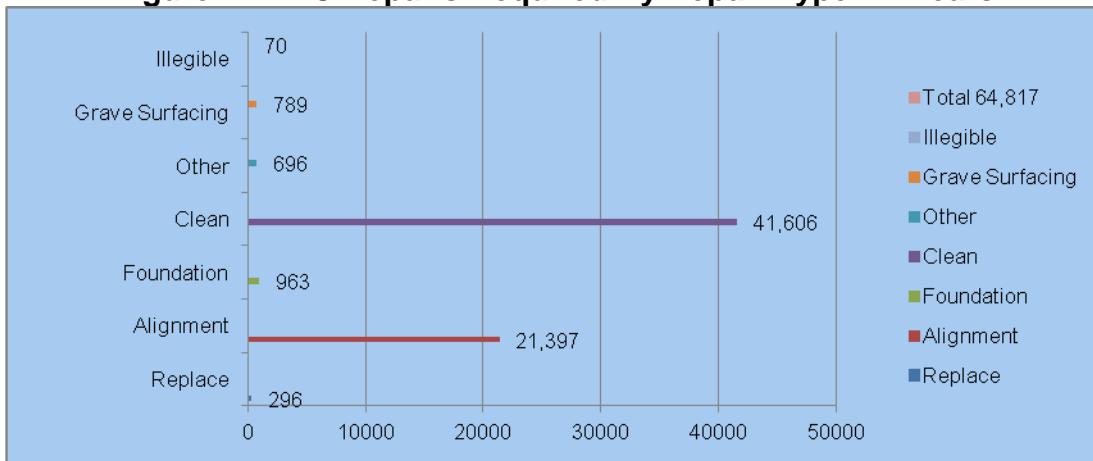
January 27, 2012. Figure 1 below shows the breakdown of the volume of repairs required by province.

**Figure 1 – VAC Graves with Repairs required all years by Province**



A breakdown of these repairs required by the type of repair necessary is shown in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2 - VAC Repairs Required By Repair Type All Years**



Note: One grave may require more than one type of repair.

As previously mentioned, with current funding VAC is only able to perform a small portion of the maintenance required. Recently, VAC implemented a 12-year rotational inspection schedule for Veterans' graves. Based on interviews with program staff, the

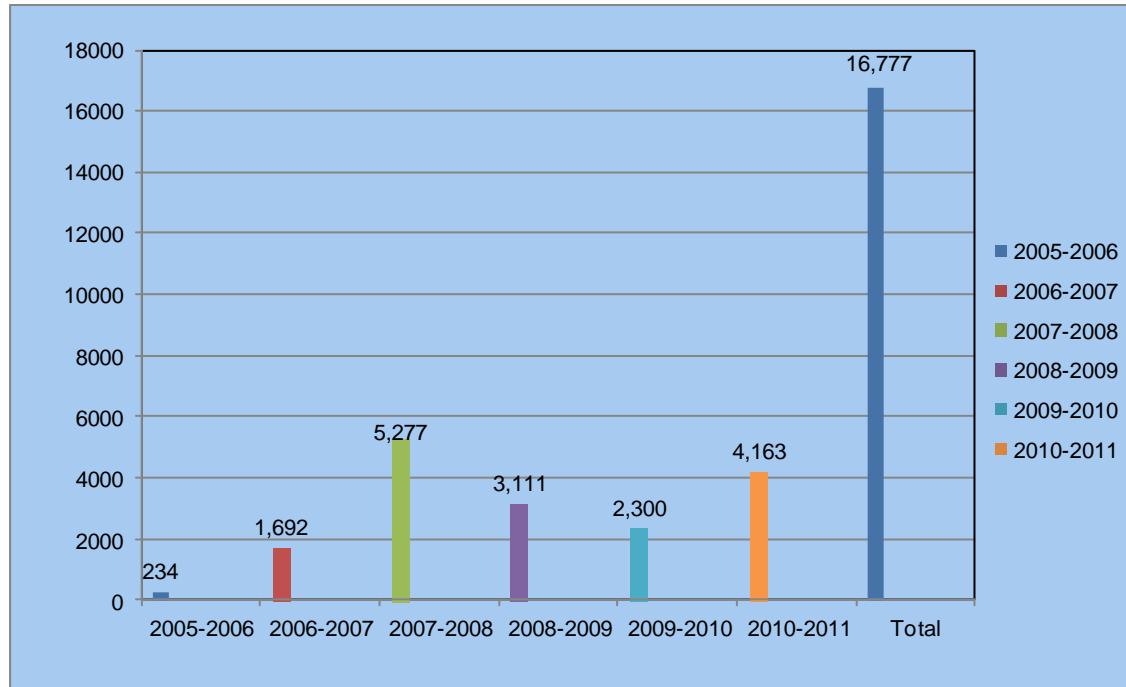
Annual Cemetery Maintenance Plan for the year is established by identifying those cemeteries with graves in poor condition and also based on feedback and comments on grave conditions from the public, family members and Veterans' organizations. The plan also identifies and prioritizes required maintenance work in the Department's two cemeteries and departmental plots, as well as Veterans' markers located in cemeteries throughout Canada. Additionally, if individual grave maintenance problems are identified, especially health and safety issues or the risk of losing a marker, staff try and arrange a repair contract quickly if funding is available.

**Table 3 - Total number of graves identified and requiring repair**

Total Number of VAC Graves Identified	Total Number of Graves with a Repair Required	Percentage of VAC Graves Requiring a Repair
192,928	51,142	27%

Figure 3 shows the breakdown of the 16,777 total grave repairs completed by year from 2005-2006 to 2010-2011. Based on the past five years of maintenance efforts, where approximately 33 percent of the required repairs were completed over a five-year period, the Department will be challenged to complete identified repairs in the proposed 12-year cycle. It is important to note that until April 1, 2011, the priority for the CWGC under the Agency Services Agreement was to locate and document Veterans' graves. In April 2011, with the new contract, CWGC was contracted to also do inspections and maintenance. As result, there should be a notable increase in the numbers which they are able to repair for fiscal year 2011-12 and this will continue in subsequent years.

**Figure 3 - VAC Repairs Completed 2005-2011**



VAC also has maintenance responsibilities for the two departmentally-owned cemeteries, the Veterans' Cemetery and Fort Massey. These cemeteries and their graves are maintained to an acceptable level based on site observations by the evaluation team as well as expert and staff comments. Although the maintenance is acceptable at these sites, interviews with interested stakeholders of The Veterans Cemetery revealed that they would like to see more done to improve the horticulture and educational components of the site, as well as the signage, thereby improving the commemorative experience for visitors.

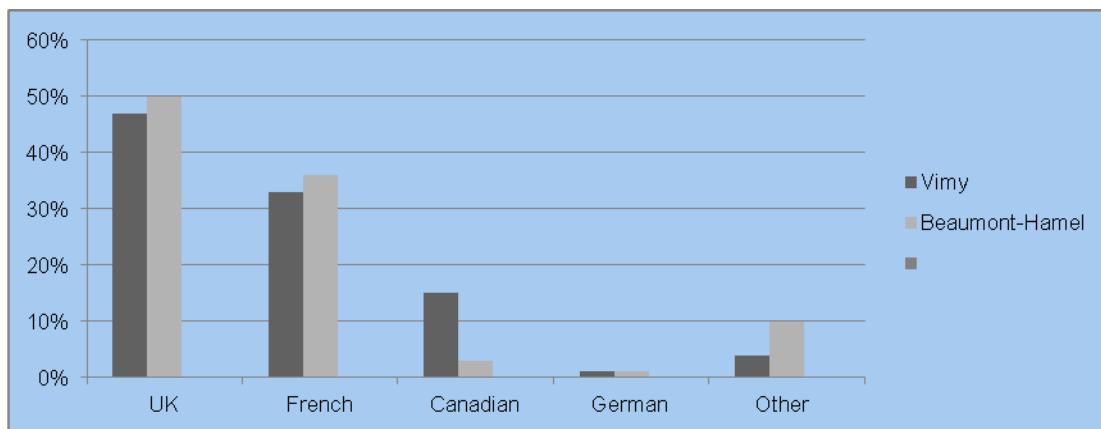
## PROMOTION:

### A) European Operations

**Key Finding:** The 14 memorial sites and cemeteries in Europe are not actively promoted as tourist destinations but are more indirectly promoted through educational endeavors pursued by the Department. Additional promotion is associated with the commemoration of activities that resulted in the memorial and through guided tours. Of the 14 memorials, VAC has staff working at the two largest (Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel). As illustrated in Figure 4, recorded visits to Vimy were up by 10,000 last year over the previous year and of those visitors, 47 percent were British, 33 percent were French and 15 percent Canadian. At Beaumont-Hamel, visitation was up by 12,000 from the previous year with 50 percent British, 36 percent French and 3 percent Canadian.

Factors affecting visitation statistics include proximity, and the fact that these sites are a significant part of European history, resulting in a larger number of visits from European schools.

**Figure 4 - Breakdown of Visitors' Origin**



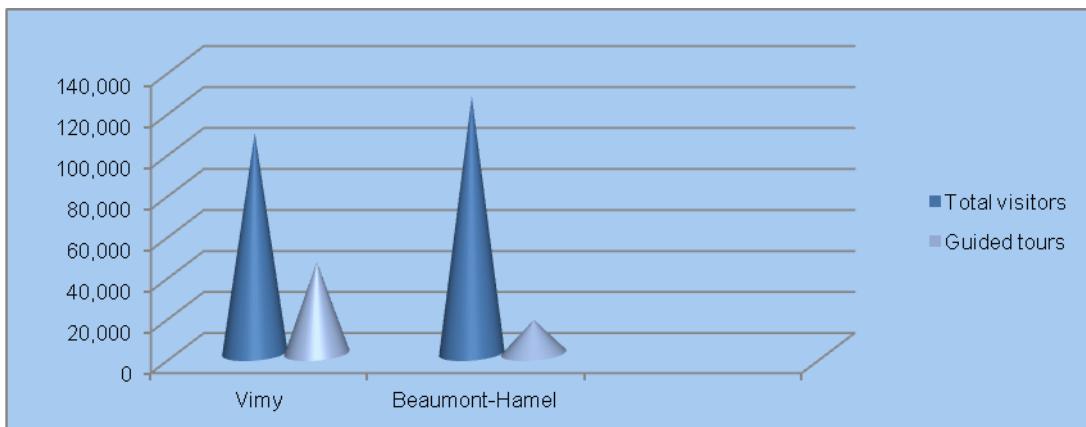
In Canada, promotion is done through VAC publications and the VAC Website, as well as through packages prepared by VAC for distribution to teachers and students who are interested in learning about Canada's history and the role of the military in it. Foundation kits are prepared covering World Wars I and II, and the Korean War. There

are also on-line resources on the battles and campaigns (e.g., the Battle of Vimy Ridge). Lesson plans and comprehensive multi-media resources are also provided to schools as part of the promotion. Staff report that in the last three years the number of students visiting Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel from Canada has increased.

Another promotional component is the impact of the guided tours conducted by the Canadian students in France. Last year 41.4 percent of the visitors to Vimy received a guided tour, as did 12 percent of the visitors to Beaumont-Hamel (see Figure 5).

Based on feedback from staff and the comment cards, these tours are highly regarded by the visitors and other countries with memorials in the region. Canada is recognized as a leader for promoting the interpretative function with a Canadian staff to complement the commemorative activity.

**Figure 5 - Number of Visitors by Site and number of Guided Tours**



## B) Cemetery/Grave Maintenance of Veteran Graves in Canada

**Key Finding:** Cemetery and grave maintenance is one of a number of activities the Department supports to foster remembrance for Canadians.

One of the strategic outcomes for Veterans Affairs Canada is that Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all those who served in Canada's efforts during war, military conflict and peace.

Tangible reminders such as cemeteries with well maintained markers commemorating the service and sacrifice of the war dead and Veterans are important visual reminders for future generations. These reminders are especially significant in the Department's two cemeteries and in the 28 departmental plots located in private and public cemeteries across Canada.

VAC has committed and spent over the last three years an average of \$1.5 million per year in maintenance of cemeteries and grave markers.

The Department is working with groups and various associations to promote commemoration through activities such as guided historical tours and candlelight tributes at the Veterans' Cemetery in Esquimalt.

As referenced in section 3.1.1, one weakness identified through site visits and interviews is the inadequate signage at VAC's two cemeteries.

#### **4.1.1 Is there a vision and plan in place to ensure future Canadians appreciate the significance of local and international memorials, cemeteries and grave markers and continue the legacy of conservation and protection?**

**Key Finding:** The Government of Canada and VAC are committed through their statements (Throne Speech) and VAC's strategic plans and activities to have in place a plan for the continued appreciation of Canadians regarding the legacy of conservation and protection of Canada's memorials, cemeteries and grave markers.

Examples of that vision are demonstrated through:

- GoC's and VAC's commitment to the continued renewal of the 'Royal Charter' with the CWGC to maintain the memorials and graves of Canada's war dead;
- The recent contract undertaken by VAC to find and document all Veterans buried at the expense of Canada for which the Minister is responsible, to ensure that Veterans' graves and markers are continually maintained;
- The development of Web-based educational information on Canada's War history and making this information available to the youth of Canada and Canadians in general;
- The development of the Virtual War Memorial;
- The upkeep of the Seven Books of Remembrance, maintained at Parliament Hill, containing the names of those who died in service to Canada;
- The national celebration of Remembrance Day and the promotion of Veterans' Week activities;
- Celebration of the anniversaries of D-Day, the Battle of Normandy and the Italian Campaign, both overseas and in Canada; the use of VAC's National Client Survey, as well as other national surveys to gauge the level of interest in commemoration by Canadians; and
- The encouragement and support provided to Veterans' organizations and other stakeholders to introduce and promote the increased utilization of VAC cemeteries through activities such as the Candlelight Ceremonies held in the Veterans' Cemetery and Fort Massey.

## 5.0 Evaluation Findings – Efficiencies and Economies

### 5.1 To what extent are VAC's resources efficiently and effectively utilized to plan, manage and implement the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program?

**Key Finding:** VAC's resources are efficiently and effectively utilized in the planning, management and implementation of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program based on comparative program outcomes.

#### A) Overseas Operations

**Key Finding:** VAC's management of the memorials and graves of the war dead overseas is comparable to that of the four countries used for comparison.

Most countries' overseas memorials are maintained by CWGC, except for the Americans and Australians in Papua, New Guinea, where the operation is managed by a deployed Australian manager and local staff. Only Canada has a fully deployed staff and uses student guides at two of its sites. Some examples of how other countries operations are conducted: the Ulster Tower – operated by an association; Thiepval British Memorial – operated by Conseil Général (l'Historial de Péronne) and South African Memorial – embassy staff who live on site.<sup>9</sup>

It was not possible to examine and compare operational costs as there are too many variables. In addition, the Charter cost is proportionate to the size and number of memorials and war dead. For example, Canada's share of the 'Royal Charter Agreement' is approximately 10 percent, whereas the United Kingdom's share is 78 percent.<sup>10</sup>

Canada uses interpretative guides at two sites, namely Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel. This practice, while increasing operational costs, is very effective and is being explored by the Americans, but is considered too expensive by the Australians. The Office of Australia War Graves acknowledges the advantages of having Australians at their sites but state that there are financial efficiencies to be gained by using expatriates and local staff with the oversight of an Australian manager.

The level of maintenance is comparable as it is done by the same provider (except for the Americans).

The Americans reported that with the decline in visits from actual Veterans and their families, they have made some changes in their horticultural processes to find

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<sup>9</sup> From Interview Notes with staff.

<sup>10</sup> Member nations who contribute funds to the CWGC for the maintenance of war graves contribute funding based on the number of graves to be maintained on behalf of the country. Canada's contribution represents approximately 10% of the commission's total budget.

efficiencies. One example is the length of the grass which was maintained to a golf fairway standard. The new standard is 25-35 millimeters. This change has reduced the maintenance level and subsequently led to a reduction in costs, with the difference not noticeable to the visitor. Canada may have little opportunity to take advantage of this type of efficiency as it is contracted with five others in the 'Royal Charter Agreement' with CWGC. There may however, be opportunities for greater efficiencies to be realized if there are expert reviews and input provided to the plans and work done under the agency contracts.

It is acknowledged that Canada may be responsible for more consecrated land in Europe than most other countries, with more active battle fields, trenches and tunnels. However, given the continued deterioration of the tunnels and trenches and the increasing cost of maintaining the now nearly 100 year old memorials, the Department may have to find more efficient ways to continue to commemorate Canada's war dead overseas.

### ***B) Post-war Veterans***

To assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program without clearly defined performance measurement data, the evaluation team examined comparative programs for examples of efficiency and best practice. None of the models examined are sufficiently similar to VAC's to be considered fully comparable.

The models were examined for the comparative processes used in their overseas memorials and cemeteries as well as procedures and policies for dealing with the post-war dead buried mostly at home, but also abroad. The practices of the following countries were examined: the American Battle Monuments Commission<sup>11</sup> and US Veterans' Administration (VA), Veterans Affairs New Zealand, the Office of the Australian War Graves (OAWG) and the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defense (MOD).

All countries studied in this comparative exercise, except Canada, have a clearly designated place of commemoration and/or burial that is maintained in perpetuity by the respective governments.

The evaluation compares and contrasts some different approaches to commemoration of the post-war dead and Veterans and the role of government resources used. The following is a synopsis of the approach used by the countries mentioned above.

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<sup>11</sup> The ABMC is responsible for 24 cemeteries and 23 Monuments. The ABMC commemorates the service, achievements, and sacrifice of US armed forces where they have served overseas and perform an equivalent function for the US as that performed by CWGC for Commonwealth countries.

## *New Zealand*

New Zealand uses stand-alone Service Cemeteries and provides grants to cemeteries based on acreage to designate plots for the internment of Veterans; there are 183 Service Cemeteries in New Zealand. The following principles established by the CWGC apply to Service Cemeteries and markers in all the countries listed:

- each of the dead is commemorated individually by name;
- the memorials are permanent and uniform; and
- there is no distinction made on account of military or civil rank, race or creed.

The provision of memorials and maintenance is the responsibility of Veterans Affairs (VA) New Zealand but is a co-operative process between the department, Veterans' groups and other key stakeholders. Much of the work done is on a voluntary basis.

Annual maintenance grants are provided to the Service Cemeteries; liaison visits by VA staff are conducted on a regular basis and are opportunities for the key stakeholders to meet to discuss the maintenance, appearance and any areas of concern.

Service members, who choose to be buried in a public cemetery, can order a plaque or headstone at a subsidized rate, the cost of installation and maintenance is the responsibility of the family. The CWGC is responsible for graves of service personnel who died during the WWI and WWII overseas and in New Zealand.

## *The United Kingdom*

The UK's Ministry of Defense (MOD) policy on memorials states “*... the cost of erecting memorials and associated projects is not usually met from public funds, but from private donations or public subscription.*” A few exceptional graves are maintained at public expense, and all graves located in a Military cemetery are maintained at public expense. No graves or markers in private or public cemeteries are maintained by the government. “*The MOD will maintain in perpetuity the graves of all personnel who died in Service on or after 1 January 1948, who had both a Service funeral and a Service headstone, and the grave has been registered to the MOD. Where the NOK<sup>12</sup> elect to have a private funeral, or choose a non-MOD pattern headstone, the graves are maintained privately and the MOD has no responsibility for them.*”<sup>13</sup>

The CWGC is responsible for the official memorials for those men and women who died or were listed as missing during WWI and WWII.

## *Australia*

Australia uses a 'Garden of Remembrance' for some war dead and those who died post-war. The gardens are places of official commemoration; they do not replace burial in private or public cemeteries but supplement them, and offer a place where the

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<sup>12</sup> Next of Kin

<sup>13</sup> MOD Policy on Graves

Veteran can be commemorated with their comrades and have the plaque or marker maintained by the government in perpetuity. The Office of the Australian War Graves (OAWG) has 12 'Gardens of Remembrance' located in every capital city, as well as Townsville and Launceston, containing almost 200,000 commemorations. The Gardens of Remembrance are usually located near the major war cemeteries or public cemeteries.

The OAWG is responsible for the maintenance of all war graves, commemoration and memorials to the missing and the Pacific Region and all war graves commemoration and memorials to the missing for Australians who have died in conflicts since WWII. The cemeteries overseas are maintained by arrangement between the OAWG and the organization in charge of the cemetery or graves. The OAWG has field offices in state capitals that are responsible for the maintenance.

The CWGC is responsible for all WWI and WWII war graves and memorials to the missing outside Australia and Papua, New Guinea.

### *The United States*

The US Veterans Administration (VA) is responsible for maintaining 131 National cemeteries in 31 states and 33 soldiers' lots. Some states also have a number of Veterans' cemeteries; some receive grants from the VA. The Department of the Army is responsible for maintaining two national cemeteries and the US National Parks System also maintains 14 National cemeteries most of which are now closed and are of an historic nature, they conduct interpretation and outreach programs.

In the US, Veterans are encouraged to be buried in designated National and State cemeteries where the graves and markers are maintained at the government's expense. If they choose to be buried in a private cemetery, they can request a crescent or marker but it must be maintained by the family.

### *Canada*

Canada's historical approach to the burial of its post-war Veterans is different from the more efficient approaches adopted by the other countries used for comparison purposes. This has made it difficult for VAC to maintain a high standard of grave and marker care and, in general, a more efficient operation regarding the maintenance of the graves of Veterans buried in Canada.

VAC is responsible for the perpetual maintenance of the graves and markers of those Veterans and some others buried by the Government of Canada. Veterans Affairs Canada through the Last Post Fund provides a burial and a marker if the Veteran qualifies for the LPF program. While VAC has two Veterans' cemeteries and is responsible for 28 Fields of Honour, most Veterans are not buried in these cemeteries or the Departmental Plots.

The majority of the VAC cemetery maintenance work is done by contract. CM is responsible for the management of the contracts. CWGC is responsible for a portion of the maintenance work, e.g., inspection, negotiating small contracts with local providers, follow-up and database updating.

## **5.2 To what extent are the contracts with GWCG and other partners providing value for money in relation to expected outcomes?**

**Key Finding:** VAC is achieving value for money regarding the contracts for the Memorials, Cemetery/Grave Maintenance.

VAC's largest partner in the Memorials and Cemeteries/Grave Maintenance Program is CWGC, for the overseas operation as well as the Veterans' grave and marker maintenance operation at home. VAC also employs small contractors to do work in the regions.

The volume of work done through contract in these programs is the most significant cost driver. Through Grants and Contributions and Operating Vote funds, VAC spent last year \$12,994,500 in large contracts and commitments alone. Under smaller contracts, the Department spent another \$573,286. By contrast, salary dollars expended for 2010-2011 were only \$1,286,470. It should be noted that most of the contract work is committed and or necessary, hence, ongoing.

The level of maintenance of the war graves and memorials in Europe and overseas is high, comparable to, and consistent with any other countries' cemeteries and memorials. For the 'Royal Charter' commitment, VAC is getting value for money based on visitor and staff feedback and the 89.9 percent satisfaction results reported in the CWGC annual report. Regarding the agency contract in Europe for maintenance and horticultural work, VAC may be getting value for money, but staff responsible for planning and reviewing the work, particularly regarding the annual maintenance of the monuments, are not sufficiently qualified to give a qualified opinion.

For the CWGC agency contract for maintenance of Veterans' graves and markers, this contract has other deliverables as well, such as, the 12-year inspection cycle, amending the VAC graves database and continued research on small cemeteries across the country. Based on the number of graves identified, inspected and repaired by the contractor, the reputation of the contractor and on the observations of the evaluation team, VAC is realizing value for money.

As detailed in Section 3.1.5, the CM unit has recently contracted with CWGC to take on an increased role regarding the cyclical inspection, repair and reporting in the VAC Graves Database. CM has maintained a portion of the contracting, review and follow-up work.

CWGC, under contract, inspected and/or repaired 1,600 markers or 0.8 percent<sup>14</sup> of the 192,928 Veterans' graves last year. This represents approximately 40 percent of the repairs to Veterans' graves during this time frame with VAC overseeing the other 60 percent of repairs completed. Additionally, VAC provides quality assurance for the work of the CWGC by inspecting completed work and verifying that it is completed as per the terms of the contract; by ensuring the planned work is necessary and by verifying the data collected and entered in to the CRGTS is accurate. This is accomplished through a quality review process conducted by CM staff.

CWGC's efforts were constrained (other than by contractual limits) by the imposed limit of \$15,000, where contracts exceeding this amount are handled by the Department. This limitation on contracts as it applies to the planned maintenance of the two VAC cemeteries and the larger identified 'Fields of Honor' may be justified (albeit some of that work is contracted to CWGC). However, for work identified by CWGC, and in cemeteries where they are working, and in newly identified sites, there may be some efficiency that can be realized. In addition, VAC may save the provincial sales tax (PST) when they let a contract as the federal government is not required to pay PST. However, in real terms, relative to time and processes necessary to let a contract, the CWGC may prove to be a cheaper option in the long term.

VAC staff reported problems contracting with local contractors and the challenge of effectively overseeing the work when it is completed. They also reported incidents of work not correctly done. The evaluation team's observations support the reported difference in maintenance levels between war graves and Veterans' graves in the same cemetery as well as the quality of work done. This may be partially due to the fact that CWGC is authorized to spend more on grave and cemetery maintenance than VAC can.

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<sup>14</sup> As reported by CWGC, e-mail 08-02-2012

## **6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **6.1 Conclusions**

The evaluation is able to make the following conclusions with respect to relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

#### **Relevance**

Canadians are generally satisfied with the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program but more detailed information is required to assess if this satisfaction reflects their opinion on the different components that make up the Program.

The majority of Canadians indicated awareness of VAC's efforts in the maintenance of memorials and war graves but less than half were aware of VAC's maintenance activities of Veterans' cemeteries and graves.

CWGC's initiatives and the VAC's CVWM will continue to engage Canadians, keeping this aspect of the program relevant for all Canadians.

The Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program is in alignment with federal government priorities and VAC's strategic outcomes.

The roles and responsibilities associated with the successful operation of the European Operations Division are for the most-part consistent with the objectives of the Division. The contractual relationships with CWGC and other stake holders are critical to the successful performance of the roles and responsibilities of the CM staff.

#### **Effectiveness/Success**

The cemeteries and grave markers in Europe are in good condition. The memorials are more costly to maintain; some are in need of more repair than others. Increasing repair and restoration costs may soon force the Department to prioritize which memorials will continue to be maintained annually and to what level. Maintaining Veteran graves in Canada is a complex task as a result of shared responsibilities with external organizations. Widely dispersed burial practices and unique individual cemetery standards and practices will continue to present the Department with maintenance challenges.

The Government of Canada and Veterans Affairs Canada have plans in place to achieve the effective and efficient commemoration of Canada's war dead, and those Veterans buried at Canada's expense.

## **Efficiencies and Economies**

Space is very limited in VAC's two cemeteries, one is full and closed to additional interments and the other is almost at capacity. Going forward, VAC, in conjunction with its key stakeholders, should explore the increased use of columbaria<sup>15</sup> and designated 'Fields of Honor' for Veterans' burials.

CWGC contracts provide value for money and are consistent with the expected outcomes of the program(s).

VAC's historical approach to the burial of its post-war Veterans, is different from the more efficient approaches adopted by the other countries used for comparison purposes in this evaluation. This has made it more difficult for VAC to maintain a high standard of grave and marker care and, in general, a more efficient operation.

## **6.2 Recommendations and Management Response(s)/Action Plan(s) - MRAPs**

**R1 It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration Division initiate activities to increase public awareness of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program, and to better measure this awareness. (Essential)**

<b>Management Response(s):</b>		
<b>Management Action Plan(s)</b>		
<b>Corrective action(s) to be taken</b>	<b>Office of Primary Interest (OPI)</b>	<b>Target date</b>
1.1 An awareness and promotional plan will be developed.	DG, Commemoration	March 2013
1.2 The awareness and promotional plan will be implemented.	DG, Commemoration	June 2013

<sup>15</sup> A **columbarium** is a place for the public storage of cremation urns, i.e., urns holding a deceased's cremated remains).

**R2 It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration Division, develop appropriate outcome measurement tools for the program's Performance Measurement Strategy. (Important)**

<b>Management Response(s):</b>		
<b>Management Action Plan(s)</b>		
<b>Corrective action(s) to be taken</b>	<b>Office of Primary Interest (OPI)</b>	<b>Target date</b>
2.1 Program Performance Measurement Strategy will be developed.	DG, Commemoration	Completed August 2012

**R3 It is recommended that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy, Communications and Commemoration ensure that: (Essential)**

- 3.1 Measures are put in place to effectively capture visitor information for Memorials in Europe.
- 3.2 Enhancements are implemented to improve the visitor experience to European Operations sites.
- 3.3 European Operations staff have the resources available to them to: assess proposals for repair work to the memorials; review the completed work ensuring value for money and/or contract the necessary expertise as required.
- 3.4 A Letter of Understanding or MOU between VAC and Les amis du monument canadien de Vimy be established.

### **Management Response(s):**

Management agrees with this recommendation.

- 3.1 European Operations entered into an agreement with Parks Canada in 2011 to capture visitor information visitor/user counts for both the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial using electronic counters. The initial data capture phase is now complete and analysis is underway. European Operations will continue to operate a number of electronic and infrared counters at both sites in order to maintain accurate site user numbers. A further study of site users will be conducted to better understand visitor use patterns, interests and interactions through the use of social science research. It is expected that this will be done through a continuing partnership with Parks Canada.
- 3.2 Commemoration Division is proceeding with the planning of a new Visitors' Centre for the Canadian National Vimy Memorial. Additionally, European Operations has made a transformation commitment to improve and enhance the overall visitor experience to the European Sites. European Operations continues to work on ways to improve the day to day visitor experience at the sites through the development of improved interpretive programming and enhanced signage which are part of the larger project in preparing for the centennial of the First World War.
- 3.3 Commemoration Division is working to fill the position of Technical Advisor through a partnership with Parks Canada.
- 3.4 Commemoration Division will seek the advice of Legal Services regarding the establishment of an MOU or Letter of Agreement with L'Association des Amis du monument canadien de Vimy.

### **Management Action Plan(s)**

<b>Corrective action(s) to be taken</b>	<b>Office of Primary Interest (OPI)</b>	<b>Target date</b>
3.1 Measures are put in place to effectively capture visitor information for Memorials in Europe.	DG, Commemoration	December 2012
3.2 Enhancements are implemented to improve the visitor experience to European Operations sites.	DG, Commemoration	December 2013
3.3 European Operations staff have the resources available to them to assess proposals for repair work to the memorials; review the completed work ensuring value for money and/or contract the necessary expertise as required.	DG, Commemoration	March 2013
3.4 A Letter of Understanding or MOU between VAC and Les amis du monument canadien de Vimy be established.	DG, Commemoration	March 2013

**R4 It is recommended that the Director General, Commemoration Division develop a comprehensive Business Case that outlines and presents options for the best approach to providing effective operation and maintenance of the 14 memorials in Europe, as well as the grave and cemetery maintenance for those Veterans buried by Canada. (Important)**

<b>Management Response(s):</b>		
<b>Management Action Plan(s)</b>		
<b>Corrective action(s) to be taken</b>	<b>Office of Primary Interest (OPI)</b>	<b>Target date</b>
4.1 A comprehensive Business Case will be developed that outlines and presents options for the best approach to providing effective operation and maintenance of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave maintenance.	DG, Commemoration	June 2013
4.2 Business Case for 11 small Memorials and the Cemetery/Grave maintenance.	DG, Commemoration	June 2013
4.3 Business Case for 3 large memorials: Canadian National Vimy Memorial, Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial and the Canada Memorial.	DG, Commemoration	December 2013

## **7.0 Distribution**

Deputy Minister

Associate Deputy Minister

Chief of Staff to the Minister

Chair, Veterans Review and Appeal Board

Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy, Communications and Commemoration Branch

Assistant Deputy Minister, Service Delivery Branch

Assistant Deputy Minister, Human Resources and Corporate Services Branch

Executive Director and Chief Pensions Advocate, BPA

Office of the Veterans Ombudsman

Regional Director's General (3)

Area Directors (12)

Director General, Departmental Secretariat and Policy Coordination

Director General, Commemoration Division

Director, Program Operations Directorate

Director, European Operations Directorate

Manager, Funeral & Burials and Cemetery Maintenance

Deputy Coordinator, Access to Information & Privacy

Comptrollership Branch (TBS)

## APPENDIX A – SIGNIFICANCE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

To assist management in determining the impact of the observations, the following definitions are used to classify recommendations presented in this report.

**Critical:** Relates to one or more significant weaknesses/gaps. These weaknesses/gaps could impact on the achievement of goals at the departmental level.

**Essential:** Relates to one or more significant weaknesses/gaps. These weaknesses/gaps could impact on the achievement of goals at the branch/program level.

**Important:** Relates to one or more significant weaknesses/gaps. These weaknesses/gaps could impact on the achievement of goals at the sub-program level.

## APPENDIX B – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The evaluation examined two distinct components of the program, namely a) the memorials and cemetery/grave maintenance of Canada's war dead around the world and b) cemetery/grave maintenance of Veterans' graves in Canada. Both of these program components operate under the direction of the Deputy Minister, through the Assistant Deputy Minister of Policy, Communications and Commemoration and the Director General, Commemoration Division. These program components have the same mandate, similar functions, objectives and purpose of commemorating Canadians who have served their country in war and peace. The components, however, have different foci and program criteria.

The memorials component of the Commemoration Division is managed by European Operations (EO) and is responsible for the management and maintenance in Europe of the 14 memorials and cemeteries/graves of the war dead after World War I and II.

There are 13 Canadian First World War memorials in France and Belgium erected to commemorate historical events of particular importance to Canadians and Newfoundlanders and to honor the sacrifices of those who served during the First World War. Two of the sites have been designated as National Historic Sites – the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial. The other 11 include: Bourlon Wood Memorial, Courcelette Memorial, Dury Memorial, Le Quesnel Memorial, Passchendaele Memorial, Hill 62 Memorial, St. Julien Memorial, Guedecourt Newfoundland Memorial, Monchy-le-Preux Newfoundland Memorial, and the Courtrai Newfoundland Memorial. The 14<sup>th</sup> Memorial, acquired by Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) in 2008, the Canada Memorial, is located in Green Park, London, England.

Maintenance for the memorials and cemeteries in Europe is contracted out to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC)<sup>16</sup>. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission performs two distinct functions for Canada and VAC. The first is called the Charter Task and involves the care and maintenance of war graves and memorials to those who have no known grave from the two World Wars. For Canada, this involves the care and maintenance of commemorations for Canada's 110,000 war dead of the two wars in some 74 countries. The second function is conducted through an Agency Service contract. Examples include the care of the post-war Canadian service graves in Canada and Europe, routine maintenance and the provision of some work on 14 Canadian and Newfoundland Battlefield Memorials in France and Belgium, and care of the Canadian graves from the South African War. VAC makes an annual contribution, in the form of a grant, of approximately \$10M. This represents Canada's contribution to the maintenance cost which is shared by five other countries and referred to as the Royal Charter or Charter Task of the CWGC.

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<sup>16</sup> CWGC was originally established in 1918 and is responsible for commemorating members of the armed forces of the Commonwealth who died during the two World Wars. Canada is one of six Commonwealth countries which constitute the CWGC.

Other components of the Memorials program include the Seven Books of Remembrance, responsibilities related to the National War Memorial and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier located in Ottawa, and the Canadian Virtual War Memorial (CVWM) hosted on VAC's Website. These programs also recognize and keep alive the memory of achievements and sacrifice made by those who served Canada in the defense of freedom. The Seven Books of Remembrance are located in the Memorial Chamber of Parliament Hill and contain the names of those who died in service to Canada during times of war, military conflict and peace. The CVWM created by VAC's Commemoration Division, is an on-line registry of information about graves, memorials and personal memorabilia of more than 116,000 Canadians and Newfoundlanders who served and gave their lives for their country. The National War Memorial and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier situated in Ottawa are Canada's national center of commemoration of Canadian war dead and Veterans. The roles and responsibilities surrounding the site are shared among four federal institutions, namely the National Capital Commission (NCC), Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC), the Department of National Defence (DND) and Veterans Affairs Canada<sup>17</sup>.

The previously mentioned memorials are funded through VAC's Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and are maintained through third party contracts. They are managed by the Director of Commemoration situated in Ottawa and the Director of Web Content and Learning at Head Office. The total number of resources and the cost of this component did not warrant further evaluation as it was considered an efficient and effective use of resources for the work performed. In addition, the mandate is consistent with the direction of the federal government and the Department's Strategic Outcome #2: Take remembrance activities to Canadians rather than taking Canadians to remembrance activities through effective use of partnership and technology.

As stated earlier, VAC is also responsible for the maintenance of the graves of 284 war dead in South Africa. These graves are maintained under a separate contract with the CWGC.

During the Korean War, of the 516 Canadians who died, 378 are buried in the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Korea (UNMCK). Since February 1974, the cemetery has been administered by the Commission for UNMCK, which is comprised of 11 member nations with burials there. The amount allotted for Canada's share of her war dead is \$70,000 per year; however, the typical payout has been in the range of \$15,000 to \$17,000 per year. These memorials are funded through an annual grant, maintained through third-party contracts, and are managed by the Program Operations Directorate of Commemoration Division in Head Office.

The evaluation also examined the care and maintenance provided by VAC to the graves and markers of former members of the armed forces who, because of their military service, were buried or whose grave markers were erected at the expense of Canada.

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<sup>17</sup> Commemoration Division Program Policy Manual, Chapter 10.

This program component is managed by Cemetery Maintenance (CM) of the Program Operations Directorate of Commemoration Division in Head Office.

There are 192,928 Veterans' graves located in over 6,100 cemeteries in Canada to be maintained in perpetuity by VAC. Included are 28 'Fields of Honour' or 'Departmental Plots'. These are plots set aside in private and public cemeteries for the burial of Veterans. The three largest of these are Beechwood National Military Cemetery in Ottawa with over 3,000 Veterans graves, Mountain View in British Columbia with over 12,000 Veterans graves, and Brookside in Winnipeg also with over 12,000 Veterans graves. The others are buried in smaller plots or separately in cemeteries throughout the country. It is estimated that another 50,000 Veterans' graves remain to be identified.

VAC owns two cemeteries, The Veterans Cemetery in Esquimalt, British Columbia and Fort Massey in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Fort Massey was acquired by VAC in February, 1943 under the authority of a Defence Council decision to approve transfer to the Department of Pensions and National Health, later Veterans Affairs Canada. The Veterans Cemetery was transferred in 1948 from the Department of National Defence under the authority of PC Order 1948-127; between the two they have over 5,000 graves in total.

Finally, VAC is also responsible for:

- Non-World War Graves<sup>18</sup> located in several countries. The cost of maintenance for 2010/11 was \$62,000. These are managed through a contract with CWGC.
- Post-war Dependant Graves in Europe are the graves of military personnel or their families who died serving on bases after World War II and before repatriations were in effect. They were buried by DND and the maintenance responsibility transferred to VAC in 2010. Before they were transferred, all graves were restored and cleaned and the maintenance cost was paid up until the year 2050. VAC budgets \$5,000 annually in the event it has to replace a marker.
- Quebec concessions<sup>19</sup>: the cost of paying for expired leases of Veterans' graves to ensure that Veterans buried there are not disturbed. Over the last three years, the average expenditure was \$18,000.

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<sup>18</sup> Non-World War Graves located in Yokohama cemetery, Choloy and various other part of the world (South Africa). These are not part of the WAR DEAD contract; these are Veterans who died after the two World Wars. CWGC is contracted to do this work.

<sup>19</sup> In the province of Quebec grave plots are leased for a specified period of time and not purchased.

Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate the expenditure trend lines for these programs during years 2008-09 to 2010-11.

**Table 1 – European Operations Expenditure**

	(Dollars)*		
	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Salary	1,077,450.00	1,114,595.00	1,107,395.00
O&M	3,439,470.00	3,405,385.00	3,487,635.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,516,920.00</b>	<b>4,519,980.00</b>	<b>4,595,030.00</b>

The following costs are included in the above totals:

Dalkia Services**	583,068.00	597,786.00	541,082.00
Security	213,792.00	209,870.00	190,109.00
Guides program	484,135.00	541,273.00	467,313.00

\*Dollar values are affected by the exchange rate of the Euro.

\*\* Local contracted administrative services.

**Table 2 – VAC Head Office and Ottawa Office**

	(Dollars)		
	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Salary*	250,705.00	250,705.00	250,705.00
O&M	10,176.00	26,011.00	54,647.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>260,881.00</b>	<b>276,716.00</b>	<b>305,352.00</b>

\*Salary based on June 2011 rate.

## APPENDIX C – LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The legislative authority for the MCGMP is contained in Order in Council 1965-688. It states that:

*“... THEREFORE, His Excellency the Governor General in Council, on the recommendation of the Minister of Veterans Affairs, pursuant to Section 5 of the Department of Veteran Affairs Act, is pleased hereby to assign to the Minister of Veterans Affairs the primary responsibility for all matters relating to the commemoration of the war dead and recognition of the achievements of former members of the Canadian armed forces and without restricting the generality of the foregoing to assign to the said Minister specific responsibility for...”*

- (a) *The care and maintenance of the graves of former members of the armed forces of Canada who rendered outstanding service to Canada.*
- (b) *The maintenance of graves and grave markers of former members of the armed forces who because of their military service were buried at the expense of Canada or whose grave markers were erected at the expense of Canada.*
- (c) *Canadian overseas memorials and Vimy Park - Order in Council P.C. 5371 of 5th October, 1951.*
- (d) *The marking of certain Veterans' graves—Veterans Burial Regulations, Order in Council P.C. 1957-1181 of the 27<sup>th</sup> August, 1957, and Last Post Fund Regulations Order in Council P.C. 1954-1932 of 8th December, 1954.”*

Section 12 of the Veterans Burial Regulations 2005 states that:

*“If a grave marker or financial assistance toward funeral, burial and cremation costs have been provided under these Regulations or under predecessor enactments dealing with the same subject-matter, all necessary maintenance of the grave marker must be provided by the Minister, including the replacement or refurbishment of:*

- (a) *the grave marker in any cemetery or block of graves owned by the Government of Canada and allocated to former members of the armed forces or the merchant navy or any persons who engaged in pursuits relating to war on behalf of Canada; or*
- (b) *a grave marker, of the standard referred to in subsection 6(1), in the cemetery where the original grave marker or burial was provided.”*

## APPENDIX D – EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance evaluation is based on a non-experimental design and the evaluation's findings and conclusions are based on the analysis of multiple lines of qualitative and quantitative evidence.

A variety of factors led to this design choice:

- There is limited benchmark information available to measure the program's impact despite the fact that components of the program such as the European Memorials have been in existence since the completion of the First World War.
- Recognition and pride in remembrance (by the Canadian public) of the sacrifices and achievements of those who have served, is influenced by many factors external to the program;
- The program is unique in terms of evaluability as there are no direct applicants to the program and no benefits are provided to individuals or groups. The impact of the maintenance of tangible reminders of history on awareness, understanding and remembrance are best examined by measures taken to increase awareness; proxies such as opinion surveys; site visit numbers and comparisons with the practices of other Commonwealth countries and the USA.

### Data Sources

To gather evidence, the following methodologies were used:

#### *Document Review*

Documents reviewed for purposes of relevance and success included: VAC's strategic documents such as the Departmental Report on Plans and Priorities, the Departmental Performance Report, Commemoration authority documents, Commemoration policies, and the results from three National Surveys<sup>20</sup>.

Government of Canada documentation such as the Speech from the Throne, and Commemoration in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century - Report of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs, December 2011, were also reviewed.

Program specific documents were reviewed to provide a greater understanding of program history and details. Program documents reviewed included the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's annual reports, maintenance plans and technical documents related to grave maintenance as well as past evaluations and related Websites.

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<sup>20</sup> 2010 Ipsos-Reid Survey, Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week Omnibus Survey, VAC's 2010 National Client Survey, and the 2010 VAC - Canadian Awareness, Engagement & Satisfaction with Remembrance Programming Survey.

### *Literature Review*

Literature of similar programs from Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the United States were reviewed to provide a comparative context for the program and information on the approach used by other countries regarding their memorials and Veterans' graves. Other literature reviewed included Lest We Forget A History of the Last Post Fund 1909-1999 and various Websites providing background information regarding Canada's cemeteries and 'Fields of Honor'.

### *Key Informant Interviews*

Interviews were conducted with a variety of key informants to provide qualitative data based on the perceptions and opinions of individuals who had/have a role in the program or, who had/have a key stake in program delivery. The evaluation team conducted a total of 24 interviews (a mix of in-person, telephone and video-conferencing). As there are no applicants to the program, VAC staff and management made up the majority of the interviews with 18 individuals providing information and opinions during the interview process. Additionally, four individuals representing stakeholders were interviewed including DND officials and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Canadian Agency representatives. One individual representing the American Battle Monuments Commission as well as one individual representing the Department of Veterans Affairs in Australia, were interviewed as subject matter experts. The evaluation team was also present in an observer capacity at two stakeholders' meetings dealing with future planning for the Department's Veterans Cemetery in Esquimalt, BC.

### *Site Visits*

The evaluation team visited two departmental cemeteries (Veterans Cemetery in Esquimalt, BC and Fort Massey in Halifax, NS) to observe cemetery and grave conditions. Additionally, five private cemeteries containing graves of Veterans were also visited to observe the number of Veterans' graves in the cemetery, physical layout of the site and the general conditions of the cemetery and Veterans' graves and markers. The site visits allowed the evaluation staff to work with, and observe program staff assessing maintenance issues of Veterans' graves, and to see first-hand some of the challenges related to accessibility and the maintenance practices of various cemeteries.

### *Data Analysis*

Administrative data regarding the program(s) were identified and reviewed for success and efficiency elements of the evaluation (e.g., program resources allocated and expenditures, site visitation numbers etc.).

The Canada Remembers Grave Tracking System (CRGTS) is an electronic registry of the graves for which VAC has responsibility. The data contained in the CRGTS was reviewed for the relevance and success components. A randomly selected sample of

150 files<sup>21</sup> from the CRGTS was reviewed to provide additional information on the condition of Veterans' graves and the types of maintenance performed. Because of the way the data is reported and captured, it was not possible to determine the average cost of repairs by type or contractor. The files reviewed were stratified proportionally by province. The evaluation team also requested and received several customized extractions of raw data from the CRGTS database and conducted analysis on various uptake and performance parameters.

Data on Web trends and Web usage by the public, captured by departmental Communication staff regarding the CVWM were collected and reviewed.

## **Considerations and Limitations**

The primary limitation of this evaluation is the incomplete PMS and related missing data which would have provided for more comprehensive data analysis of inputs to outcomes.

In addition, the use of a non-experimental design limits the ability to measure the ultimate impact on the Canadian public.

The evaluation was challenged by the variety of activities included in the program's mandate, the world-wide scope of the program, as well as the indirect impact of program activities to the ultimate program outcomes. With respect to the latter, for example, VAC receives calls from the public regarding the condition of a Veteran's grave in a local cemetery, which indicates public knowledge of the Department's role in commemoration. In the case of the 14 memorials located in Europe, even with VAC's best efforts to educate the public, most Canadians may only be aware of the two largest national sites in France, namely, Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel.

Another challenge is that the maintenance of Veterans' cemeteries and graves is a relatively new responsibility as VAC became responsible for most of these graves through assignment from other departments and through its responsibility for those buried by the Last Post Fund. As the historical records are incomplete due to turnovers and changes of responsibilities, VAC is in the process of compiling a comprehensive data base of Veterans' cemeteries and graves for which it is responsible.

A further consideration is the fact that historical decisions and practices have influenced the program design since the early 1900s and impact program flexibility as a result of long-standing commitments.

Finally, while there are related questions in the three surveys referenced in this report, the survey questions were not specific enough to fully gauge public awareness and satisfaction of the components or activities being evaluated.

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<sup>21</sup> The sample was taken from the total number of files in the database, including 18,489 War dead, which are the responsibility of GWGC.

### **Mitigation Strategies**

The evaluation applied the following mitigation strategies to address the above limitations:

- multiple lines of evidence for all evaluation issues and questions;
- file reviews based on provincial distribution of Veterans' graves using CRGTS which contained photographic documentation of graves as well as administrative information, compensating for the lack of direct observation of Veterans' graves in each province;
- interviews with regional staff previously involved with the program;
- multiple interviews with key program staff to ensure an accurate understanding of data collected and program history; and
- a comparative review of the literature and Websites of other countries' memorial programs, and interviews with foreign subject matter experts.

### **Roles, Responsibilities and Quality Assurance**

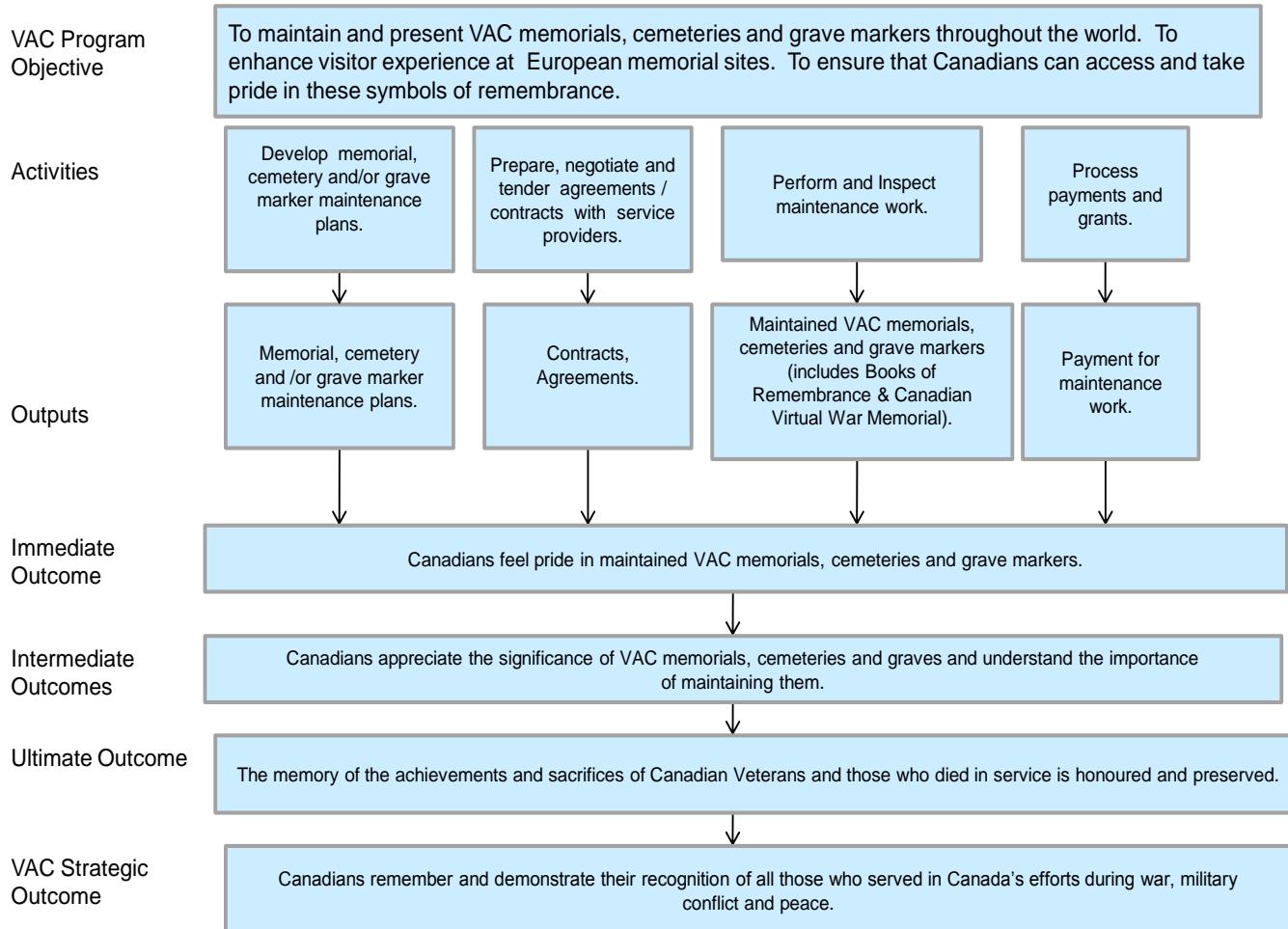
The VAC Audit and Evaluation Division is the project authority for this evaluation. The evaluation plan was distributed to the program area for review and feedback prior to fieldwork commencement (see Appendix G).

Other quality assurance measures which were applied to this evaluation included: validation with the program area, the Statistics Directorate, as well as internal peer review.

The report was reviewed by the Evaluation Director, Audit and Evaluation Director General, and the Departmental Evaluation Committee.

## APPENDIX E - DRAFT PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

### SA 2.1.4 Memorial and Cemetery Maintenance Logic Model 2012-13



## APPENDIX F - TERMS OF REFERENCE

<b>Project Title and Number</b>	<i>Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Evaluation</i>					<b>2011-12</b>
<b>Project Type</b>	Summative Evaluation					
<b>Project Authority</b>	DG: Don Love, DG, AED DIR/MGR(s): Kevin Edgecombe, Director, AED					
<b>Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VAC helps honour the memory of deceased Veterans and war dead through the maintenance of memorials including graves, markers, cemeteries and the Books of Remembrance.</li> <li>The graves of the war dead are cared for in partnership with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Department manages the care of Veterans' graves and Veterans Affairs Canada's two departmental cemeteries.</li> <li>Cemetery/Grave Maintenance is one of five priority budget areas that the Department plans to commit dollars to in the upcoming years.</li> </ul>					
<b>Project Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To assess the extent to which the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program continues to address a demonstrable need and are responsive to the needs of Veterans.</li> <li>To assess the linkages between the objectives of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program and (i) federal government priorities and (ii) departmental strategic outcomes.</li> <li>To assess the roles and responsibilities in delivering the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program.</li> <li>To assess progress toward expected outcomes of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program with reference to performance targets and program reach, program design, including the linkage and contribution of outputs to outcomes.</li> <li>To assess the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program resource utilization in relation to the production of outputs and progress toward expected outcomes.</li> </ul>					
<b>Scope</b>	Covers SA 2.2.2 Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance.					
<b>Resources</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>DG</b>	<b>DIR</b>	<b>MGR</b>	<b>OFF</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
	Planning	27	27	243	243	540
	Fieldwork	27	27	243	243	540
	Report	13.5	13.5	121.5	121.5	270
	<b>Totals</b>	67.5	67.5	607.5	607.5	<b>1,350</b>
<b>Notes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An evaluation of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program is part of the coverage required by the <i>Evaluation Policy</i> during the 5-year cycle of all transfer payments.</li> </ul>					

## **APPENDIX G - MEMORIALS AND CEMETERY/GRAVE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM EVALUATION PLAN**

### **Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program 8900-192**

#### **Evaluation Work Plan**

**September 30, 2011**

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

The Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program is responsible for honouring the memory of Canada's war dead and deceased Veterans through the maintenance of memorials, including graves and cemeteries, and through the Books of Remembrance.

The preservation of memorials and maintenance of cemeteries/graves of Canadian and the former Dominion of Newfoundland forces who died in the two world wars is provided by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). Canada is one of the 6 partner countries (Australia, India, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom) providing funding to the CWGC. Funding provided is proportional to the number of graves for which Canada shares approximately 10% of CWGC costs - \$9 million. There are 82,855 identified burials with an additional 27,504 war dead commemorated on memorials<sup>22</sup> from the two wars located both within Canada and 74 countries overseas. This agreement also allows the CWGC to undertake horticultural work and minor maintenance and restoration at Canada's thirteen battlefield sites in France and Belgium.

The Commission for the United Nations Memorial Cemetery Korea (UNMCK) provides cemetery and grave maintenance for 378 of Canada's war dead buried in Korea. The Commission consists of 11 member nations (Australia, Canada, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Turkey, UK, USA and Korea) whose fallen during the Korean War are interred at the UNMCK.

In addition to the above, the Department is responsible for the maintenance of grave markers provided under the *Veterans Burial Regulations*, 2005 to post-war Veterans through the Last Post Fund. A Memorandum of Understanding has been established with the CWGC for the maintenance of these grave makers in Canada.

## 2.0 SCOPE

This evaluation is required as a result of the 5-year review mandated by the Policy on Transfer Payments and will examine program activity over the last 5 years (2006 – 2011).

The Evaluation Team will assess the relevance, success, cost-effectiveness and efficiency of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program (i.e. aligned with federal government priorities, the extent to which a program is achieving expected outcomes and to which resources are used in a cost-effective/efficient manner).

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<sup>22</sup> Those who have no known grave or were buried at sea are commemorated on memorials.

## 3.0 OBJECTIVES

The evaluation of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program will encompass the following objectives:

### **Relevance**

1. Assessment of the extent to which the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program continues to address a demonstrable need and is responsive to the needs of Canadians.
2. Assessment of the linkages between the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program to: (i) federal government priorities and (ii) departmental strategic outcomes.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

3. Assessment of the roles and responsibilities for the Commemoration Division in delivering the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program.

### **Success**

4. Assessment of progress toward expected outcomes (including immediate, intermediate and ultimate outcomes) with reference to performance targets and program reach, program design, including the linkage and contribution of outputs to outcomes.

### **Effectiveness and Efficiency**

5. Assessment of resource utilization in relation to the production of outputs and progress toward expected outcomes.

## 4.0 STUDY APPROACH

**Objective 1:** To assess the extent to which the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program continues to address a demonstrable need and is responsive to the needs of Canadians.

The evaluation team will review and analyze the results of the VAC National Client Survey as well as the results of recent surveys conducted by external providers for the Department to examine Canadians' response to Commemoration and Memorial Activities as conducted by VAC. In addition, interviews with key stakeholders and partners will be conducted to obtain their perspective.

**Objective 2:** To assess the linkages between the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program to: (i) federal government priorities and (ii) departmental strategic outcomes.

The tone and priority for Veterans Affairs Canada and its commemoration activities are included in the mandate and priorities found embedded in the Speech from the Throne.

The evaluation team will review relevant documents (Speech from the Throne, VAC Strategic Plans, etc.) to ensure VAC's Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program is aligned with those of the Federal Government.

A sound plan is based on the organizational mandate and business goals of the Department. The evaluation team will review VAC's Five-Year Strategic Plan and discuss the strategic direction of the Department with VAC managers to ensure the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program is reflective of the long-term direction of the Department.

**Objective 3:** To assess the roles and responsibilities in delivering the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program.

The evaluation team will assess the roles and responsibilities of the Commemoration Division and its respective partners in delivering the program. This will involve literature and document reviews as well as interviews with key stakeholders.

**Objective 4:** To assess progress towards the expected Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program outcomes.

The purpose of this objective is to determine how well the program's plan is executed.

This will involve an examination of the performance targets, program reach, program design, including the linkage and relationship of inputs to outcomes. A challenge identified early in this process is that the Commemoration Division is currently in the process of developing performance measurement standards. This will constrain the evaluation team's ability to effectively measure the extent to which outcomes equaled program expectations.

**Objective 5:** Assessment of resource utilization in relation to the production of outputs and progress toward expected outcomes.

The evaluation team will use multiple data collection methods to assess the resource utilization in relation to the production of outputs and outcomes. To the extent possible, program costs will be assessed against the program outputs, as well as outcomes, to determine whether the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program is demonstrating efficiency and economy.

An assessment of VAC's roles and responsibilities in delivering the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program will be conducted to determine if there are any opportunities to deliver program funds in a more efficient and economical manner.

## **5.0 METHODOLOGY**

Multiple data collection methods consisting of a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches will be used. These methods will include:

- Key informant interviews (e.g., VAC staff & partners, CWGC, LPF, UNMCK)
- Review of departmental and GoC reports and plans, etc.
- Examination and analysis of internal and external survey results
- Examination of internal VAC statistical reports
- Comparison with other similar programs in the GoC and other countries
- Document review
- Direct observation

## **6.0 EVALUATION LIMITATIONS**

The Government of Canada has a longstanding partnership with CWGC to deliver cemetery/grave maintenance as well as horticultural work and annual maintenance and restoration of Canada's thirteen battlefield sites in France and Belgium. VAC relies on the CWGC reporting and on VAC staff in Europe to monitor day-to-day activities. There is no Performance Measurement Strategy currently in place, it is under development and will be ready in September 2012. There are limited performance indicators to measure the Department's management of the Memorials and Cemetery/Grave Maintenance Program. As a result, this will restrict the sources of information available to comprehensively evaluate the achievement of the program's outcomes. In order to manage this, the evaluation team will utilize multiple data collection methods using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. These methods will include key internal and external stakeholder interviews, data analysis of the recent public opinion surveys of the program, data analysis of information maintained in the Enterprise Reporting Database (RDB) and CIS, randomly selected file reviews of the Canada Remembers Grave Tracking System (CRGTS), direct observation, analysis of management reports, CWGC annual reports, and other document reviews.

## **7.0 PROJECT TIME LINES**

Activity Time Frame:	Target Date
Start Date:	October 3, 2011
Fieldwork:	November 2011
Evaluation Report:	January 2012
Presentation of Results and Report Finalization:	February 2012
Completion Date:	March 2012