



Veterans Affairs  
Canada

Anciens Combattants  
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# *Backgrounder*

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## **Juno Beach**

During the Second World War, Juno Beach was one of five stretches of the Normandy coast in occupied France chosen by the Allies to serve as landing zones during *Operation Overlord* on June 6, 1944. Canadian troops were tasked with coming ashore at Juno Beach that morning.

Juno Beach was an eight-kilometre long section of French shoreline that included the coastal villages of Saint-Aubin-sur-Mer, Bernières-sur-Mer, Courseulles-sur-Mer and Graye-sur-Mer. Our soldiers would face imposing defences as the Germans had studded the coast with machine gun positions, heavy artillery, beach obstacles, mines, barbed wire and watchful enemy troops.

Some 14,000 Canadians came ashore at Juno Beach in the face of heavy enemy fire on June 6, 1944, to help establish an Allied beachhead. 450 Canadian paratroopers also landed in Normandy before dawn to target German positions farther inland. As well, Royal Canadian Navy warships and landing craft were important parts of the massive Allied fleet on D-Day, while Royal Canadian Air Force bombers and fighters helped clear enemy planes from the skies and strike at German defensive positions.

359 Canadian soldiers were killed on D-Day, while more than 5,000 of our soldiers would lose their lives over the entire course of the 11-week Battle of Normandy. Many more returned home with wounds to mind and body that would affect their lives for years to come. The Canadians who took part in the Normandy Campaign were among the more than one million men and women who served our country in the defence of peace and freedom during the Second World War.