

Annual Report-2025

Women Veterans Council



ISBN 978-1-100-00529-4

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This Annual Report has been prepared by the Women Veterans Council for 2024-25.

The views, opinions, findings, and recommendations expressed in this report are those of the Women Veterans Council and do not necessarily reflect the views, policies, or positions of Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), the Government of Canada, or the Minister of Veterans Affairs.

Part 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Women Veterans Council – Inaugural Reporting Period (2024–2025)

This report covers The Women Veterans Council (WVC) core activities from its establishment on December 2, 2024 until the end of December 2025.

The council was established following Recommendation 36 of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs' (ACVA) report *Invisible No More: The Experience of Canadian Women Veterans*. The Council was created to provide independent, lived-experience–informed advice directly to the Minister of Veterans Affairs on issues affecting women currently serving and women Veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Its mandate spans health and wellbeing, equitable access to benefits, transition from service, research, data equity, economic security, and recognition.

The Council is composed of 12 diverse members representing CAF and RCMP officers and non-commissioned members, regular and reserve forces, serving and retired personnel, and a wide range of professional, cultural, and lived experiences. Two Co-Chairs, one from the CAF and one from the RCMP ensure balanced representation and leadership. To advance its work, the Council initially established three subgroups: Medical & Research, Community & Peer Support, and Service Delivery. In September 2025, a Governance subgroup was also established.

Inaugural Year Focus and Progress

The first year was primarily dedicated to establishing foundational governance, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and building internal capacity. A comprehensive governance document was developed and agreed upon by council members and is pending ministerial approval. Subgroups were formed, priorities were identified, and early engagement occurred with VAC officials, research bodies, and the women veteran community, including participation in national forums and consultations.

Despite significant disruptions including a federal election, a government shutdown, and the turnover of four Ministers of Veterans Affairs within nine months the council provided input on departmental initiatives, reviewed ACVA recommendation updates, contributed to the Women Veterans Research Plan, supported improvements in knowledge mobilization, and promoted the integration of lived experience into research, policy, and service delivery discussions.

Key Recommendations and Ministerial Responses

On October 19, 2025, the Council submitted 10 formal recommendations to the Minister addressing governance clarity, transparency, secure communications infrastructure, community engagement, tracking of recommendations, regular ministerial engagement, and mental health support for Council members. The Minister's responses, received on November 28, 2025, supported collaboration on governance updates, committed to regular engagement, acknowledged the need for improved communications and tracking mechanisms, and recognized the council's early contributions. However, several foundational issues most notably the absence of a dedicated budget, a secure digital collaboration platform, and formalized community engagement mechanisms remain unresolved.

Barriers and Challenges

The council's effectiveness in its inaugural year was constrained by delayed approval of governance documentation, limited direct ministerial guidance, lack of operational tools, insufficient transparency, and unclear communications protocols. These challenges contributed to reduced visibility of the Council's work and hindered its ability to fully meet community expectations.

Looking Forward

The council has identified urgent priorities for 2026, including final approval of governance documents, enhanced transparency through timely public reporting, implementation of secure collaboration tools, a clear communications and engagement plan, and more frequent meetings to enable timely advice. With these foundations in

place, the Women Veterans Council is positioned to shift from establishment to impact—advancing systemic change and equity for women Veterans across policies, programs, research, and service delivery in Canada.

Part 2: WOMEN VETERAN'S COUNCIL BACKGROUND

Background

On June 12, 2024, the Standing Committee on Veteran's Affairs (ACVA) released its report *Invisible no More. The Experience of Canadian Women Veterans*. The report made 42 recommendations to address the needs and concerns faced by Canadian military and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) women and women veterans in areas such as physical and mental health, financial security, and transition from uniformed service to civilian life.

Recommendation no. 36 called for the establishment of a women's council that would report directly to the Minister of Veterans Affairs. The call for applications for the Women Veterans Council was announced on June 10, 2024, and the council was officially established on December 2, 2024.

How Were We Selected?

Members consist of women who have served or are currently serving in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and/or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). CAF members include both officers and non-commissioned members (NCMs) from the reserve and regular forces, RCMP members from a range of ranks, coming both from diverse areas of expertise, and geographic postings across Canada. Council members bring experience from domestic and international operations and reflect a wide range of identities, cultural backgrounds, lived experiences, and professional expertise, all of which inform and strengthen the council's perspectives and advice. The council includes women who are single or partnered, with or without children, and those with varied service-related experiences and injuries, ensuring that its work reflects the realities and needs of women veterans across Canada..

What Do We Do?

The Women Veterans Council advises the Minister of Veterans Affairs (MVA) on initiatives and priority areas affecting women currently serving and women Veterans of the CAF and RCMP.

Drawing on members' lived experience and professional expertise, the council identifies systemic barriers and provides advice and recommendations on issues including:

- Supports for CAF and RCMP women who are transitioning out of service;
- Equitable access to all benefits administered by VAC for women;
- Social and community supports focused on meeting the needs of women Veterans;
- Research priorities to ensure VAC-funded research reflects the needs of the women Veterans;
- Knowledge mobilization of research for continuous improvement of VAC programming, service delivery, and priority funding areas;
- Women's rights related to health equity, data equity, economic equity, outreach, and recognition.

Beyond formal advice, the council contributes to advancing gender equity by sharing knowledge and monitoring progress on issues affecting women during and after service.

Why Do We Do It?

Women's experiences of service and transition are not uniform, and policies and programs that do not reflect this diversity risk perpetuating inequities.

The council exists to advance equity in health, research, access, practice, and policy for women serving in and transitioning from the CAF and RCMP. Using intersectional

analysis, including GBA+ and SGBA+, the Council supports VAC in ensuring programs and policies reflect the full range of women's experiences.

This includes women with service-related disabilities, women from diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, and women at all stages of service and post-service life.

Roles and Responsibilities

Council members

Council members contribute their lived, professional, and educational experience to support the Council's mandate. Their responsibilities include:

- Making written and formal recommendations to the MVA on topics of priority;
- Actively participating in council meetings (virtually and in person);
- Reviewing pre-meeting materials in advance to support informed dialogue and discussion in accordance with requested timelines;
- Promoting and monitoring efforts to address equity for women in benefit access, data, health, and economic outcomes;
- Participating in training sessions as needed to support their role;
- Respecting the Council's Code of Conduct and declaring any real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest to the Co-Chairs and Secretariat.

Co-Chairs

The Women Veterans Council has two co-chairs, elected by council members through a closed voting process. Their responsibilities include:

- Chairing all council meetings and guiding the discussion to ensure inclusive participation;

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- Leading the collaboration with council members to develop agenda items;
 - Liaising with the VAC Secretariat to ensure the effective administration and smooth conduct of Council meetings;
 - Disseminating Records of Discussion for council review and approval within 10 business days;
 - Engaging directly with the MVA throughout the year, as required, and whenever possible, after collaboration with the council;
 - Providing the council advance notice of all engagements, including purpose and audience, and follows up with a summary of discussions within 10 business days.
 - Supporting subgroup work, ensuring alignment with council objectives;
 - Canvassing council members on guest speakers, facilitating council approval for same, and liaising with the secretariat for the coordination of the speaker;
 - Representing the council in formal communications, following consultation with council members, as appropriate; and
 - Leading and/or delegating the leadership of the development of the annual report.

Subgroup Leads

Subgroup Leads may be designated by the council to help advance specific areas of work aligned with the council's priorities. Their responsibilities include:

- Guiding the work of the subgroup in alignment with Council-approved objectives or tasks;
- Coordinating subgroup meetings or activities and reporting progress to the full Council;
- Ensuring diverse perspectives are considered within the subgroup;

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- Providing advance notice of all subgroup engagements, including purpose and audience, and following up with a summary of discussions.
 - Drafting summaries or recommendations on behalf of the subgroup for presentation to the full Council;
 - Liaising as necessary across VAC and the council to ensure subgroup work is supported and resourced; and
 - Supporting the development of the annual report representing the sub-group's work.

Note: Subgroup Leads are selected based on relevant experience, interest, and/or capacity and may rotate as needed.

Objectives

Short-Term Objectives

The council's short-term goals are to provide timely insight, advice and recommendations and facilitate regular engagement and information sharing with the Veteran, CAF and RCMP women's communities. These include:

- **Provide Timely Input on Departmental Initiatives**
Offer insight and feedback—based on lived experience—on new and ongoing initiatives, strategies, or policies being considered or implemented by VAC that may impact women Veterans or still-serving members.
- **Promote and Monitor Government Equity Efforts**
Actively promote and monitor the efforts of the Government of Canada in addressing equity for women—particularly in areas of benefit access, health equity, economic equity, data equity and programs specific to women Veterans.
- **Support Improved Communication and Engagement**
Recommend ways VAC can strengthen outreach with and feedback from women

Veterans and ensure VAC's communications are clear, inclusive, and responsive.

- **Review Departmental Initiatives**

Review and provide feedback to VAC on departmental documents shared with the council, including research updates, policy proposals, implementation summaries, priority funding areas, or changes to programs that impact women's health, benefits, access, and/or recognition.

- **Identify Barriers and Gaps**

Identify systemic barriers affecting access to services, benefits, and recognition for CAF and RCMP women with an emphasis on issues related to transition out of service, economic equity, and data transparency.

Long-Term Objectives

The council's long-term goals are to support systemic change and equity for women Veterans by influencing broader policies and programs. These include:

- **Provide Ongoing Advice and Recommendations to the Minister**

Identify systemic barriers and sources of discrimination and provide insight, advice and recommendations to the MVA on a wide range of issues, including:

- Supports for CAF and RCMP women who are transitioning out of service;
- Equitable access to all benefits administered by VAC for women;
- Social and community supports focused on meeting the needs of women Veterans;
- Research priorities to ensure VAC-funded research reflects the needs of women Veterans;
- Knowledge mobilization of research for continuous improvement of VAC programming, service delivery, and priority funding areas;

- The rights of women in relation to health equity, data equity, economic equity, outreach, and recognition.
- **Monitor Progress on Equity Commitments**
Promote and monitor the Government of Canada's efforts to address equity for women across benefit access, healthcare services, data practices, and economic outcomes.
- **Develop and Submit an Annual Report**
Present formal written recommendations to the Minister each year that reflect the views of the council, grounded in intersectional analysis using GBA+ and SGBA+, and informed by ongoing consultation, collaboration, and Council dialogue.
- **Contribute to a Culture of Recognition and Representation**
Promote the visibility and recognition of women's contributions within the CAF and RCMP, supporting efforts that reflect diverse lived experiences, advance inclusive representation, and challenge historic under recognition in commemorative activities.

Priority Setting

The Women Veterans Council is committed to providing strategic, actionable advice to the MVA.

Priorities will be determined through discussion among council members, informed by available evidence, engagement with the Veteran community, and awareness of emerging issues. Once identified, these focus areas will guide the council's activities, including research, engagement, and the development of recommendations.

The council's priorities may evolve over time based on new information, community feedback, and the needs of the women Veteran population.

Members of the Women Veterans Council 2024-2025

1. Constable (Retired) Jennifer Chorney, RCMP;

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2. Warrant Officer (Retired) Celine Fillion, CD, CAF;
 3. Lieutenant-Colonel Dawn Leblanc, CD, CAF (Serving member)
 4. Corporal (Retired) Sarah Lefurgey, RCMP;
 5. Captain (Retired) Hélène Le Scelleur, CD, CAF (Lead Research and Medical Subgroup);
 6. Sergeant (Retired) Jessica Miller, CD, CAF (Lead Community and Peer Support Subgroup);
 7. Colonel (Retired) Telah Morrison, OMM, CD, CAF (co-chair);
 8. Corporal Ellen Peters, RCMP (Serving member)
 9. Captain (Retired) Lindsay Shields, CD, CAF (Lead Governance Subgroup);
 10. Constable (Retired) Vivienne Stewart, RCMP (co-chair & Lead Service Delivery Subgroup);
 11. Lieutenant-Colonel (Retired) Eleanor Taylor, OMM, MSM, CD, CAF
 12. Lieutenant (Navy) (Retired) Wenshuang “Wen” Nie, CD, CAF;

PART 3: GOALS OF THE REPORTING PERIOD

As the inaugural year for the Women Veterans Council, the primary focus was on establishing the governance procedures and policies to support the council's effective and efficient operation in future years. A governance document was developed and agreed upon by council members, providing a framework to guide Council activities.

Key priorities included establishing mechanisms to communicate with the broader community and accurately represent the needs of women veterans, centralizing information related to the council's work, and ensuring systematic follow-up on recommendations with the VAC Secretariat. The council also focused on creating sub-working groups, participating in the annual Women's Forum, prioritizing tasks and recommendations, and reviewing the ACVA report to provide informed recommendations to the MVA.

Additional objectives included recommending essential training and presentations to ensure all members share a common understanding of women veterans' needs and systemic barriers, as well as obtaining clear direction from VAC and MVA on the council's operational parameters, including budget availability for an in-person Forum and the annual Council meeting.

PART 4: PROGRESS TO DATE

Council Establishment & Leadership:

The Women Veterans Council was officially established on December 2, 2024, following ACVA Recommendation No. 36. An introductory virtual meeting was held on December 3, during which co-chairs representing the CAF and RCMP cohorts were selected via online vote to ensure equitable leadership. Dates and logistics for future meetings were also set.

Working Groups & Early Activities:

At the first in-person meeting (January 29, 2025, Ottawa), the council formed three working sub-group: Research & Medical, Community & Peer Support, and Operations Delivery, to focus on key areas efficiently. Each group has contributed progress updates to this report.

Engagement & Learning Opportunities:

In March 2025, members attended the Women in Defence and Security breakfast and VAC's Women's Forum, connecting with women veterans, service providers, and presentations on systemic issues. The council also received briefings from VAC, RCMP, and CAF to enhance understanding of services and operational contexts.

Governance & Operations:

Despite delays due to a federal government shutdown and ministerial changes, the council maintained activity through sub-working groups and informal meetings to finalize the core governance document and clarify roles, objectives, and decision-making processes. A formal vote on the governance document was postponed by the VAC Secretariat pending departmental review.

Training:

Required training on GBA+, SGBA+, trauma-informed care, and Mental Health First Aid could not be completed during the first year but remains a priority for future capacity building.

PART 5: FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO MVA

Council engagement with the Department was limited during this inaugural year, meeting briefly with three different VAC Ministers. These transitions, along with broader departmental challenges, impacted the council's capacity to advance many recommendations it might have wished to present.

Despite these challenges, the council contributed valuable insight and constructive feedback, grounded in lived experience, on new and ongoing VAC initiatives affecting women Veterans and currently serving members. Council members who participated in the annual Forum of the Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research advocated for the integration of veterans' lived experience into podium presentations and emphasized the importance of increasing veteran community participation. These efforts were successful, resulting in additional spaces being made available to the veteran community this year.

On October 19, 2025, the council submitted 10 recommendations to the Minister of Veterans Affairs. The full list of recommendations, along with the Minister's responses, are included in **Appendix A** and **Appendix B**, respectively.

These recommendations focused on governance, transparency, and accountability, including budget clarity, updated governance materials, and structured monitoring of communications and recommendations. They also emphasized direct engagement with the MVA, enhanced community consultation mechanisms, secure and centralized digital platforms, and mental health support for council members. Collectively, these recommendations aimed to ensure the council can effectively advise VAC, the MCVA, represent the needs of women Veterans, and promote trust, transparency, and inclusion in all aspects of its work.

Finally, on December 18, 2025, the council met with MVA and discussed four clear priority issues that the council felt were essential to the women veteran community and the effectiveness of the council as a whole. The four issues discussed are attached in **Annex C** as well as the general answers from MVA.

PART 6: BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

The primary challenge faced by the Women Veterans' Council this year was the development and approval of its governance documentation. Given that the council reports to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, the turnover of four different ministers within a nine-month period, coupled with a federal election, impeded the council's ability to secure approval for the governance document before the end of September. As this document constitutes the foundational framework for the council, its absence limited the council's capacity to operate effectively during the year.

Similarly, although the council met with each of the ministers briefly, there was no opportunity for the ministers to provide the council with their guidance, direction, or priorities.

Other Significant Challenges Included:

- Despite the considerable time and effort council members have invested in this matter, there is still no established communications plan, tools, or mechanisms for council members to effectively engage with the veteran community.
- The perceived lack of transparency. Little to no information has been made publicly accessible regarding the council's ongoing activities, including its accomplishments, barriers, challenges, and recommendations to the Minister. Consequently, from a public perspective, it appears that the council has achieved little and has been predominantly ineffective. It is essential that more frequent, detailed information be publicly disclosed.
- There is a lack of access to a secure, dedicated platform that facilitates collaborative work among council members independently of the secretariat. This issue is particularly problematic given that the council is expected to operate primarily in a virtual environment and its members are spread across the nation.

Consequently, council members have had to conduct much of this work using their personal emails, which significantly impedes productivity and considerably prolongs the time required for members to complete their work.

- Given the numerous substantial changes in government over the past year and the recent approval of the parliamentary budget in late November 2025, the council remains uncertain regarding available resources and, consequently, has been largely unable to complete any planning.
- Conducting quarterly meetings annually, as originally outlined, was inadequate given the volume of work to be addressed. Furthermore, it does not enable the council to draft and respond to inquiries and questions in a timely manner. Furthermore, organizing ad hoc meetings to address urgent matters proved challenging due to the council members' other commitments, responsibilities and schedules.

PART 7: SUBGROUP WORK SUMMARIES

GOVERNANCE

In September 2025, the Governance Subgroup, comprising Lindsay Shields, Sarah Lefurgey, Eleanor Taylor, Telah Morrison, and Ellen Peters, was established to ensure the effective operation and continuous improvement of governance procedures.

On September 17, 2025, the final draft of the governance document was reviewed and agreed upon by council members and is currently awaiting ministerial approval. Of note, it was decided that the communications section of the document would be detailed in a separate document and was consequently excluded.

Moving forward, once the governance document has received approval, the Governance Subgroup will concentrate on:

- Membership Oversight: Overseeing the administrative process for confirming term extensions annually;
- Nominations and Appointments: Assisting with identifying and selecting new council members for MVA approval;
- Governance Framework: Reviewing the governance document annually and recommending updates or amendments as needed to ensure alignment with best practices and organizational objectives.

MEDICAL & RESEARCH

The Medical & Research subgroup, comprising H  l  ne Le Scelleur, Sarah Lefurgey, Lindsay Shields, Jennifer Chorney, Wen Nie, and Dawn Leblanc, was established at the council's first in-person meeting in January 2025.

Overview

Over the past year, the Medical & Research Subgroup advanced its mandate to strengthen the evidence base, improve knowledge dissemination, and integrate lived experience into research and clinical decision-making affecting women veterans. The Subcommittee focused on identifying systemic gaps, informing policy and research priorities, and supporting the modernization of VAC programs and services.

Key Activities

- Reviewed priority health issues affecting women veterans, including reproductive health, care pathways, chronic conditions, and gendered clinical presentations.
- Analyzed claims processes, highlighting barriers related to women-specific conditions, triage inconsistencies, and delays associated with nursing reviews.
- Assessed research governance and funding mechanisms, identifying gaps in coordination, oversight, and impact measurement.
- Contributed to the development of the Women Veteran Research Plan and Pan-Canadian Research Strategy on Women Veterans' Health.
- Strengthened internal operations through dedicated clinical and research work streams.

Consultations & Partnerships

Engagements were held with CIMVHR, VAC Research and Services Directorates, Atlas Institute and Chronic Pain Centre of Excellence (CPCoE). The Subcommittee also provided formal feedback on the Women Veterans Forum, emphasizing meaningful inclusion, safe-space practices, workshop relevance, and the need for clearer follow-up on the use of research findings.

Key Concerns

- No funding allocated in Budget 2025 to implement the Women Veteran Research Plan.
- Persistent exclusion of RCMP members from research initiatives.
- Absence of a national knowledge dissemination platform.
- Claims processes misaligned with current evidence for women-specific conditions.
- Lack of resources to support council participation in key knowledge-mobilization activities.
- Limited tools for sustained two-way engagement with women veterans and the research community.

Strategic Direction 2025–2026

The Subcommittee will contribute to and inform VAC and the Women Veterans Council by supporting:

- Implementation of the Women Veteran Research Plan.
- Modernization of claims processes for gendered conditions.
- Development of a national knowledge dissemination portal.

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- Formal integration of lived experience into research and service decisions.
 - Strengthened collaboration with CIMVHR.
 - Ongoing, structured dialogue with the women veteran community on women's health needs.

PEER SUPPORT

The Peer Support subgroup, comprising Jessica Miller, Eleanor Taylor, Ellen Peters, Jennifer Chorney and Dawn Leblanc, was established at the council's first in-person meeting in January 2025.

Introduction

Peer support and community-based programs remain essential components of veteran wellness in Canada. They provide trusted, trauma-informed spaces where veterans can share lived experiences, reduce isolation, and access support without stigma. Veterans frequently turn to peers first when managing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), operational stress injuries (OSI), service related sexual trauma, often referred to in mainstream as Military Sexual Trauma (MST), transition stress, reintegration challenges, and risks such as homelessness and social withdrawal.

These programs operate alongside, but distinct from, formal clinical and departmental services. Their unique role complements VAC programs while filling critical gaps in early support, connection, and long-term reintegration.

Overview of Peer Support in Canada

VAC-connected formal peer programs include the Operational Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS) program and peer support integrated within OSI Clinics. At present, there is no organized, centralized list of veteran-led peer support organizations, resulting in inconsistent visibility, coordination, and access across regions.

National Research and Standards Leadership:

- ATLAS Institute for Veterans and Families
- Mood Disorders Society of Canada
- Peer Support Canada

In 2025, an in-person meeting was held with an ATLAS research team to discuss findings from their most recent report on peer support effectiveness.

Key Findings

- Veterans show higher trust in peers than institutions, including VAC, CAF, and SMSRC.
- Peer programs reduce clinical load and crisis usage.
- Rural veterans remain underserved.
- Women veterans require specialized peer environments.
- Community organizations lack stable funding
- National partners emphasize lived-experience leadership.

Challenges

- Lack of sustainable funding
- No national coordination framework
- Insufficient MST-specific programming
- Limited peer facilitator training
- Inconsistent rural access
- Weak integration with clinical services

Recommendations

1. Establish a national peer support framework.
2. Provide multi-year operational funding.
3. Create MST-specific peer support funding.

4. Build VAC–community coordination pathways.
5. Support peer facilitator training.
6. Promote research and evaluation.

Governance and Structural Recommendations

During the reporting period, the peer-support and community-engagement function encountered structural challenges that affected its ability to meaningfully engage with the CAF and RCMP veteran community. A central issue was the absence of a shared, consistent understanding within the Council regarding its role in direct community engagement. This lack of clarity created operational friction and limited the Council's capacity to respond effectively.

Several tools and engagement approaches were examined; however, each raised concerns related to mandate boundaries, privacy obligations, departmental accountability, and risk tolerance. It became evident that meaningful community engagement could not be achieved within the existing single-body structure.

This informed the recommendation to transition to a dual-body model—one responsible for formal advisory functions and one responsible for community-facing engagement—to provide clearer mandates, reduce risk, and better support CAF and RCMP veterans.

Conclusion

Peer and community support are essential to wellness and reintegration. Implementing these recommendations through a phased, multi-year approach will ensure programs are trauma-informed, evidence-based, and aligned with best practices.

SERVICE DELIVERY

The Service Delivery Subgroup, comprising Vivienne Stewart, Telah Morrison, Eleanor Taylor, Celine Fillion, Sarah Lefurgey and Ellen Peters, was established at the council's first in-person meeting in January 2025.

During 2025, the subgroup had several ad hoc virtual meetings and many email discussions related to setting priorities based on the ACVA report recommendations that were identified as being service-related. Relevant recommendations that VAC was already working on, and about which VAC had provided updates to Council, were reviewed for the adequacy of work completed and to identify work the Subgroup considered was still required.

The Subgroup determined that many of the issues being reviewed likely overlapped with issues being reviewed by the Medical & Research Subgroup and the Peer Support Subgroup. For example, on the Medical & Research side, the Subgroup is concerned that the Table of Disabilities does not include complementary and alternative therapies as acceptable (and compensable) treatments in Mental Health Benefits. Anecdotally, and based on some research, there are indications that many of these therapies have been found to be more useful in treating PTSD in veterans than the traditional treatment modalities. On the Peer Support side the Service Delivery Subgroup also has concerns relating to the adequacy of VAC communications when it comes to informing the veteran population of changes that VAC has already implemented that benefit them.

Moving forward, it is expected that the Subgroup will continue to:

1. Monitor progress in the implementation of the service delivery-related ACVA recommendations through Subgroup requests for information and VAC updates;
2. Work with the other Subgroups on overlapping issues;
3. Identify shortcomings in the Table of Disabilities, the Entitlement Eligibility Guidelines and VAC frontline and decision-making practices; and

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4. Make recommendations designed to correct these shortcomings.

PART 8: FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

To facilitate the effective operation of the council, restore trust of the veteran community in VAC and the Women Veteran Council, the following recommendations are essential and need to be a focus in 2026:

- Transparency: More frequent, detailed information must be publicly disclosed in a timely manner. Recommendations once approved by the council, should be posted publicly within a week and not be subject to ministerial approval since they are simply the recommendations made by the council. Additionally, responses by VAC to these recommendations should be posted publicly with recommendations once available.
- Operational Tools: Access to a secure, dedicated platform that facilitates collaborative work among council members independently of the secretariat and enables secure storage of the council's working documents. This issue is particularly problematic given that the council is expected to operate primarily in a virtual environment and its members are spread across the nation.
- Communications Plan: A clearly established communications plan, encompassing tools and mechanisms that enable council members to effectively engage with the veteran community, as well as providing veterans with opportunities to engage with the council.
- Frequency & Scheduling of Meetings: Given the challenges associated with providing prompt responses and coordinating ad hoc meetings, it is advisable to schedule supplementary meetings annually in September for the months of September through June in instances where no quarterly meeting has already been scheduled for that month. One week prior to these supplementary meetings, an assessment should be conducted to ascertain whether there are pressing issues that require immediate attention and cannot be deferred until the

subsequent main meeting. If no such issues are identified, the meeting planned for the following week shall be cancelled.

- Governance. The council has drafted a governance document to ensure the best practices for effective council operations. This document needs to be finalized and approved by VAC.

PART 9: GOALS FOR 2026

As we move into 2026, our goal is to secure clarity from the MVA on our terms of reference, mandate, and her priorities. This will enable us to better execute our role and serve women Veterans effectively. We look forward to working within this clarified mandate and continuing to author thoughtful, evidence-based recommendations informed by the experiences and voices of the women Veteran community.

Annex A

Formal Recommendations of the Women Veterans Council

October 19, 2025

RECOMMENDATION #1: Budget Creation & Transparency

That Veterans Affairs Canada publish the annual budget allocation and/or create an annual budget for activities specific to the Women Veterans Council (WVC), as determined by the WVC, including such activities as an annual in-person Women Veteran's Forum, Council member attendance fees at related conferences, and the like.

Rationale:

- Creation of a budget with specified funding will help address misunderstandings within the community about the scope of support provided to the WVC. Public disclosure of budgets aligns with principles of accountability and will foster confidence among veterans and partners.
- The Council acknowledges that there are always fiscal constraints; however, having a reasonably budgeted amount available to it is essential to ensure that what we are proposing are viable and fiscally responsible solutions, particularly in addressing foundational needs such as communications and information management platforms.
- As the Council conducts the majority of its work virtually, with members located across multiple time zones, this clarity on available resources is critical to ensuring that we have the necessary tools to effectively fulfill our mandate as outlined.

Additional Context:

The need for a budget was discussed at the September and October 2025 Council meetings with the Secretariat. It was also proposed in the governance document that was submitted to the Secretariat on September 8, 2025.

RECOMMENDATION #2: Review and Update of Governance Materials

That the Terms of Reference, Mandate, and webpage of the Women Veterans Council be reviewed and updated in collaboration with the Council to accurately reflect the Council's role, authority, and scope of influence.

Annex A

Rationale:

- Clarifying the Council's purpose and scope will help address misunderstandings within the community about our role, which have led to elevated expectations and increased inquiries directed to the Council.
- Clear, current governance materials and public information will promote understanding of the Council's advisory function and strengthen transparency.
- It is imperative that these materials be co-developed in conjunction with the Council, following dialogue and collaboration. Updates should not be undertaken unilaterally by Veterans Affairs Canada, but rather in partnership with Council members to ensure that revisions accurately reflect our collective understanding, lived experience, and advisory intent.
- We recommend that these governance materials be reviewed bi-annually, with updates completed by April 15 and October 15 each year.

Additional Context:

The Council has created and approved a detailed governance framework, which was submitted to Veterans Affairs Canada (via the Secretariat's email address, Amy Meunier, Moussa Dramé, and Peggy Nash-Butt) on September 8, 2025. A response from the Department is still pending.

This recommendation was also raised at the June, September, and October 2025 Council meetings with the Secretariat.

RECOMMENDATION #3: Secure Council Communications Platform

That a secure, centralized digital platform be established for Council communications, document sharing, and archival of past work, to facilitate coordinated, timely collaboration on working products given that the Council primarily operates virtually.

Rationale:

- A centralized platform is essential to ensure that Council members can work collaboratively and efficiently, regardless of location. Given the varied time zones across which members are located, such a platform would support asynchronous work, enabling ongoing progress outside of scheduled meetings.
- This would also reduce duplication of effort, promote consistency in communication, and improve efficiency for both Council members, who are volunteering their time, and Veterans Affairs Canada staff supporting the Council.

Annex A

Additional Context:

- The Council has identified this need as critical to its ability to fulfill its mandate. Current communication channels do not provide adequate functionality or security for the Council's ongoing work.
- This recommendation was raised at the January, April, June, September, and October 2025 Council meetings with the Secretariat.

RECOMMENDATION #4: Dedicated Monitoring of Council Inbox

That a designated lead from the Secretariat, in collaboration with a lead from the Council, be assigned responsibility for regularly monitoring and responding to messages received through the Women Veterans Council inbox.

Rationale:

- An unmonitored inbox, or one lacking a clear response process, presents a significant reputational risk to both the Council and Veterans Affairs Canada, as it may appear that inquiries from women veterans are being ignored. Simply acknowledging receipt of an email without providing a timely or meaningful response is equally detrimental, as it can erode trust and discourage future engagement.
- Active, consistent management of this communication channel is essential to maintaining trust and credibility with the women veterans' community. To achieve this, there must be a clear framework and shared understanding between VAC and the Council regarding communication protocols, including criteria for when the Council can respond directly versus when departmental review is required. Greater trust and flexibility for the Council to respond appropriately and promptly is essential to ensuring that inquiries are handled respectfully, accurately, and without unnecessary delay.
- If adequate monitoring and support cannot be provided at this time, we recommend the inbox be temporarily deactivated until appropriate processes are in place.

Additional Context:

This recommendation was raised at the January, April, June, September, and October 2025 Council meetings with the Secretariat.

Annex A

RECOMMENDATION #5: Regular Ministerial Engagement

That the Council meet directly with the Minister a minimum of twice annually.

Rationale:

- While the Council values and acknowledges the strong support provided by the Secretariat and departmental staff, it is crucial that direct dialogue with the Minister be maintained. This ensures that the Council's advice, insights, and lived experiences are heard as intended and helps strengthen trust that women veterans' voices are reaching the highest level of leadership.
- It also reinforces confidence that the Council remains a continued priority and that Veterans Affairs Canada is committed to systemic change, even if it differs from historical practices. Simply acknowledging the receipt of an email or stating that the Council has "heard" the originator is not sufficient and can be equally detrimental. There must be trust that the Council can respond appropriately without delays of days or weeks caused by extensive vetting, and clear guidance is needed on the criteria for when the Council can respond directly and when further consultation or approval is required.

Additional Context:

- This recommendation was raised at the June, September, and October 2025 Council meetings with the Secretariat and via email on August 30, 2025.

RECOMMENDATION #6: Enhanced Community Engagement Mechanisms

That the Secretariat consult with the Council to identify mechanisms for more direct engagement with women veterans, beyond existing tools such as Let's Talk Veterans.

Rationale:

- Establishing effective tools for communication and consultation is essential to ensure women veterans can meaningfully contribute and feel heard.

Annex A

Additional Context:

- This recommendation was raised at the January, April, June, September, and October 2025 Council meetings with the Secretariat.
- To address this issue efficiently, we recommend that a member of the VAC communications team be appointed as a dedicated point of contact to work directly with Eleanor Taylor and Jessica Miller on a regular basis or, alternatively, the current team leads for the Peer Support subgroup. This individual would collaborate with the Council to co-develop a feasible solution, including a realistic commitment on how often and for how long they can dedicate time to this engagement, ensuring a practical and sustained approach to the matter.

RECOMMENDATION #7: Timely Response and Tracking of Council Recommendations

That a formal mechanism be established to track Council recommendations and associated departmental responses, including timelines for review and feedback.

Rationale:

- Transparent follow-up will strengthen accountability, improve communication, and demonstrate respect for the Council's advisory role.
- Updates should be specific rather than general statements such as "in progress" or "almost finalized." When a recommendation is submitted, the Council should be advised of who - by position or by name - is responsible for reviewing it at each level. This allows the Council to see that progress is occurring and reassures the veteran community that their input is being reviewed in a timely manner. It also helps to repair trust that has been lost among some Council members within VAC.
- Whether recommendations are ultimately accepted, modified, or declined, visibility into the review process, including the decision makers involved at each stage, serves as a tangible sign of progress. This transparency will help build confidence among Council members and within the broader veteran community.

Additional Context:

This recommendation was raised at the October 2025 Council meeting with the Secretariat.

Annex A

RECOMMENDATION #8: Accuracy in Public Communications

That Veterans Affairs Canada ensure that all communications referencing the Women Veterans Council distinguish clearly between the Department's work on the women veterans file and the work of the Council.

Rationale:

- Avoiding conflation of roles prevents misunderstanding within the community and preserves the integrity of the Council's independent advisory function.
- More documents should be made publicly available to ensure transparency and accountability.
- Any recommendations made by the Council should be posted publicly on the VAC website, allowing the community to see the Council's work and demonstrating the Department's commitment to openness and engagement with women veterans.
- Additionally, at present, Records of Discussion (RODs) of Council meetings are compiled by the Secretariat and submitted through VAC personnel for review before posting on the external VAC website.
- As these records capture the minutes and key discussions of the Council meetings, with the Secretariat providing administrative support, it is imperative that the Council review and approve these records before they are provided to other VAC personnel for comment and ultimately posted online. This ensures accuracy, and preserves the integrity of the Council's discussions.
- Veterans are increasingly requesting access to these RODs, and the current delays are contributing to further distrust in the community.

Additional Context:

- This recommendation was raised at the October 2025 Council meeting with the Secretariat.

RECOMMENDATION #9: Mental Health Supports for Council Members

That mental health support is made available and funded by Veterans Affairs Canada for Council members during and for two hours following Council meetings.

Annex A

Rationale:

- Participation in Council discussions often involves engagement with sensitive or traumatic topics that can place emotional and mental strain on members. Over the past year, the challenges identified in these recommendations have contributed to increased stress, as discussed with the Secretariat during the September and October 2025 meetings.
- Providing mental health support during and after meetings reflects best practices employed by centres of excellence, such as the Atlas Institute, and demonstrates a commitment to wellbeing and sustainability.

Additional Context:

- This recommendation was raised at the June 2025 Council meeting with the Secretariat and via email on April 8, 2025.

RECOMMENDATION #10: One Year Anniversary Update Meeting with Selection Committee

That the Council offers to meet at the end of 2025/beginning of 2026 with the Selection Committee to provide updates, share successes and challenges, and seek guidance and insights.

Rationale:

- The Selection Committee invested significant time and effort to establish this Council. A one year anniversary update meeting would acknowledge their contribution, provide transparency on progress, and allow the Council to benefit from their expertise in addressing challenges and advancing our mandate.
- This would be voluntary, should Selection Committee members wish to attend.

Additional Context:

- This recommendation was raised at the October 2025 Council meeting with the Secretariat.

ANNEX B

Response from the Minister- 28 November 2025

Responses

1. Budget Creation and Transparency

That Veterans Affairs Canada publish the annual budget allocation and/or create an annual budget for activities specific to the Women Veterans Council (WVC), as determined by the WVC, including such activities as an annual in-person Women Veteran's Forum, Council member attendance fees at related conferences, and the like.

Response

The Minister of Veterans Affairs greatly values the Women Veterans Council's ongoing collaboration and the thoughtful recommendations you continue to provide. Your contributions are helping to shape how we engage with and support women Veterans, and we are grateful for your commitment. As an advisory body, the Council is supported through existing mechanisms within the Community Engagement Division of Veterans Affairs Canada. While a dedicated budget is not being considered at this time, the Department remains committed to supporting the Council's mandate and exploring opportunities to enhance transparency and responsiveness.

The Women Veterans Forum is one of several important platforms through which we engage with women Veterans. We appreciate the Council's insights into community engagement, emerging priorities, and its assistance in identifying gaps and barriers—all of which inform our approach. Decisions regarding expenditures and engagement formats are made by the Department, in alignment with broader government priorities and fiscal stewardship.

To further strengthen our partnership and ensure clarity around roles and responsibilities, we are committed to co-developing an updated Terms of Reference with the Council. This collaborative effort will help guide our shared work and reinforce our commitment to meaningful engagement with women Veterans.

2. Review and Update of Governance Materials

That the Terms of Reference, Mandate, and webpage of the Women Veterans Council be reviewed and updated in collaboration with the Council to accurately reflect the Council's role, authority, and scope of influence.

Response

The Minister of Veterans Affairs appreciates the Council's input on the Terms of Reference, Mandate and related public-facing materials, including the webpage. The Minister supports the Council's recommendation to review and update the Terms of Reference, Mandate and webpage for the Women Veterans' Council. The Minister recognizes the importance of having clear and up-to-date governance documents that accurately reflect the Council's advisory role.

The governance feedback document submitted by the Council, along with discussions at multiple Council meetings will guide this work. The Minister remains committed to maintaining 2

an open and collaborative process as these updates move forward and to ensuring that governance materials continue to support the Council's ability to provide meaningful advice on issues affecting women Veterans.

As part of this commitment, the Minister will ensure that governance materials undergo an annual review to keep them current and aligned with the Council's mandate.

3. Secure Council Communications Platform

That a secure, centralized digital platform be established for Council communications, document sharing, and archival of past work, to facilitate coordinated, timely collaboration on working products given that the Council primarily operates virtually.

Response

The Minister of Veterans Affairs recognizes the value of a secure, centralized digital platform to support the Council's virtual collaboration, especially given the geographic and time zone diversity of its members. We are currently exploring a range of options to

identify a viable solution that meets the Council's needs for secure communication, document sharing and archival functionality. We understand this has been a recurring topic of discussion and appreciate the Council's continued emphasis on its importance.

We will keep the Council informed as we assess potential platforms and work toward a resolution that supports efficient and coordinated engagement.

4. Dedicated Monitoring of Council Inbox

That a designated lead from the Secretariat, in collaboration with a lead from the Council, be assigned responsibility for regularly monitoring and responding to messages received through the Women Veterans Council inbox.

Response

The Minister of Veterans Affairs appreciates the Council's ongoing engagement and feedback regarding inbox management. We understand the desire for more timely and coordinated communications and are reviewing current practices to identify solutions that support effective engagement.

To ensure consistency with Government of Canada standards and to safeguard privacy and accountability, departmental inboxes are managed centrally. In light of these requirements and further to the Council's recommendation that the inbox not remain active if it could not be managed by members, the existing Women Veterans Council inbox will be deactivated.

Moving forward, communication with the Council will continue through established departmental channels to ensure information is shared securely, roles are clear, and the Council remains well supported in fulfilling its advisory function.

5. Regular Ministerial Engagement

That the Council meet directly with the Minister a minimum of twice annually.

Response

The Minister of Veterans Affairs greatly values the Women Veterans Council and the important advisory role it plays. The lived experiences and perspectives of the Council members are essential in guiding efforts to strengthen supports for women Veterans across Canada.

The Minister is committed to maintaining meaningful engagement with the Council. The Minister will meet with the Council twice annually or at the Minister's discretion, depending on scheduling and evolving priorities. To ensure that communication remains consistent and responsive throughout the year, staff from the Minister's office will also be available to meet with the Council at least twice annually and up to four times per year.

The Council's feedback and ongoing engagement are invaluable, and the Minister remains dedicated to supporting an effective advisory relationship as this important work continues.

6. Enhanced Community Engagement Mechanisms

That the Secretariat consult with the Council to identify mechanisms for more direct engagement with women veterans, beyond existing tools such as Let's Talk Veterans.

Response

The Minister of Veterans Affairs supports the Women Veterans Council's recommendation to explore more inclusive ways of engaging with women Veterans. The Council plays an important role in shaping how the Department connects with this community, and we value its ongoing contributions.

To support effective collaboration, personnel from the Veterans Affairs Communications Division will engage with the Council where appropriate, including attending meetings, to exchange ideas on outreach strategies, tools and messaging. While staff will not be

assigned on a dedicated basis, this approach reflects a shared commitment to meaningful engagement while balancing broader departmental responsibilities.

The Department will continue to share relevant communications and engagement materials with the Council for input. This ongoing exchange helps ensure that Council perspectives inform Veterans Affairs Canada's efforts to reach and serve women Veterans in a thoughtful and inclusive way.

7. Timely Response and Tracking of Council Recommendations

That a formal mechanism be established to track Council recommendations and associated departmental responses, including timelines for review and feedback.

Response

The Minister of Veterans Affairs appreciates the Council's recommendation and understands the value of having a clear and consistent way to follow the progress of Council advice.

A shared tracking tool is already in place through the Council's Google Drive, which allows recommendations and responses to be recorded in one location. Ongoing communication will be supported through touch-points with both staff from the Minister's Office and the Department, which will also offer opportunities to review progress and discuss next steps.

With respect to timelines, the Minister acknowledges that different recommendations move at different speeds depending on their complexity and the level of coordination required.

Although setting specific timelines can be challenging given the varying nature of issues under consideration, the Minister is committed to sharing updates as they become available. The Minister welcomes the Council's views on what may be considered timely and is open to discussing approaches that support clarity for both the Council and the Minister's Office.

8. Accuracy in Public Communications

That Veterans Affairs Canada ensure that all communications referencing the Women Veterans Council distinguish clearly between the Department's work on the women veterans file and the work of the Council.

Response

The Minister of Veterans Affairs recognizes the importance of clearly differentiating the Department's responsibilities from the advisory role of the Women Veterans Council. We remain committed to ensuring public communications reflect this distinction and will continue to share relevant materials with the Council for input prior to publication, where appropriate.

We will reconnect with the Council in the near future to discuss potential next steps and gather additional feedback.

9. Mental Health Supports for Council Members

That mental health supports be made available and funded by Veterans Affairs Canada for Council members during and for two hours following Council meetings.

Response

The Minister of Veterans Affairs thanks the Council for raising this recommendation and recognizes the importance of ensuring Council members have access to mental health supports. Your well-being matters, and we take this seriously.

At present, mental health supports remain available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, through several dedicated services: 5

- VAC Assistance Service, which provides free and confidential support to retired RCMP members, Canadian Armed Forces Veterans and their families
- Canadian Forces Member Assistance Program, which is available to serving Canadian Armed Forces members and their families
- RCMP Employee Assistance Services, which are available to current RCMP members, employees, and their families

All services can be accessed by calling 1-800-268-7708 (toll-free). These services connect individuals directly with qualified mental health professionals and are promoted as key resources for members who may need support before, during or after Council meetings.

That said, the Minister would appreciate a clearer understanding of what more you feel is needed. How are the current supports not meeting your needs? What gaps are you experiencing before, during or after Council meetings? Your insight will help us determine whether existing services can be adapted or whether additional, dedicated support would be more appropriate.

We fully recognize that the nature of your discussions can have emotional impacts, and we are committed to ensuring that the supports in place align with those realities. Your feedback will be essential in guiding how we strengthen this moving forward.

10. One-Year Anniversary Update Meeting with Selection

That the Council offers to meet at the end of 2025 / beginning of 2026 with the Selection Committee to provide updates, share successes and challenges, and seek guidance and insights.

Response

The Minister of Veterans Affairs acknowledges the foundational role the Assessment Board played in establishing the Women Veterans Council. Their work was instrumental in ensuring the Council reflects the diverse experiences and perspectives of women Veterans across Canada.

As the Council approaches its one-year anniversary, we agree that this is an important moment to reflect on progress, recognize contributions and continue strengthening visibility and engagement. Public reflections, such as those planned for the Council's upcoming annual report, offer a meaningful way to share achievements, promote transparency and reinforce accountability.

While the Assessment Board's mandate concluded following the delivery of its advice to the Minister, we supports the Council's intent to acknowledge its contributions and

share progress. A meeting may not be feasible, but the annual report provides a valuable opportunity to highlight the Council's accomplishments and demonstrate its impact.

In its first year, the Council has made significant contributions to departmental initiatives, including:

- Shaping the Honouring Her Service 2025 Women's Forum
- Informing the Strategic Direction for Women Veterans
- Providing input on service modernization and communications
- Co-developing the Women Veterans Research Plan
- Designing engagement tools for the Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research forum
- Collaborating on a federal research funding proposal
- Participating in targeted learning sessions on Veterans Affairs Canada programs
- Exchanging knowledge internationally with the Australian Department of Veterans' Affairs
- Co-developing its governance and operational framework

These achievements reflect the Council's commitment and impact. It will take time to build a solid foundation that provides the stability and action required to support all women in service and women Veterans. Together, we can move forward.

ANNEX C

Points of Discussion/Decisions Council raised with Minister of Veterans Affairs on 18 December, 2025

Item 1. National Women Veterans Forum

Since 2019, the National Women Veterans Forum has served as VAC's primary engagement mechanism to hear directly from women Veterans about their lived experiences of service, transition, health, recognition, and access to support. The Forum is the only mechanism through which members of the Women Veterans Council can engage directly with women Veterans from the broader community.

- Key question for discussion: Will the Minister support an in person National Women Veterans Forum this year and co-create the plan and agenda with the Women Veterans Council.

The MVA would not commit as of December 18, 2025 for an in person women's forum. She did note that once a decision was made, VAC would seek the advice of council in regards to the forum.

Item 2 : Women Veterans Research Plan

The National Women Veterans Research Plan was co-developed with the Women Veterans Council, VAC's Research Directorate, and national scientific partners to address long standing gaps in evidence related to women Veterans' health, service conditions, and post service outcomes. While the strategy framework and priorities are complete, no funding was allocated in Budget 2025 to support implementation. Existing federal research mechanisms are not aligned with the scope or intent of the plan, and RCMP members remain excluded from many research initiatives due to legislative and contribution agreement constraints. Without dedicated funding and a defined implementation pathway, the plan risks remaining conceptual rather than driving policy, program, and service modernization.

- Key question for discussion: How and when will the Department resource and operationalize the Women Veterans Research Plan to ensure it results in measurable improvements in services, programs, and outcomes for women Veterans.

MVA noted that VAC needs to include research that is not just male centric, and that research needs to include the health and well being of all veterans. VAC relies on collaboration with separate organizations to conduct most of the research, which allows the plan to be flexible and scalable. There is no single source of funding for research

within VAC. The council noted that without dedicated funding, there is a risk that research diminishes.

Item 3 : VAC–RCMP Relationship and Recognition of RCMP Veterans

Long standing concerns persist regarding the lack of formal recognition of former RCMP members as Veterans, ongoing support gaps, and unclear governance and accountability structures between VAC and the RCMP. A 2012 recommendation from the Veterans Ombudsman to formally recognize former RCMP members as Veterans remains unimplemented. Legislative definitions under the Pension Act exclude RCMP service, limiting VAC's authority and resulting in inequitable access to programs and benefits, including for RCMP members who have experienced service-related sexual trauma.

- Key question for discussion: Whether the Minister will commit to clarifying the VAC–RCMP governance relationship and exploring legislative pathways to formally recognize RCMP members as Veterans and ensure equitable access to supports.

MVA noted she required more time to review the VAC-RCMP relationship and related governance issues as it was a complicated file. MVA was committed to seeking clarity and to reporting back to the Council with findings and next steps.

Item 4 : Governance of the Women Veterans Council

As a body housed within VAC, the Women Veterans Council faces inherent limitations on communication, advocacy, and community engagement. Public expectations that the Council represents and speaks for women Veterans are misaligned with what is structurally possible inside government, creating frustration within the community and placing Council members in an untenable position. A proposed dual body governance model would separate internal confidential policy advice from external community engagement and public advocacy, aligning with best practices while protecting both the Department and the integrity of women veterans' voices.

- Key question for discussion: Whether the Minister supports, in principle, a transition to a dual body governance model and the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalize the relationship between VAC and an external women veterans' body.

MVA noted that the current structure of council does create tensions, and has limitations on advocacy and communication to the community. However, MVA does not agree to a

dual body governance model, and noted it does not align with the VAC framework. She further noted that there is a need for clarity on the current structure.