

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- We are committed to consulting with Veterans, RCMP, their families and the broader stakeholder community to create space for their advice and suggestions.
- The Deputy Minister's coffee group and six advisory groups for the Minister of Veterans Affairs are in place and provide advice and recommendations on issues related to policy, service excellence and transition, health and well-being, families, care and support, and recognition.
- Members include men, women, 2SLGBTQI+ and Indigenous Veterans, representatives from Veteran stakeholder organizations, former RCMP, Canadian Armed Forces personnel, and subject matter experts who advocate on behalf of the Veteran community.
- We organize forums and stakeholder events including the National Stakeholder Summit which occurred in Montreal on March 5-6, 2024, the Women Veterans forum which took place on March 7-8, 2024, and the 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans forum August 28-29, 2024.
- Consulting with Veterans and Canadians in general is important to the Department. Our most recent

consultations completed on Let's Talk Veterans include 2025 Women Forum, Veteran Employment, Health Claim Processing, Supports for Families and Caregivers and the Recording and Monitoring of Calls.

WHEN PRESSED:

Q1 – What are the six Ministerial Advisory Groups?

Ministerial Advisory Groups allow the Minister of Veterans Affairs to seek advice directly from Veterans, Canadians and other stakeholders on issues that affect Veterans and their families. There are six groups focused on issues related to policy, service excellence and transition, health and well-being, families, care and support and recognition. Each group has a chairperson(s) and a co-chair who is a senior VAC official. A representative of the Veterans Ombudsperson is invited to attend advisory group meetings as an observer. There is also a serving member of the CAF on each group.

Q2 – Why were the Ministerial Advisory Groups created?

Ministerial Advisory Groups were created to consult directly with Veterans and stakeholders, improve transparency and focus on issues of importance to Veterans and their families. Advice from Advisory Groups has helped VAC improve programs and services for Veterans, ranging from reducing the complexity of benefit applications to improving mental health services.

Q3 – Why did the Ministerial Advisory Groups need to be renewed?

Ministerial Advisory Group members were appointed in 2016 and members who left or resigned were not replaced. Renewal provided an opportunity to fill vacancies, build on the work already done and bring new and diverse voices to the table as the needs of Veterans and their families continue to evolve.

Q4 – Who chose the new Ministerial Advisory Group members?

New members have been selected by the Minister of Veterans Affairs through an open and transparent application process. The original Ministerial Advisory Group members were appointed by the Minister in 2016, however as we have evolved and the needs of Veterans and their families have changed, the renewal had a more structured process. The Notice of opportunity for renewal of the six Ministerial Advisory Groups was posted on June 16 on the Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) website. Appointments were made based on applicant's qualifications and by prioritizing adding new, diverse and underrepresented voices to ensure representation of our various stakeholders.

Q5 – What is Minister's involvement for these six ministerial advisor groups?

The six ministerial advisory groups were created to improve transparency and seek consultation on issues of importance to Veterans and their families. The Minister receives advice and guidance through these groups with recommendations reviewed, tracked and actioned as appropriate.

Stakeholder Engagement

Source: Commemoration & Public Affairs Date: 2024/11/25

Q6 – Who attended the National Stakeholder Summit and Women’s Forum

There were approximately 170 stakeholder organizations, advisory group members, and community partners who attended the stakeholder summit in person and another 80 virtually. For the women’s forum there were approximately 100 women Veterans and women Veteran focused organizations who attended in person and another 60 virtually.

BACKGROUND — STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

Engagement with stakeholders is important to Veterans Affairs which maintains open dialogue with Canadians in formal and informal format. Veterans Affairs has hosted a number of national and regional stakeholder summits and town hall sessions since 2016.

In 2016, the Minister of Veterans Affairs established six advisory groups to provide advice related to policy, service excellence, mental health, families, care and support, and commemoration. Membership includes Veterans, representatives from Veterans organizations, Canadian Armed Forces personnel, and subject matter experts. A number of Budget initiatives were influenced including Pension for Life and the Departmental strategy on Wait Times launched in 2020.

VAC has connected with a number of Indigenous Veterans groups and national organizations. We continue to seek respectful and innovative mechanisms to help build deeper collaboration, and new ways to work together by fostering relationships with different Indigenous organizations.

Engagement and outreach continues with an online platform titled “*Let’s Talk Veterans*”. This accessible consultation tool allows us to gather information from the broad Veteran community. This platform will focus our efforts on improving the design and deliver of programs for Veterans and their families. To date we have completed consultations on the 2025 Women’s Forum, Health Claim Processing, Future of Remembrance, Disability Adjudication Process, Accessibility, Veteran Employment, Families and Health Claims Processing, and Supports for Families and Caregivers. The information we have received from these consultations is helping the Department to better support Veterans and their families.