Dominion Command Veteran Services and Seniors

Meeting Minutes

14 October 2026

Our Mission is to serve Veterans, which includes serving military and RCMP members and their families, to promote Remembrance and to serve our communities and our country.



Legion

DOMINION COMMAND
MINUTES OF THE VETERAN SERVICES AND SENIORS COMMITTEE
LEGION HOUSE
Via ZOOM Conferencing, 14 October 1:30pm

File: 65-1

In Attendance:

Sharon McKeown	-	**Chair**
Jack MacIsaac	-	**Deputy Chair**
Robert Cutbush	-	**Member**
George O'Dair	-	**Seniors Advisor**
Dave Gordon	-	**Homeless Veterans Advisor**
Craig Hood	-	**OSI Special Section**
Berkley Lawrence	-	**Member**
Don McCumber	-	**LTC Advisor**
Jill Carleton	-	**Member**
Carolyn Hughes	-	**Coordinator**
Alexa Pasha	-	**Assistant Coordinator**

Excused: Larry Murray – Ex-Officio
Bob Underhill- Member

1. OPENING RITUAL

The meeting commenced at 1:30hrs. Comrade Sharon McKeown, new Chair of the VSS committee, welcomed all members and introductions were made for the new elected members of the committee.

MOTION: To deviate from agenda during the meeting.

CARRIED

2. REVIEW OF MINUTES

It was moved for approval of the previous meeting's report and was carried.

3. INFORMATION ITEMS:

a. **Persian Gulf War Bill Introduced 16 April 2026; Modern Wartime Service**

The Bill can be reviewed at https://www.parl.ca/Content/Bills/451/Private/S-246/S-246_1/S-246_1.PDF

Veteran Services Dominion Command received an influx of emails regarding the delegate's decision at Convention to non-concur with the resolution to call the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan Special Duty Areas as wars.

The above Bill will review all conflicts since Korea and is inclusive of all veterans. The bill has now been moved to the House of Commons from the Senate. As such, the Committee has agreed to monitor and watch what occurs with the bill and if and when further action is required.

The importance of getting the proper information out to the veteran community and social media platforms, on why this decision was made at Convention was discussed.

The Legion does not differentiate veterans into when and where they served. We will advocate and represent all veterans equally.

Since the meeting, our social media has released the following:

> "A proposed bill designed to create a national framework for recognizing wartime service in Canada will hopefully lead to a meaningful and consistent designation for those who served in certain military operations. The Legion was pleased and to see the recent introduction of Bill S-246 by Sen. Hassan Yussuf and to have been asked for our thoughts. The Legion is in alignment with the bill's overall intent which also reflects key recommendations from the House of Commons Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs on the Gulf War. The Legion has long advocated for fulsome and targeted support of Canadian Veterans who served not only in the Persian Gulf but in similar operations around the world. We look forward to offering related suggestions as the work progresses, such as the inclusion of RCMP members and how non-CAF support personnel are to be defined."

b. **Suicide Prevention Among Canadian Veterans- ACVA report-April 2026**

The full ACVA report can be found at https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/451/ACVA/Reports/RP14038870/acvarp04/acvarp04-e.pdf

The Legion is recommending that all the recommendations made in the ACVA report be implemented. As it has now been six months since it's passing, and we have seen no progress, we have sent a letter to the Ministers of Veterans Affairs Canada and National Defence to action.

c. Commissionaires Contract and First Right of Refusal

The situation is being monitored and noted that the number of Veterans hired by the Commissionaires has declined over the years. Given our advocacy for veteran employment, we are concerned for the veterans that are currently working for the Commissionaires.

d. Homeless Veterans
Presented by Comrade Dave. Please see report for further information

Comrade Dave highlighted the importance of Service Verification being completed either by Dominion Command or Veterans Affairs Canada. This is essential to ensure the Poppy Funds are being used as intended under the Leave the Streets Behind Program.

Comrade Craig offered for the BSO OSI Legion to support the Provinces with the Leave the Streets Behind program. He noted that the team would be happy to assist where they could. Comrade Carolyn will let others know if there is a need for extra to support, to reach out to Comrade Craig to connect the BSO OSI Legion Section.

e. Seniors
Presented by Comrade George. Please see report for further information.

Comrade George provided a brief historical overview on the support and engagement that The Royal Canadian Legion had with our senior veterans in the community.

Home Away Initiative is now available on the Dominion Command website. This can be found under "Support for Veterans" then scroll to "Support for Seniors". The document is 28 pages and has been updated for contact information.

Comrade George has recommended that there be an All-Branch Email on the topic of the Home Away Initiative with the link for the document, so Branches know where to find this information.

ACTION: Comrade Carolyn

f. **Long-Term Care (LTC) Advisor**
Presented by Comrade Don. Please see report for further information

Comrade Don addressed the extensive advocacy efforts to date that he has carried out in Nova Scotia to protect and highlight the importance of

veterans in our LTC. He has created recommendations for the Nova Scotia government regarding how we can support veterans in LTC and keeping them together in facilities. He highlights the importance of shared and lived experiences of amongst peers offer when co-located near each other.

Comrade Berkely noted that there may be an avenue for tackling the issue of lack of LTC beds for Veterans, by waiting to see what occurs with the Bill on the Persian Gulf War. If veterans are identified as having war service, this may affect beds for those Veterans such as the WWII and Korean Veterans.

Comrade Craig noted there could be use of the Poppy Fund being directed at LTC or hospitals to ensure that beds be provided to Veterans needing to access them.

g. BSO Legion OSI Special Section
Presented by Comrade Craig.

Comrade Craig noted Operation Eat Well and Operation Green Thumb will be piloted in the Spring of next year. He continues to expand membership and peer supporters.

h. Veteran Services Update

Presented by Comrade Carolyn.

I. Provincial Commands - SO training and SOPD

Comrade Carolyn will be visiting Nova Socia next week for CIMVHR and will stop by the NS Command office. New Brunswick, Manitoba, Quebec and BC have new recently hired Service Officers. They travelled to Dominion Command in October for training. Mentoring will continue.

II. MOU with Transition Center

Staff from Dominion Command been attending the Transition Unit in Ottawa and it is going well. The Service Officers across the country have been notified of this information and Comrade Carolyn will continue to encourage full advantage is taken to build relationships.

III. Service Officer Handbook Update

Comrade Carolyn has noted that it is being stripped down to

continue only the pertinent information. The handbook previously had too much information in it for Branch Service Officers. The update is being worked on, and the title will change to reflect the volunteer nature of the Branch Service Officers.

4. ACTION ITEMS

a. **VSSP Applications –** The grant for the Mood Disorders Society of Canada has been moved to payment. We will receive updates about the programs progress in the future months.

b. **Committee Terms of Reference –** They were reviewed and updated, and Comrade Carolyn will ensure they are included in the manual.

MOTION: It was moved that updates to the terms of reference by accepted.

CARRIED

ACTION: Comrade Carolyn

5. ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS/ROUND TABLE

Comrade Jill advised of the development of a National Trauma Center for Female Veterans and Members. The center should be running within the next year and a half and is supported through The Royal Ottawa.

Comrade Jill noted the importance of World Food Day coming up on the 16th of October and to remember that many individuals and veterans are accessing food banks across the country.

Comrade George noted the concerns over companies charging a fee for service for appeals and first applications to Veterans Affairs Canada. Comrade Carolyn highlighted what the Legion is doing to combat this. At this time, there is nothing illegal albeit it is immoral to charge veterans. Other than continuing to education the Veteran population on Legion services that are free.

Comrade Sharon mentioned that she would like to discuss ways in which to get the younger Veteran population engaged with the Legion and participating at various events, meetings and discussions. Further talks on this topic to come.

6. FUTURE MEETING

A future meeting to be set for January of 2027 with day and time to be determined.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The Meeting was adjourned after approximately two hours.

Sharon McKeown
Committee Chair

Carolyn Hughes
Committee Coordinator