

## Media Report 26 June 2020 --- part two

This weeks media reports will cover and answer great questions veterans are still asking such as Frequently asked questions regarding COVID-19 in Ottawa. Due to ongoing and evolving COVID-19 pandemic, callers may experience increased wait times when calling the Government of Canada Pension Center. Callers may also experience dropped calls, as all telecommunication networks across Canada are presently facing capacity challenges. and local Media Articles and Tax credits and deductions are available for persons with disabilities, their supporting family members, and their caregivers. **During the COVID-19 pandemic, we are using the Veterans Emergency Fund to the full extent possible to support Veterans' safety and well-being. Read more about updates to the Emergency Fund during this time in the Frequently Asked Questions below.**

## Continuation of Disability Pension

**Benefits for Veterans Emergency Fund to the full extent possible to support Veterans' safety and well-being.**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we are using the Veterans Emergency Fund to the full extent possible to support Veterans' safety and well-being. Read more about updates to the Emergency Fund during this time in the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) below.

## Questions and answers

Summary

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Q1. What is the Veterans Emergency Fund?

The Veterans Emergency Fund (VEF) provides emergency financial support to Veterans, their families and survivors whose well-being is at risk due to an urgent and unexpected situation. The fund is administered by Veterans Affairs Canada.

For examples of what the fund covers, please see [Question 14](#).

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Q2. What is the benefit of the fund?

The new fund provides VAC with the flexibility to financially assist Veterans and their families quickly and efficiently in times of urgent need.

The fund means that front-line offices will be better able to deal with emergency situations, without complicated eligibility requirements and approval processes.

The emergency fund will provide short-term relief while VAC works with you to identify any long-term needs and possible solutions.

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Q3. Who can apply?

You may be eligible if you are a Canadian resident and a:

- Veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF);
  - Current spouse/common-law partner of a Veteran;
  - Survivor of a deceased Veteran or deceased CAF member; or an
  - Orphan of a deceased Veteran or deceased CAF member (or the legal guardian if the orphan is under the age of 18).
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Q4. How do I apply for this program?

You can apply for the program through the ways listed below.

IN PERSON: Find an [Area Office](#) near you.  
ONLINE: [My VAC Account](#)  
PHONE: 1-866-522-2122

Please note: Although you can apply online for the Veterans Emergency Fund through My VAC Account, we will contact you personally before a decision is made. The application process will not be conducted exclusively online.

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Q5. Can I send my Veterans Emergency Fund application to VAC in the mail?

We recommend that you do not send your VEF application in the mail as this can create delays in reviewing your request. The most efficient way to apply is by calling (1-866-522-2122) or visiting a [VAC office](#). You can also submit your application using [My VAC Account](#).

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Q6. What information do I need to apply for the Veterans Emergency Fund?

Veterans Affairs Canada will need to verify your identity, your Canadian Armed Forces service history (or the service history of the Veteran) and as much information as possible about the financial emergency.

Before you apply, please make sure you have the following information:

Information to verify your identity (one document)

- Provincial driver's licence,
- Provincial healthcare card (excluding Alberta and Manitoba),
- Other provincial identification card,
- Certificate of Indian Status,
- Vital statistics documents: birth certificate, marriage certificate,
- Employee identification card (federal, provincial or municipal), or
- Canadian passport, or
- Other federal identification card.

## Veteran service information (all information listed)

- Full name,
- Service number,
- Date of birth, and
- Date of Veteran's death, if applicable (i.e. if you are a survivor or orphan).

## Details about the financial emergency

You will also need to provide as much information about your emergency as possible (i.e. quotes, notices, statements, letters, etc.). If we require additional information to prove your urgent need for emergency funding, we will let you know.

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Q7. Do I need to receive benefits from Veterans Affairs Canada to apply for emergency funding?

No. However, we will require the information about the Veteran in order to confirm their service history.

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Q8. What will staff use to quickly confirm a Veteran's service information?

VAC staff will be able to confirm a Veteran's service information by entering their name, service number and date of birth into our Client Service Delivery Network (CSDN). VAC will work with DND to obtain service information for those Veterans who don't have an existing relationship with VAC.

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Q9. Will my request for emergency funding be shared with other members of my family?

In certain circumstances, Veterans Affairs Canada may need to share your name, the amount you received and the date of your decision.

Scenario (hypothetical): A Veteran is approved for emergency funding. One month later, the Veteran's spouse applies for emergency funding, and does not know that the Veteran has already accessed the fund. Depending on the amount of emergency funding previously accessed, we may need to advise the spouse that emergency funding has already been requested.

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Q10. What information will I need to prove that I need emergency funding?

Please provide us with as much information about your emergency as possible (i.e. quotes, notices, statements, letters, etc.). If we require additional information to prove your urgent need for emergency funding, we will let you know.

If you have any questions or need help completing the application, please contact us by phone or in person and someone will assist you with the process.

IN PERSON: Find an [Area Office](#) near you.

PHONE: 1-866-522-2122

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Q11. If I am unable to prove my identity because the documents were destroyed as a result of my emergency, can I still apply for and receive funding?

Yes. Our first priority is making sure you have the emergency financial help you need, when you need it. We will work with applicants to find a way to prove their identity and verify the Veteran's service, if needed.

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Q12. What if someone lies about their identity?

Knowingly making a false or misleading statement is a criminal offense. Applying for the Veterans Emergency Fund using false information would make the individual ineligible for the benefit. It may also result in an overpayment that would have to be repaid by the individual and could lead to further consequences.

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Q13. If an application is received from a spouse, common-law partner, survivor or orphan, will the Veteran's information still be required to determine eligibility?

Yes. In all cases, we will need to verify the Veteran's service with the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces.

For more information about what you need to apply, please see [Question 5](#).

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Q14. What does Veterans Affairs Canada consider an emergency?

An emergency is defined as a situation that requires immediate action. It is one that if financial support is not provided, the situation will directly affect the health and safety of a Veteran or their family members. An emergency can be caused by a defined event, or it can be the result of other unexpected circumstances that have contributed to a current and urgent need for funding.

Every situation will be different and unique, which is why applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

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Q15. Can you provide a few examples of what people may apply for?

The Veterans Emergency Fund is intended to help with short-term urgent, unexpected emergencies. The emergency fund will cover essential needs, which may include:

- Food
- Clothing
- Shelter
- Medical care/expenses
- Expenses required to maintain safety and shelter

Please note: The list provides only a few examples. Each application will be considered on the individual's circumstances and demonstrated need.

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Q16. What is an essential need?

An essential need is a service or item that, if removed or unavailable, could lead to a crisis or emergency situation. This is assessed based on the circumstances of the individual and their capacity to address the emergency.

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Q17. Am I allowed to apply for urgent costs related to my children?

Yes. Emergency expenses related to the dependents of a Veteran may be covered as long as they meet the criteria for essential needs. An example would be medication for an ill child that is not covered by other benefits or plans.

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Q18. How long will it take to receive funding?

Once we receive your completed application and supporting documents, most decisions and payments will be made within one to two business days.

Although we have a one to two business day service standard, we will work to address the emergency situation more quickly where it is possible to do so.

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Q19. Is one to two business days a realistic timeframe?

Some payments will be paid immediately once the application is approved. In other situations, payments may need to be processed, cheques mailed or direct deposits completed, which requires one to two business days.

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Q20. How will payments be made to those in an emergency situation?

Depending on the situation, payment could be made by:

- Payment to a third-party using the Veterans Emergency Fund acquisition card,
- Direct deposit to the applicant,
- Cheque to the applicant, or
- Third-party cheque.

We will work with Veterans, their families and survivors to determine the best course of action.

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Q21. I currently live outside Canada and would like to access the Veterans Emergency Fund. Can I do this?

No. The Veterans Emergency Fund is only available to those who reside in Canada.

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Q22. The Government of Canada promised one million dollars per year for this program. Is there any chance the funding may be depleted?

Yes. There is a chance that the fund may be depleted. However, considering previous usage of similar emergency trust funds, the new Veterans Emergency Fund is expected to have sufficient funding for the year. This amount is more funding than Veterans Affairs Canada has ever been able to provide Veterans in emergency situations.

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Q23. If the fund is depleted, what happens to Veterans that need emergency funding to help deal with emergency situations?

Veterans Affairs Canada staff will work with the applicant to find and access other sources of emergency financial help if the Veterans Emergency Fund is depleted. In fact, there are municipal, provincial and non-government organizations (NGOs) available and ready to provide assistance, direction and support to Veterans and their families.

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Q24. Will I have to pay it back?

No. Funds are considered a grant, not a loan.

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Q25. What if a Veteran needs emergency funding for a recurring payment (i.e. multiple rent payments)? Are these payments eligible for funding?

The Veterans Emergency Fund will not cover recurring payments. The intent of the program is to provide one-time payments to resolve an emergency situation while we assist you in finding a longer-term solution for the financial issue, if required.

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Q26. Do I need to claim the Veterans Emergency Fund payment on my tax return?

One-time payments made in an emergency situation are not required to be reported on your income tax.

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Q27. What does Veterans Affairs Canada hope to learn from the new fund?

The Veterans Emergency Fund will help us identify trends, which will help us better understand and address issues in the Veteran community. We will use this information to inform decision-makers in an effort to improve the programs, services and benefits we offer Veterans and their families.

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Q28. If I borrow money to make the payment(s), is VAC able to reimburse me?

The intent is not to provide funding for payments where an emergency has already been addressed. If your financial situation is impacted by the requirement to repay borrowed money, this type of request may be considered on a case by case basis. For example, if repayment of borrowed money requires you to use your rent money, and the initial need would have qualified for the fund, this type of situation may be approved.

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Q29. Can I access the Veterans Emergency Fund outside VAC office hours?

The Veterans Emergency Fund will be accessible during normal working hours—Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm local time.

If your emergency occurs after hours, there are municipal, provincial and non-government organizations (NGOs) available and ready to provide assistance, direction and support.

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Q30. If my emergency happens outside of VAC office hours, who should I reach out to?

Depending on the nature of your emergency, we may be able to help connect you with emergency services near you.

If you require immediate emergency support, please contact a provincial or territorial [emergency management organizations](#) (EMOs) near you. The EMO websites contain contact information for government and community organizations that are ready to provide emergency support.

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Q31. Your slogan for this program is "Support you need, when you need it." Do you think you are following through on this by only offering emergency service during normal working hours?

If your emergency occurs after hours, there are municipal, provincial and non-government organizations (NGOs) available and ready to provide assistance, direction and support.

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Q32. Why is the fund not available to former Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) members?

The RCMP sets the direction and has the authority over what programs and services are available to its current and former members. Veterans Affairs Canada does not have the legislative authority for the RCMP nor determines what the benefit/compensation framework for the RCMP should be.

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Q33. If I am denied funding, can I appeal the decision?

Yes, if you are not satisfied with the decision, you may request a reconsideration within 60 days from the date you receive the decision. Although no additional information is required to request a review, you may submit information that you believe helps support a change to this decision. Please submit your request by secure messaging through [My VAC Account](#), or by mail to:

Veterans Affairs Canada  
Benefits Program Officer, Veterans Emergency Fund  
Benefits Adjudicating and Processing  
PO Box 6000  
Matane QC G4W 0E3

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Q34. How long does it take to have a review completed for my denied application?

When requests for reconsideration are received, a decision can be made within one to two business days as long as all the pertinent information is provided.

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Q35. Has the VEF changed as a result of COVID-19?

The intent of the fund hasn't changed, however, VAC has responded to the needs of Veterans. In exceptional circumstances, VAC can approve amounts in excess of \$2,500.00 per applicant/family during the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, the fund provides emergency financial support to Veterans, their families and survivors whose well-being is at risk due to an urgent and unexpected situation.

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Q36. I am a Veteran who is facing financial hardship as a result of COVID-19. Is the VEF available to me?

You may be eligible if you are a Canadian resident and a:

- Veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF);
- Current spouse/common-law partner of a Veteran;
- Survivor of a deceased Veteran or deceased CAF member; or an
- Orphan of a deceased Veteran or deceased CAF member (or the legal guardian if the orphan is under the age of 18).

We also require that you provide as much information as possible about the emergency need (i.e. quotes, notices, statements, letters, etc.) and that you provide documentation demonstrating the resources that you currently have available. We encourage applicants to apply for other sources of income (e.g. [Canada Emergency Response Benefit](#), Employment Insurance) and access opportunities (e.g. mortgage payment deferrals, car payment deferrals) that may be available to them before applying for the VEF. We understand that these benefits or additional options may take some time to take effect. However knowing that you have tried to access other COVID-related supports will help us determine your overall need and VEF eligible expenses.

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Q37. If the COVID-19 restrictions last for months, can I access the fund multiple times?

Yes, if you qualify, you may access the fund multiple times, up to the maximum amount payable. For COVID-19 situations, you may be able to access up to three months of the requested expense in one payment if it is clear that the financial issues will not be resolved by other means and will be ongoing during this unique period.

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Q38. Will the method of payment change because of COVID-19?

At this time, there are no changes to the way the VEF is paid. The preferred method of payment is a payment directly to the 3rd party using a VAC credit card. Where a payment by credit card is not possible, payment by priority direct deposit is available. Payment by priority cheque may be possible but may cause a delay in the payment being received.

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Q39. When can I expect to receive the funds?

Once we receive your completed application and supporting documents, most decisions and payments will be made within one to two business days. Although we have a one to two business day service standard, we will work to address the emergency situation more quickly where it is possible to do so.

## Veterans Affairs Canada – 2019 Veteran Suicide Mortality Study / Anciens Combattants Canada - Étude sur la mortalité par suicide chez les vétérans 2019

Comrades All, Please find link below to the 2019 Veteran Suicide Mortality Study from VAC.

Subject: Veterans Affairs Canada – 2019 Veteran Suicide Mortality Study / Anciens Combattants Canada - Étude sur la mortalité par suicide chez les vétérans 2019

(Le français suit)

Dear Stakeholders and Advisory Group members,

We would like to share with you the following news release – Veterans Affairs Canada releases 2019 Veteran Suicide Mortality Study. This has been posted to the Veterans Affairs Canada website. We encourage you to pass this along to anyone who may be interested.

News Release

June 18 – Ottawa – Veterans Affairs Canada

Veterans Affairs Canada releases annual study on Veteran suicide mortality

<https://www.canada.ca/en/veterans-affairs-canada/news/2020/06/veterans-affairs-canada-releases-annual-study-on-veteran-suicide-mortality.html>

aWe would like to share with you the following news release – Veterans Affairs Canada releases 2019 Veteran Suicide Mortality Study. This has been posted to the Veterans Affairs Canada website. We encourage you to pass this along to anyone who may be interested.

## News Release

June 18 – Ottawa – Veterans Affairs Canada

Nous aimerions partager avec vous le communiqué de presse suivant – **Anciens Combattants Canada publie l'étude sur la mortalité par suicide chez les vétérans 2019** . Ce communiqué de presse a été affiché sur le site Web d'Anciens Combattants Canada. Nous vous encourageons à le transmettre à tous ceux qui pourraient être intéressés

## Communiqué

Le 18 juin – Ottawa – Anciens Combattants Canada

Anciens Combattants Canada publie une étude annuelle sur la mortalité par suicide chez les vétérans

<https://www.canada.ca/fr/anciens-combattants-canada/nouvelles/2020/06/anciens-combattants-canada-publie-une-etude-annuelle-sur-la-mortalite-par-suicide-chez-les-veterans.html>

## Local Legion branches hoping to avoid permanent closure need your help

BROCKVILLE, ON -- Royal Canadian Legion halls across the country are the backbone for many rural communities.

They host weddings, stag and does, dances, and many more events, and use the money they raise to pay the bills, like hydro and insurance.

However, since the COVID-19 pandemic began in March, branches have been closed, drying up their revenue streams.

r"We've done nothing since March. I closed the place on March 16," said Ralph McMullen, president of Branch 96 in Brockville.

McMullen is also the Zone G-2 commander, who oversees nine other branches in the district, from Gananoque to Westport.

"We're not faring any better than the smaller branches," McMullen said. "I've sent emails out to all the other branches and everybody is saying they are going to be all right hopefully until August. After that, it's a guessing game."

With the loss of revenue, some branches might be forced to close for good.

It is estimated that 124 of the 1,381 Legion branches across Canada are [likely to close permanently](#), and another 357 are facing serious financial hardship.

McMullen says it could be worse

"The meeting command say they expect to lose 35 per cent of the branches across the country," he said.

The small town branches are at the most risk, as those Legions are the centre of rural communities.

"That's the only place they have meeting places for, for things like funerals and weddings and anything else. Once they're gone, they're gone. They won't be back," McMullen said.

Reaction from downtown Brockville was met with disappointment.

"The Legion was their place," says Craig, out for a walk along King Street. "A lot of these people, they are retired, and so the Legion provided that for them."

"My husband and I are members and we like to go there for lunch and play darts. It would be very sad if it closed," says Linda, enjoying lunch on a downtown patio.

Some branches reached out to the government to ask for financial aid, but found out they do not qualify, as the money available can only be put towards programs, and not rent or utilities.

"We're a 95-year-old organization, and in those 95 years we have prided ourselves on being self-sufficient. We have not reached out for funding," says Steven Clark, Royal Canadian Legion National Executive Director, in Ottawa, "but these are unprecedented times."

McMullen has reached out to local levels of government, making them aware of the situation and he says donations from the public will be happily accepted

"Gananoque, Mallorytown, Seeley's Bay, Lyndhurst, Toledo, Delta, Portland, Westport, they will all be glad to take donations," he said.

"If you want to see your branches stay in your community, help them out."

## RCL Class Action Against AVIVA Canada Insurance

The class action was filed on 22 June 2020. Information can be found at <https://www.lerners.ca/cases/canadian-legion-class-action/>.

Two documents are attached:

-LTR to Mr. Pond encl SOC: this letter informs the RCL of the action taken and a request from Lerner: they are "...making concerted efforts to reach potential class members, and would be grateful if you would communicate directly with the Branches to advise them of this important development. Please feel free to direct any inquiries from the Branches to our firm as we are willing and able to assist them regarding their individual claims."

-Statement of Claim

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## Chief of the Defence Staff and Deputy Minister release message regarding racism in Defence Team community

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### Canadian Military Family Magazine

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On Friday, June 23, 2020, Chief of the Defence Staff General Jonathan Vance and Deputy Minister of National Defence Jody Thomas released a message to address the global response to the killing of George Floyd.

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## How Canada rescued 2,000 Soviets in the Arctic

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### Malaysia Sun

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Library and Archives Canada, Legion Media If it weren't for help from Canadian forces, the Soviet population of Norway's Spitsbergen would have met certain death — either at the hands of the Nazis, or from starvation at the onset of a long Arctic winter. On August 23, 1941, an entry was made in the military log of Canada's Saskatoon Light Infantry: "The men were saying it was the first time their feet had been cold in August." The Canadians had up until then never participated in military operations in the Arctic.

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## Première cérémonie non-virtuelle depuis le début de la pandémie pour l'anniversaire de la Guerre de Corée

45e Nord

Première cérémonie non-virtuelle depuis le début de la pandémie de la COVID-19 alors que des couronnes de fleurs ont été déposées et le chant d'un seul clairon a résonné près du Parlement ce matin matin, pour souligner le 70e anniversaire du début de la Guerre de Corée.

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## 'We're not going to forget': Subdued ceremony marks 70th anniversary of Korean War amid COVID-19

National Post

Wreaths were laid and the call of a single bugle rang out near Parliament Hill as a subdued ceremony was held on Sunday to mark the 70th anniversary of the start of the Korean War. The ceremony, attended by a small group of Canadian and Korean officials and a handful of surviving veterans from the conflict, was one of the first of its kind in months after COVID-19 forced the cancellation of numerous military commemorations.

[READ MORE](#)

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## Military mission ending in most Ontario long-term care homes

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**CBC News**

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Ontario drivers are being told to stay on the lookout for military vehicles on the roads this week as hundreds of Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members deployed to long-term care facilities in the Greater Toronto Area start to head home. About 500 military members and their associated equipment were gathered at Canadian Forces Base Borden north of Toronto in early April to support the federal government's response to COVID-19.

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## 2019 Surgeon General Report on Suicide Mortality in the Canadian Armed Forces released

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**Canadian Military Family Magazine**

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The Department of National Defence has released the 2019 Surgeon General Report on Suicide Mortality in the Canadian Armed Forces. The 2019 report is an update covering the period from 1995 to 2018.

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## Unexploded military shell discovered in North

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## York neighbourhood

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### City News

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Several homes in a North York neighbourhood were evacuated for several hours after a landscaper stumbled upon a fascinating discovery while digging in a backyard. Police, firefighters and members of the bomb squad were called to a residence on Whitman Street near Steeles Avenue and Yonge Street. When they arrived, they discovered a two-foot long unexploded artillery shell.

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## Projet d'acquisition de drones militaires : des élus somment Ottawa de choisir Bagotville

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### Le Lac-St-Jean

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Plusieurs élus et représentants du secteur économique du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean ont signé hier une lettre ouverte à l'endroit du leader du gouvernement canadien, Pablo Rodriguez, afin de lui faire part de leurs inquiétudes face aux choix de terre d'accueil pour le projet d'acquisition de drones militaires du gouvernement canadien.

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## U.S. Army modifies contract for 7 Joint Assault Bridge Systems supply by DRS Sustainment Systems

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### Army Recognition

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According to information released by the U.S. Defense Government website on 18, 2020, DRS Sustainment Systems Inc., St. Louis, Missouri, was awarded a \$7,985,880 modification (P00069) to

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contract W56HZV-16-C-0028 for seven Joint Assault Bridge Systems. Work will be performed in West Plains, Missouri, with an estimated completion date of December 30, 2021. The initial contract was awarded last March.

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## The Army will soon allow users to access classified info from home

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### C4ISRNET

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The Army is expected to roll out a capability that will allow employees to remotely access sensitive and classified information in the next 30 days. The decision to establish remote classified access comes as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to keep Americans working from home and military leaders prep for a second wave of the virus in the fall.

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## Photos show devastation unleashed on terror leaders by sword-carrying 'Ninja bomb'

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### Military Times

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Detailed reports first surfaced in 2019 of the existence of a precision warhead equipped with six sword-like blades that allow the missile to cut through buildings or cars with ease. The weapon had been in use for some time, reports claimed, with development dating back as far as 2011 under former President Barack Obama.

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# NATO's new surveillance drone begins test flights over the Mediterranean

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## Defense News

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The first of five new NATO surveillance drones began test flights over the Mediterranean Sea this month, nudging the alliance toward a new capability meant to relieve the demand for U.S. equipment. The flights took off from Sigonella air base in Sicily, Italy, the future headquarters of the Northrop Grumman-made Global Hawks of the Alliance Ground Surveillance program. The planes are owned by a collective of 15 NATO members.

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