

Media Report 20 Jan 2023

This weeks media reports will cover and answer great questions veterans are still asking and local Media Articles and An illness or injury can have an impact on your ability to adjust to life after service. We all need healthcare services. The Treatment benefits program provides coverage for a variety of benefits and services to help you get—and stay healthy

Each month, VAC provides news about:

- benefits and services available to Veterans and their families and tips on accessing them;
- remembrance and commemoration activities in Canada and abroad; and
- other events, including public discussions.

You will also see stories about today's Veterans, their challenges and successes, and how they contribute to their communities after leaving the military.

In this edition:

News

- [Deadline for filing a claim for compensation for groundwater contamination in Shannon, Quebec is 15 January 2023](#)
Class members wishing to obtain the compensation to which they believe themselves entitled must fill out the Claim Form approved by the Court and submit it to the Claims Administrator no later than 15 January 2023.

Programs and services

- [Rehabilitation program: continuing the conversation](#)
If you a Veteran or family member with experience in our Rehabilitation Program, please join the third round of consultations so that together, we can continue to improve rehabilitation services.
- [Compassionate Award application is now more accessible](#)
You can now access and fill out an application form for the Veterans Review and Appeal Board's Compassionate Award online through My VAC Account.
- [One-time top-up to the Canada Housing Benefit](#)
Applications have opened up for the one-time top-up to the Canada Housing Benefit, a tax-free one-time payment of \$500 to help cover some of the cost of rent.

Veterans' stories

- [Getting out of the hurt locker](#)

As he began his uniformed RCMP career in 1974 on northern general duty detachment in Alberta, traumatic situations immediately began affecting RCMP Cpl. (Ret) Paul Woods.

- [Canadian combat engineer wins first Veteran Entrepreneur of the Year Award](#)

The Canadian Innovation and Entrepreneurship Awards program from the Innovators & Entrepreneurs Foundation has launched a new award recognizing Veteran entrepreneurs to celebrate excellence and outstanding achievement in entrepreneurship, within the Veteran community.

Commemoration

- [25 years since 1998's Great Ice Storm](#)

In January 1998, more than one million households were plunged into darkness when ice storms struck parts of Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick

- [150 years of the RCMP: 1873–2023](#)

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) has been our country's national police service—and iconic Canadian institution—since 1873.

- [The Last Post Fund: Ensuring dignity for all who serve](#)

The Last Post Fund's mission is to ensure that no Veteran is denied a dignified funeral and burial as well as a military gravestone, due to insufficient funds.

- [Commemoration calendar](#)

Engagement

- [First Accessibility Action Plan released](#)

On 22 December 2022, VAC released its first ever Accessibility Action Plan, which lays out our commitment to improve accessibility by identifying barriers and the actions we can take to prevent and remove them.

- [Join the 2023 Annual Forum for Women and 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans](#)

The 2023 Annual Forum for Women and 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans will explore how more inclusive policy, programs and services at Veterans Affairs Canada could better address the needs of women and 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans.

Please share Salute! with your friends and contacts so they can keep up on issues that matter to Veterans and their families.

Let us know what you think about Salute! [by emailing us](#).

Learn more about [Salute!](#)

A new Table of Disabilities

While the Table of Disabilities has received regular updates, the last full review of the table was published in 2006.

What is the Table of Disabilities?

The Table of Disabilities assess the level of an impairment and the impact that impairment has on the VAC client's quality of life. All decisions regarding an application for Disability Benefits relies on the Table of Disabilities.

Why are you updating the Table of Disabilities?

We want to reduce processing times by making the Table of Disabilities more efficient and usable. This June, VAC started a [multi-year initiative to modernize the Table of Disabilities](#). The update will ensure our approach to assessment reflects advances in health research and best practices, and will apply a [Gender-Based Analysis Plus](#) mindset throughout. This work is being done to ensure that members and Veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police feel confident that the decisions they receive on their applications for disability benefits are fair, transparent and consistent.

What else will change because of this update?

Modernizing the Table of Disabilities will also include updating and simplifying Medical Questionnaires to make them easier for health professionals to complete and submit. In addition, the policy and processes for Additional Pain and Suffering Compensation will be aligned with the Table of Disabilities so that decisions can be made in a more timely manner.

Combined, these updates will provide:

- clear, transparent and consistent disability benefit decisions,
- a reduction in processing times for applications, and
- overall processing improvements.

Timeline for the Table of Disabilities modernization initiative

Modernization Phases	Status	Start
Phase I: Research and Preparation	Complete	June 2021
Phase II: Planning, Prioritization, Analysis and Consultation	Expected completion September 2022	March 2022
Phase III: Development	Ongoing	July 2022

Modernization Phases	Status	Start
Phase IV: Implementation	Pending	Pending

Related information on applying for VAC Disability Benefits

[How we review a disability benefit claim - Veterans Affairs Canada](#)

[Table of Disabilities - How Benefits are Determined - Disability Benefits - After an illness or injury - Veterans Affairs Canada](#)

[Timely disability benefits decisions plan - Veterans Affairs Canada](#)

[Assessment and Reassessment of a Disability - Policies - Veterans Affairs Canada](#)

[Pain and Suffering Compensation - Policies - Veterans Affairs Canada](#)

[Additional Pain and Suffering Compensation - Policies - Veterans Affairs Canada](#)

How Starlink shaped the war in Ukraine

Like Uber, but for howitzers. Sometimes a good analogy really is worth a thousand other words. That one (from Shashank Joshi, *The Economist's* defence editor) comes from [this week's Briefing](#), which he and I worked on together. It looks at how Starlink—a satellite-internet system offered by SpaceX, one of Elon Musk's many firms—has shaped the war in Ukraine.

Ukraine regards Starlink as crucial to its war effort, and its use there has given the rest of the world a glimpse at the future of internet-enabled warfare. The Uber analogy works like this: when Ukrainian soldiers spot a valuable target they can upload pictures and details to an online chatroom full of artillery commanders. Any commander who happens to be free and in range can announce that they will go for the target. A few minutes later, the shells arrive.

That is not the only battlefield use to which Starlink can be put. It can co-ordinate between units and control drones. It can be used to upload footage of drone strikes, which in turn can be used in the social-media posts that have helped Ukraine's PR war. Away from the frontlines, the small, portable Starlink dishes, which can be powered from a car's cigarette-lighter socket, help Ukraine's government to stay connected to the outside world even as Russian missiles pound its electricity grid.

There are downsides, too. Ukraine's war effort relies on a private system run by a capricious billionaire who has indicated that his views sometimes diverge from those of Ukraine's government. In October Mr Musk [polled his Twitter followers](#) on whether Russia should be allowed to keep Crimea, which it annexed in 2014.

Even so, in public at least, Ukrainian soldiers and politicians are delighted with the system. One front-line squaddie describes Starlink as "our oxygen".

Satellite internet is not a new idea. But Starlink fits Elon Musk's *modus operandi* of improving existing but not-very-good technologies. There were electric cars before Tesla, but Tesla made them practical and desirable. There were plenty of rockets before SpaceX, but SpaceX slashed the price of getting to orbit, by solving the tricky technological problem of making rockets partly reusable.

Thanks to unprecedentedly low launch costs, SpaceX has been able to send around 3,500 Starlink satellites into space since 2019; they now account for roughly half the active satellites in orbit. The eventual total could reach 40,000, many times more than have been launched since the Space Age kicked off with Sputnik-1 in 1957.

Starlink was designed as a consumer service, to bring high-speed, good-quality internet to places that cannot get it. But its unique architecture makes it attractive for military users, too. Anti-satellite weapons can threaten individual satellites. But they are likely to struggle against constellations of thousands. Britain, China, Europe and Russia all have plans for "mega-constellations" of satellites of their own. The day after our article was published, Taiwan announced it too was hoping to join the club.

For now, most of those constellations exist only on paper. But SpaceX is [already a space superpower](#) in its own right. It launched around one rocket per week in 2022 and hauled more than twice as much mass into orbit as every other company and country in the world put together. Its planned (and delayed) "Starship" rocket will be [even more powerful](#) than its existing Falcon-9—and cheaper to boot. If anyone wants to catch up, they have their work cut out.

IN THE MEDIA

[Opposition parties call for extension to deadline for military tainted water compensation](#)

[Une pratique des techniques de guerre en hiver](#)

[WWII Veteran's Pay Book & Discharge Papers found in Prince George dumpster, local Legion seeks information on family](#)

[More than a decade ago, the army had a plan to rebuild. It went nowhere](#)

[Le combattant post-traumatisé](#)

[Preparing BATUS for the winter extremes as temperatures plummet to -40°C](#)

[Divesting assault breaching and bridging capabilities will hurt America's marines](#)

[Metal detectors donated to Ukraine by UK are 'seriously good,' expert says](#)

[Un historien dévoile un chapitre oublié de la Première Guerre mondiale](#)

[39 CER Association January 2023 Newsletter](#)

[39 CER Association December 2022 Newsletter](#)

49th Annual Retired Sappers Reunion – April 28-30, 2023

Colonel Commandant presents CME Commendations to 34 CER Soldiers