Economic Reintegration of Canadian Armed Forces Veterans

by
Amber Butterworth

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Approval

Name:	**Amber Butterworth**
Degree:	**Master of Public Policy**
Title:	**Economic Reintegration of Canadian Armed Forces Veterans**

Examining Committee: **Chair:** Nancy Olewiler
Professor, School of Public Policy, SFU

Dominique Gross
Senior Supervisor
Professor

Doug McArthur
Supervisor
Professor

John Richards
Internal Examiner
Professor

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Abstract

The Canadian Armed Forces Veteran population is growing by roughly 4,500 people each year. Labour market outcomes for the population are currently hindered by systemic barriers that include: stigma, private sector motivation, skills recognition, and access to credentials and/or qualifications. This group is non-homogeneous, with ages ranging from 20-67, and a dispersion of rank, length of service, health, disability, or socioeconomic status. This paper aims to identify how to economically reintegrate this group after service as satisfying work is a crucial determinate for a successful transition from service member to Veteran. A literature review and comparative case study analysis are conducted, along with an impact analysis of findings. Following, 3 policy options are assessed for applicability to the systemic barriers faced by Veterans in Canada. Based on the results, I propose a federally led employment program, connecting the private sector to Veterans, while simultaneously raising awareness, be implemented in Canada.

Keywords: Veteran; Canadian Armed Forces; Human Capital; Economic Reintegration; Employment; Talent Pool

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List of Acronyms

APPL	Advanced Placement for Prior Learning
BCIT	British Columbia Institute of Technology
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CAF TG	Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group
CTP	Career Transition Partnership
DLN	Defence Learning Network
DND	Department of National Defence
HR	Human resource(s)
ITA	Industry Training Authority
LMSCP	The Legion Military Skills Conversion Program
LTP	Long Term Planning
MEP	Military Employment Platform
N-APPL	National Advanced Placement & Prior Learning
NGO	Non-government organisation
NWCHS	Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Science
POE	Prince's Operation Entrepreneur
PSO	Personnel Selection Officer
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
SCAN	Second Career Assistant Network
SISIP	Service Income Security Insurance Plan
TAP	Transition Assistance Program
UoM	University of Manitoba
VAC	Veterans Affairs Canada
VACETB	Veterans Affairs Canada Education and Training Benefit

Glossary

Advanced Placement

When one has already completed degree, diploma, or equivalent (such as a threshold of military training), they may qualify for direct entry into second year of a full-time program. This is a scenario where 'block credit' may appear on the academic transcript.

Block credit

Block credit occurs when a group of courses, often in the form of a certificate or diploma equivalency, are recognized for credit transfer. If granted, 'block credit' will appear in the academic transcript as such rather than individual course credit (see PLAR).

PLAR

Prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) refers to course credit given for different types of learning. This could include job training, seminars or workshops.

Transfer Credit

A scenario where an individual has taken an equivalent course in another circumstance, they may qualify to receive credit for that course at the incoming institution.

Executive Summary

The Canadian Armed Forces Veteran population is growing by roughly 4,500 people each year. Labour market outcomes for the population are currently hindered by systemic barriers that include: stigma, private sector motivation, skills recognition, and access to credentials and/or qualifications. This group is non-homogeneous, with ages ranging from 20-67, and a dispersion of rank, length of service, health, disability, or socioeconomic status. Identifying how to economically reintegrate this group after service poses a complex question for government, especially given satisfying work is a crucial determinate for a successful transition.

To start, this paper explores what a Veteran is, how Veteran status is achieved, and an overview of which government departments are relevant to Veterans and the department's respective roles. I then look at the career transition supports that are offered in Canada by both the government and non-government organisations to get insight of the current landscape. The career transition supports include direct entry to the labour market or indirect entry by means of obtaining a credential or skills upgrading. I identify that there is priority hiring into federal service but no policy promoting hiring Veterans into the private sector or in terms of post-secondary acceptance. Next, to better understand the systemic barriers faced, a literature review is conducted. As a result of the research, I find that a positive outcome during the job-search may depend on the hiring manager's experience with Veterans and that Veteran status may actually hinder the chances of a positive outcome. For Veterans who have found employment, 59.6% view their skills as greater than what is required in their current job, demonstrating the underemployment phenomena (Schafer et al., 2016). Normative valuations around post-secondary credentials or qualifications also act as a barrier for Veterans as their skills do not lend well to a standard prior-learning assessment method. The private sector and society are not accustomed to handle military skills translation without prior knowledge.

A case study analysis of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia is used to identify similar practices that assist Veterans in being economically reintegrated. Through this case study analysis, I find that each case country facilitates private sector relationships directly in order to promote both employment opportunities and awareness. Second, the United Kingdom and Australia are found to be more advanced in

transferring military credentials or courses, to that of the civilian counterpart via granting both the military qualification and the civilian simultaneously. Based on these findings, 3 policy options are proposed with the intent to minimise systemic barriers in the Veteran reintegration process. First, it is proposed to implement an employer program at the federal level. Second, I look at the possibility of collaborating with training institutions and/or regulatory agencies in order to grant civilian qualification at the time of military training completion. Last, I propose a national framework for prior skills recognition. The policy options are assessed based on 5 criteria: effectiveness, cost, administrative complexity, equity, and stakeholder acceptance.

Following an analysis of the policies, it is recommended that a direct employer program at the federal level be implemented. This option is found to be effective, low cost, less administratively complex than the other options, and acceptable by stakeholders. The program will raise awareness and create more opportunity for meaningful work, and thus combating systemic barriers for a Veteran who is attempting to contribute their human capital to the labour market. In the long-term it is recommended to identify which groups are currently working on developing a national skills recognition for assessment purposes and perhaps partner with the identified group to involve the prior learning of Canadian Armed Forces Veterans.

Chapter 1.

Introduction

Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Veterans, or Veterans, represent roughly 1.6% of our population in Canada and possess characteristics that are vastly different from one another (Life After Service Studies Secondary Analysis, 2013). With ages ranging from 20-67, and a dispersion of rank, length of service, health, disability, or socioeconomic status, how to economically reintegrate this group after services poses a complex question for government, especially given satisfying work is a crucial determinate for a successful transition, along with spousal/family relationships and mental health (The Veterans Ombudsman, 2017).

Each year, over 4,500 people leave the Canadian Armed Forces (Statistics Canada, 2018). Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) Research Directorate (2017) states that most Veterans work post-release and interestingly, while there is no difference in the unemployment rate between Veterans and the general Canadian public, Veterans are more likely to remove themselves from the labour force entirely (23% vs 18%). There is no certain explanation for this statistic. However, 40% of Veterans who released between years 1998-2012 from the Regular Force reported difficulties adjusting to their civilian life (MacLean MB et al, 2016). The transition services offered during and after release are based on the assumption that each member will have the opportunity and motivation to make a transition plan for 1 to 2 years prior to release. This transition plan is to facilitate transition ease. According to the Veteran Transition Advisory Council interim report (2017) by the True Patriot Love Foundation, the majority of private sector employers are not inclined to hire Veterans. They perceive Veterans as homogeneous and systemically under-utilise them. On the contrary, Harell & Berglass (2012) found that firms that hire and utilise Veterans, see Veterans as effective, resilient, and loyal employees. Similarly, in the post-secondary realm, for institutions that offer credit for military training, Veterans generally out preform their civilian counterparts (Wainwright et al., 2016). These two positive reports on Veterans' performance demonstrate the missed opportunity by many firms and post-secondary institutions.

This capstone focuses on the systemic barriers that Veterans face when entering the labour market in Canada. The background study and literature review provide insight to the barriers Veterans are facing. The case study analysis looks at the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia which identify successful characteristics of the respective Veteran transition programs. I validate the case study findings by means of a secondary analysis that compares the jurisdictions to relevant literature and confirms the magnitude of the research findings.

Grounded on these research findings, three policy options for Canada are proposed. The first is to implement an employer program directly by the federal government. This would consist of a federal government recognition program for firms that hire Veterans in various capacities. The second option is to collaborate with training authorities to grant civilian qualification at time of CAF trade training. This option leverages the time spent training and knowledge/competencies acquired. Finally, the last policy option is to develop a national framework for skills recognition where recognition does not need to be given at the time of military training; however, it is given based on the cumulative knowledge, skills, and experience during the entire length of service, and attributed via assessment during or after transition. Based on the policy evaluation, I recommend implementing policy option one, the federal government's Veteran employment program. This evaluation was conducted using multiple criteria measures (program effectiveness, cost, administrative complexity, equity, and stakeholder acceptance) and rankings that indicate the anticipated impact. In the short-term, it is necessary to establish the program's goals and objectives, build the employer network, and motivate them to meet Veteran hiring goals. In the long-run, I suggest complementing the program by creating learning modules, which are in bite-sized pieces, to empower the employer partners to learn, set meaningful targets, and ultimately increase access to meaningful work and reduce the systemic barriers Veterans face when entering the labour market.

Chapter 2.

Canadian Armed Forces Veterans

This chapter aims to describe what a Veteran is, how Veteran status is achieved, and an overview of which government departments are relevant and their respective roles. Knowledge of the unique nature of the Veteran population and the roles of various actors provides a base understanding of the population.

2.1. What is a Veteran?

A serving member becomes a Veteran when they are released from the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). This initiates the Veteran transition process where a member choosing to retire or who is medically released commences a process as a Veteran reintegrating into civilian life (Veterans Affairs Canada, 2019). Personnel who have initiated planning for transition make many significant decisions in a matter of months or years, depending on their unique situation. This may also be the incoming Veteran's first time being a 'civilian' (Veterans Ombudsman, 2017).

Canadian Armed Forces Veterans (regular, or full-time, and reserve, or part-time, force) comprise approximately 601,000 of the Canadian population. This is about 1.6% of the total Canadian population (Veterans Affairs Canada, 2018a) with over 4,500 additional people becoming Veterans per year (Statistics Canada, 2018). For most of this population, they will want to continue to work, at varying capacities, post-service. Notably, Veteran characteristics vary substantially and they are not homogeneous. Of those released in 1998-2007, their ages range from 20-67 years old, and a dispersion of rank, length of service, health, disability, or socioeconomic status. Those who are unemployed and looking for work are more likely to have been released at a younger age, to have served in the army, to have served for fewer total years, and to have exposure to combat (LASS Secondary Analysis, 2013). Labour market transition is a key factor in a successful transition from military to civilian life and post-secondary credentials and civilian trade certifications/qualifications are important in finding work.

Struggling to find meaningful work[1] can make the transition more challenging. MacLean, et al (2016) demonstrate this as they find that an astonishing 40% of the Veterans (release year 1998-2012) were unemployed and reported difficulties adjusting to their civilian life. Of this group, 43% of respondents had completed up to a high school diploma and an estimated 41% had post-secondary coursework (not including a university degree).

There are nation-wide resources made available through both VAC and the Department of National Defence (DND) to promote a smooth transition. These include a web-portal, several integrated personnel support centres (ISPCs), individual case managers, specialised services for those with mental health conditions, and career services. In addition, through partnerships with various non-profit organisations, VAC and DND are able to offer enhanced services of the resource offerings and peer-support (CAF TG, 2018). These services are described in detail in Chapter 3.

2.2. Government Structure

The Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces act as the serving member's employer, trainer, and career facilitator while the individual is on active duty. Under one branch, the DND and the CAF make up the single-largest federal government department (Department of National Defence, 2018). Collectively, their mandate is to implement decisions made by the Government regarding Canada's defence and interests both at home and abroad. DND employees are civilians who support the CAF who serve on the land, in the air, or at sea. CAF members serve either as Regular Force members, which means they have full-time military employment, or as Primary Reservists (Reserves), which means they commit on a part-time basis. The Regular Force member's do not work or interact much with civilian industry. The Reserves fulfil their military commitment in conjunction with their civilian life and career obligations.

Once a member commences transition, VAC, an additional federal governmental department, facilitates the now Veteran's transition into civilian life, by acting as a service provider to the individual. VAC consists of the following four branches: service

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[1] The term 'Meaningful work' is used to describe the Veteran working in their desired field.

delivery, strategic policy and commemoration, chief financial officer and corporate services, and strategic oversight and communications. The service delivery branch provides economic and social support by delivering both services and benefits to Veterans. The strategic oversight and communications branch ensure programming and policy meets needs and remains relevant. This is accomplished by policy development, strategic partnerships, and commemorating past sacrifices and achievements. Next, the chief financial officer and corporate services ensure financial stewardship requirements, and lastly, the strategic oversight and communications branch is responsible for communication initiatives and aligning with the Departments objectives and priorities (Veterans Affairs Canada, 2019a).

In conclusion, given the structure of departments, people have a high likelihood of becoming very isolated from other sectors, including the civilian workforce, when they choose to serve in the Canadian military. There is strong training and experience that comes with service. The training and experience can difficult for a Veteran to explain or elaborate on, especially if the Veteran was unable to follow a transition plan. Successful labour market transition is a key factor to define an individual's transition as a positive one. It is important to make meaningful connections with other departments and civilian industry in order to substantiate the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are acquired through service. This proposes a challenge for those in the regular, or full-time, force.

Chapter 3.

Career Transition Supports

This section focuses on career transition supports, focusing first, on government support and a scan of current policy in Canada. This is then followed by non-government organisation (NGOs) career transition offerings. Government support and NGO offerings can include direct or indirect labour market entry by means of obtaining a credential or skills upgrading.

3.1. Government Support

The Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group (CAF TG) focuses on transition program execution activities, including free tools and services that assist personnel and their families as they transition into civilian life. It is important to note that the service offerings are not mandatory; however, there is an emphasis on promoting such services to members, but no guarantee the member will utilise them. These promotional activities target members on their respective base and Personnel Selection Officers (PSOs) champion them. PSOs are serving members of the CAF who use a strategic human resource management lens and in terms of transition, a PSOs primary responsibility is to recommend and support transition initiatives, including individual career and education counselling (Forces.ca, 2019).

The first aspect of career transition includes the Second Career Assistant Network (SCAN) Seminar, which brings together various information sources and organises them into 1-or-2-day seminars in-person or online. These seminars include presentations by both governmental and non-governmental organisations. Topics include pension, education benefits and course-credit offerings, career search tools, and some opportunity to network with each other and the NGOs. There is a focused SCAN seminar for those who have been medically released that include information relevant to facilitating a transition with specific medical claims. There is also a SCAN seminar designed for those who are not medically releasing. All members with a transition plan and recent Veterans are welcome to attend the general SCAN seminar in order to learn

about career transition. Members are encouraged to attend SCAN seminars ten years, five years, and twelve months prior to release (CAF TG, 2018).

The CAF TG offers transition workshops that take place on local bases across Canada. Topics include four modules that aim to teach the soon-to-be Veteran self-assessment skills, resume writing, and how to interview and find a job. VAC also offers career transition services (CTS) to those already released or to complement the other CAF TG services while a member is in the transition process. These include access to civilian labour market information, career counselling, and job search training. Members also have the opportunity to partake in a Long Term Planning (LTP) seminar (CAF TG, 2018). These seminars relate to education in and out of the CAF, their military career, and goals for retirement. Topic examples include home purchase, education upgrading, CAF Pension, Service Income Security Insurance Plan (SISIP), and estate management.

The CAF offers an education reimbursement to serving members who complete an approved Individual Learning Plan (ILP). There are three sub-programs depending if a member is Regular Force, in the Primary Reserves, or if they are a Regular Force member looking to upgrade their skills that will be advantageous both in their service and future civilian employment. For Veterans honourably released on or after 1 April 2016, VAC launched the Veterans Affairs Canada Education and Training Benefit (VACETB). Veterans who have at least twelve years of service are eligible to receive up to $80,000 to spend on formal post-secondary training or career and personal development courses. For those with less than twelve, but more than six years of service, they could receive up to $40,000 (CAF TG, 2018).

While the above services are not mandatory, the CAF does mandate members who have a date-of-release to take Enhanced Transition Training via their Defence Learning Network (DLN). This is online training to provide all essential information related to leaving the CAF. The information includes a spectrum from what to do with the uniform to high-level next-step planning (CAF TG, 2018). In order to complement the services above, the CAF TG developed an online inventory with the aim to translate military jobs into equivalent civilian occupation titles (Canadian Armed Forces, 2019).

In conclusion, there are effective options and resources for transitioning members. It is not mandatory for a transition member to utilise these resources and there is definitely program overlap. In order for a program to be effective, transition programming needs to evolve based on what the private sector is looking for and based on Veteran feedback. The government program literature also references programs from the next section (NGO support) as complements to their offerings; however, there is no clear link demonstrated as to how the programming can work together. For example, while members who served for a specified length of time are eligible to receive funding to retrain, the length of time it takes to retrain and potential to learn a skill for which the Veteran has proved competence, is not taken into consideration.

3.1.1. Current Policy in Canada

A scan of current policy in Canada illustrates that honourably released Veterans, under the Veterans Hiring Act, have a priority hiring entitlement in the selection of public service employees (Government of Canada, 2019). There are no current hiring polices for the private sector. In terms of post-secondary education, there are no polices for Veteran admittance or credit granting. It is important to note that each province is autonomous in regard to their respective education mandate.

3.2. Non-Government Organisation Support

There are many NGO offerings made available to Veterans. These organisations either receive VAC funding or operate completely independent from government as a revenue generating entity. There are nine organisations mentioned in this report that focus on career and/or education support for Veterans in Canada. This is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1.   Government and NGO Veteran Employment/Education Programs

Government Department/NGO	# of Programs
Department of Defence (CAF)	6
Department of Veterans Affairs	1
NGO	9[2]

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[2] There are low barriers to entry of new NGO programs. This number reflects NGO programs available at the time of writing this paper.

First, Agilec is an organisation that specialises in career transition services and vocational rehabilitation. The organisation receives funding through VAC and offer eligible serving members and Veterans career transition services, which include transition and skills coaching (Agilec, 2019). Second, American Edge4Vets is a service provider offering skills translation via workshops and mentoring (Edge4Vets, 2016). Next, there is Prince's Operation Entrepreneur (POE), funded by Prince's Trust Canada (established by HRH the Prince of Wales), offering networking opportunity and training in order to build a successful business (Prince's Trust Canada: Operation Entrepreneur, 2019). Fourthly, in terms of trade specific careers, Helmets to Hardhats is in partnership with Canada's building trade unions in order to offer apprenticeship opportunities for a Veteran who is looking to achieve a journeyperson certification (Helmets to Hardhats, 2019).

The Royal Canadian Legion[3] is a long-standing charity that offers numerous services to Veterans, such as emergency funds, housing, advocacy, and scholarships (Legion, 2019). Legion branches represent geographic locations and their services vary – for example, the Legion BC/Yukon Command funds The Legion Military Skills Conversion Program (LMSCP) at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) (Legion BC/Yukon Command, 2019). The LMSCP operates autonomously of the Legion and offers advanced placement or block credit[4] in order to fast track Veterans to a credential and ultimately to the labour market. This program also delivers the Military Employment Platform (MEP). MEP is a program that connects Veterans with employers who have gone through a workshop and are champions of hiring former military (British Columbia Institute of Technology, 2019). Next, continuing the theme of education, the National Advanced Placement & Prior Learning (N-APPL) Program is a national consortium of post-secondary institutions that have taken BCIT's LMSCP approach to military skills recognition in order to fast track Veterans to a credential by recognising the skills and expertise acquired in military training (National Advanced Placement & Prior Learning Program, 2019). There are other options for members when transferring military skills and experience for course credit that use different methodologies.

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[3]The Royal Canadian Legion is known as and will be referred to as 'The Legion'.

[4]Advanced Placement - If you have a completed degree, diploma, or equivalent (such as a threshold of military training), you may qualify for direct entry into second year of a full-time program

Block credit - Block credit occurs when a group of courses, often in the form of a certificate or diploma equivalency, are recognized for credit transfer.

University of Manitoba (UoM) offers Veterans degree credit equivalences using a prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR[5]) model (University of Manitoba: Extended Education, 2018) and Royal Roads University offers flexible entry based on years of experience (Royal Roads University, 2019).

In conclusion, there are many offerings to Veteran's in order to aid them in transition to the labour market directly or indirectly through further education. While these services are indispensable, the organisations and programs are likely to work in silos given geographical location. This results in service duplication and a lack of overall industry standard between government and non-government services.

3.3. Limitations

There are no uniform data on Veterans in Canada collected by Statistics Canada. Those who reply to surveys and take part in descriptive data collection in Canada have self-registered with VAC and thus are known to be Veterans. Approximately 20% of Veterans have registered with VAC. These are the Veterans who have the option to volunteer to be apart of various research papers or studies (VanTil et al., 2018). This can act as a limitation when proposing policy as we are missing the voice of large proportion of the Veteran population.

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[5]PLAR - prior learning assessment and recognition refers to course-credit given for different types of learning. This could include job training, seminars or workshops.

Chapter 4.

Economic Reintegration

Employment is a significant component for a successful transition; nevertheless, Veterans can be faced with a unique mix of challenges during this process. The Veterans Ombudsman (2017) states that the most crucial determinants for transitioning successfully include satisfying work, spousal/family relationships, and mental health. The following sections review the literature that affects Veterans who are in the process of economic reintegration. This literature is largely broken down into four themes: stigma, the motivation of the private sector, skills recognition, and access to credentials and qualifications.

4.1. Stigma

There are biases and stigma associated with being a Veteran. Unless there is an active war with Canadian involvement broadcasted by the media, most of the Canadian public, including employers, are not aware of the daily contributions made by our forces – both at home and abroad. The majority studies and the media are focused on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or physical injury; therefore, society tends to think about transition barriers from that lens. This provides a misconception that most or all Veterans have a problem that can be related to service and result in stigmatisation (Keeling, 2018). The Stone et al (2018) model successfully predicts a hiring manager's perception of a Veteran based on a function that leverages the previous work of Stone, C. & Stone, D.L. (2015). It infers that stigma can include ideas surrounding a Veteran's ability to socialise, that they are emotionally unstable, or they have violent tendencies. Secondly, the model predicts that there are negative ideas surrounding the evaluation of the Veteran. That she or he is not qualified or that military human capital is simply non-transferrable (Stone et al., 2018). Given that the media, who tend to focus on negative narratives are a key player in shaping public opinion, I conclude negative ideas of the behaviour and evaluation of Veterans is very prevalent.

In terms of reintegration, a positive outcome during the job-search may depend on the hiring manager's experience with Veterans. Stone et al (2018) found evidence

that Veteran status can truly be a hindrance for the job seeker. In order to save time, a manager may make an inference about a job candidate's skills based on being a Veteran (Stone et al., 2018). It is clear that judgements inherently aid in decision-making, which means stigma has the ability to reduce a Veteran's chance at being the ideal candidate and while this may be inadvertent, it is not equitable. Research has shown that Veterans tend to outperform non-Veterans. For example, BCIT's study demonstrated that military student graduates had on average a higher GPA than their civilian counterparts (Wainwright et al, 2016). This suggests unsubstantiated stigma given Veterans are less likely to find success in the hiring decision (Stone, C. & Stone, D. L., 2015). Once a hiring manager has had a positive interaction with a Veteran, they begin to alter their stereotype towards the population; if there has been a negative experience, the negative stereotype persists (Stone et al., 2018).

In summary, Veterans seem to be very misunderstood to the non-military population. The media are identified as a key player in shaping public opinion of Veterans. Assuming firms operate on a time sensitive and risk averse basis, they would overlook this population all together when seeking job candidates. This concluded to be due to inferences on skills drawn while screening job-applications and avoidance of potential social or behaviour issues the Veteran may possess or is thought to possess.

4.2. Private Sector Motivation

Veterans face a reality where they are either not chosen for the job in which they applied or they are being underemployed. As stated previously, there is stigma and firms do not understand military culture. There seems to be a level of ignorance present in the status quo that results in limited inclination to promote Veteran hiring programs in an organisation. Firm behaviour to maximize profit is in alignment with the superior performance most Veterans offer. The firms need to realise this in order to be motivated to have a Veteran hiring program.

The lack of motivation to hire a Veteran is realised by the majority of the private sector in Canada (True Patriot Love Foundation's Veteran Transition Advisory Council, 2017). The firms perceive Veterans as homogeneous and as a result systemically under-utilise the majority of this population. This is also demonstrated in a report by Schafer, et

al (2016), where 59.6% of veterans (n=1,501[6]) view their skills as greater than what is required in their current job. To better understand this, I looked to a qualitative study by Harell & Berglass (2012). The study identifies the top reasons that a company may not hire a Veteran. The reasons unsurprisingly include skill translation, negative stereotypes, skill mismatch, acclimation, and the firm simply does not know where to find Veterans who are seeking employment (Figure 1). The study also solidifies the business-case requirement to influence upper management. The reasons provided are due to a gap in knowledge of Veterans, stigma (behaviour and evaluation), and risk averse behaviour.

Skills Translation	Negative Stereotypes	Skills Mismatch
Acclimation	Cannot find Veterans	
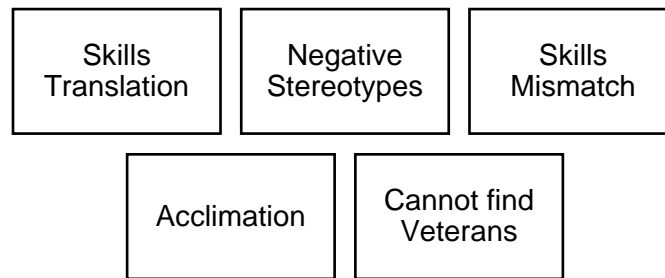
Figure 1.   Top Reasons Why a Company Tends Not to Hire Veterans
Source: Schafer et al (2019).

There is currently no policy that aims to nudge firms to hire Veterans during the hiring process. Influencing this firm behaviour can bridge the gap for Veterans seeking meaningful employment. There are sufficient programs and resources aiming to prepare the Veteran and fund further new civilian training or retraining in the civilian context. Framing this issue as value-added to a firm as opposed to a social or complex issue can influence firm behaviour. Targeting a firm's human resource (HR) practitioner is recommended in order to best identify strategic relationships between the organisations objectives and Veteran hiring practices (Ford, 2016).

Overall, Veterans are being overlooked as the value of their military human capital is difficult for non-military firms to understand or recognise. Nudging firms to adapt their hiring practices could increase Veterans' access to meaningful employment. HR practitioner's have the ability to influence a firm from the top-down through strategically aligned human resource planning initiatives that meet firm objectives.

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[6] n = sample size

4.3. Skills Recognition

Currently, there are no standards on translating the military skillset or on the recognition of skills acquired during service. Firms are failing to recognise and utilise the skills and competencies that Veterans have developed in their military experience (figure 2). Many employers simply do not recognise the transferability of military skills given the complexity. Programs such as the VACETB (section 3.1) are an indication of the lack of skills recognition given the federal governments offer to re-train the Veteran in a civilian context. The number one reason identified as a barrier to Veteran employment is in fact the skills translation (Harell & Berglass, 2012). Attempts to correct this have occurred by the means of automated skills translators; however, these tools fall short. Automated translators function as an online resource where a Veteran can indicate their military occupation and the translator is to indicate the civilian-job equivalency. These translators are significantly discounting military human capital as they fail to account for various soft-skill competencies including leadership and teamwork, for example. In 2017, Canada Company's METPathfinder application came close to being a succinct one-stop-shop including translator. The application became terminated when funding was reallocated to an alternate organisation[7]. Without a quality and succinct translating application that has national exposure, ambiguity and disparities, based on geographic location, are formed. This occurs with in-house attempts to translating and equating the competencies with out any collaboration. Some organisations within given jurisdictions may be innovative, speculative, or boast a relationship with the CAF, which enables information sharing.

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[7] Press release: https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/veterans-jobs-app-1.4588916
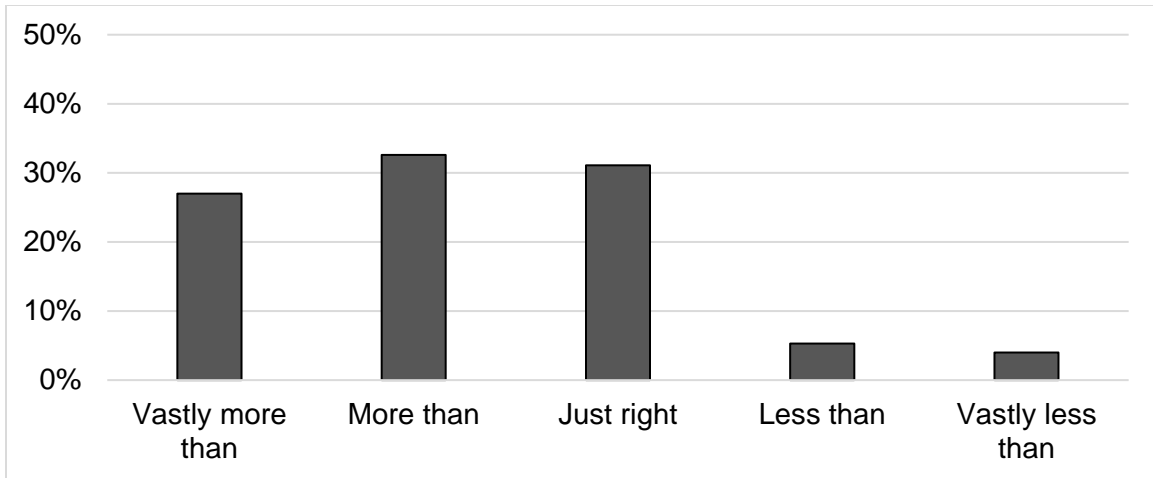
Figure 2.   My skills and experience are _____ my current job requirements
Source: Schafer et al, 2019.

Veterans are also changing jobs multiple times upon release. This indicates that they are seeking a position at a comparable level to the level when they were serving. Schafer et al (2016) demonstrate this with their findings that it is in fact common for a Veteran to attempt to prove their skills while holding jobs much lower than their skillset and experience by changing jobs many times post-release. These transitory jobs then act as placeholders that allow the Veteran to understand the role of a civilian and the common language used in industry (as opposed to military language). This is not an efficient practice from the outset. Certain military trades, such as those in the combat arms, feel this strain disproportionately as their skills seem less transferrable overall, even thought this lack of transferability is not the reality. To put it simply, the abilities of this population are not clear to civilian employers (Thompson, Canada, Veterans Affairs Canada, & Research Directorate, 2018).

Difficulties in Veterans' finding suitable employment has negative consequences on their mental and physical health. There is a link between meaningful work, positive physical and mental health, and a reduction in social barriers for the transitioning Veteran (Thompson, Canada, Veterans Affairs Canada, & Research Directorate, 2018). Meaningful work can be realised with the appropriate skills recognition. The importance of this is clear as meaningful work is a variable which affects all the successful transition function.

In turn, it seems that the onus is solely on the Veteran to translate those skills accordingly without having experience or qualifications as a civilian. The CAF Transition

Group prompts the Veteran to market their skills and find the evidence using various techniques (CAF TG, 2018). These are positive abilities to have; however, there is still a gap between the demonstrated skills from service and socially acceptable skills, such as a credential. Schafer et al (2016), claim hired Veterans preform jobs at lower levels due to firms being unable to translate skills into traditional working language and the lack of civilian education and experience requirements.

4.4. Access to Credentials and Qualifications

Credentialing and industry qualifications have the ability to act as a barrier for Veterans entering the labour market. This may give the perception that the Veteran is unqualified. Previously discussed is underemployment and the lack of skills recognition by firms. The need for a civilian credential or qualification is a factor in the systemic effect that obstructs a Veteran from meaningful employment. The CAF has their own methods and mechanisms for training, promoting, and tracking members' hours while serving, which remain unintegrated and out of sync with civilian practice (Department of National Defence & Solomon, 2018).

According to the VTAC Interim Report Findings, 33% of employers require a post-secondary credential and 47% were seeking a trade qualification. This requirement applies whether the job seeker is a Veteran or someone who has never served. The credential and/or qualification pose another layer of complexity when a Veteran attempts to enter the civilian labour market. Minimum requirements on job postings indicate a level of experience and competence in order to be successful. These requirements can include minimum degree levels or a particular industry qualification. Industry qualifications may have required an association affiliation, along with various other requirements. Such requirements are very common for those applying to leadership or managerial positions in a business sense – for example, military medics attempting to enter the civilian medical field and mechanics and electricians applying to comparable civilian trades (Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, 2017). Currently, Canada does not have a standard agreement or criteria for post-secondary institutions to recognise military training and experience. This leaves Veterans with the option to retrain in order to meet job-requirements, take a lower ranking position, or exit the field. This is not efficient. Retraining is also often not realistic and starting from the beginning does not promote positive mental health outcomes. Given the inefficiencies of retraining,

it is not difficult to find reports calling for Veteran skill equivalencies where appropriate. The Veterans Ombudsman (2017) found that education is a personal factor for a Veteran to transition successfully and that low education acts as a barrier. Promoting access to education for Veterans can boost transition outcomes, especially for those with lower education as they are more likely to face transition challenges. Education, for those who need it, after service is a significant facilitator to a civilian life for all Veterans (Rose et al, 2018).

Traditional PLAR processes and the CAF training structure do not lend well to civilian training institutions; however, it is possible to recognise general competencies. The British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), where programs consist of prescribed courses and are cohort-based, was able to articulate CAF training into a diploma equivalency and overcome this barrier by placing Veterans into the upper level of an academic program (Wainwright et al, 2016). Although the CAF's reliance on training and experience eliminate the ability to use PLAR efficiently, BCIT was able to develop an alternative approach called Advanced Placement for Prior Learning (APPL). The APPL method uses a scorecard to create benchmarks. This results in only one initial labour-intensive Veteran assessment for equivalency of a given CAF trade to an academic program requirement. CAF trades and BCIT programs each have a common core of learning outcomes with no variance. The report demonstrates the success of BCIT's method as rigorous testing and benchmarking occur each academic year. Using a cross-sectional study of military/Veteran students and civilian students, BCIT found that military/Veteran students entered the program with a greater skillset than their civilian counterparts. The Federal Government noticed this program and Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) provided BCIT with a one-off grant in 2015 to take the program national as the National Advanced Placement & Prior Learning Program (N-APPL). BCIT Continues to work under the N-APPL umbrella to expand their methodology through institutes across Canada in order to increase block credit and advanced placement opportunities to Veterans.

Further, it is also possible to recognise technical skills of Veterans should the regulatory agency understand the equivalency. Looking to Florida, specifically at military medics, Keita (2015) presents a case study that looks at a university's recognition of the skills and experience of Veterans in order to fill the projected shortage of registered nurses (RN) in the United States. Florida International University's Nicole Wertheim

College of Nursing and Health Science (NWCHS) has developed a program intended to transition and reintegrate Veteran medics into the workforce as RN's. This program capitalizes on the prior education, experience, and skills of military clinical personnel through the creation of a degree program, titled, The Veteran Bachelor of Science in Nursing (VBSN). The main objective of the program is to utilise the distinctive leadership skills and clinical education these Veterans earned and practised while serving. Both institutional, BCIT and NWCHA, cases had a new credential created in order to avoid unnecessary or non-application systematic disturbances or barriers.

Overall, institutions such as BCIT and NWCHS have the ability to alleviate the lack of skills recognition and promote an overall smooth transition by granting access to education. Skills translation is an ongoing debate that cannot end with a one-size-fits-all solution. While numerous solutions may cause confusion, this can be avoided by setting standards and leaning on programs that share information, such as N-APPL. This allows the Veteran to spend less time in school, potentially retraining. The Veteran then enters the labour market faster while feeling confident that their military experience matters. As for direct transition, partnerships are important in order to learn and understand each other (institute-to-institute and institute-to-CAF).

Chapter 5.

Policy Problem and Stakeholders

This capstone aims to address the following policy problem: CAF Veterans face too many systemic barriers when transitioning to the labour market in Canada. Canada invests large amounts in military human capital and CAF personnel spend many years of their lives serving before voluntarily or involuntarily transitioning to the civilian labour market. Canada will never be without a military. Therefore, this is not solely a current issue but also an issue in future as members end their service. Confidence in economic reintegration post-service may also positively affect recruiting efforts of the CAF. Given the chapter four literature review, successful economic integration of Veterans is found to be a function of stigma, private sector employer motivation, and skills recognition.

The stakeholders who hold an interest and are affected include Veterans, serving members, firms, post-secondary institutions, and external regulators (including transfer councils). Veterans, the key stakeholder, are a skilled population who currently lack an efficient transition back to civilian life. Serving members face uncertainty should they have an unplanned exit. Next, I mention firms and post-secondary institutions. Firm incentives are to increase profit and thus firms employ an individual who has met the appropriate job-criteria. Firms do not spend time translating or trying to understand someone who comes from an alternative background as this is costly. The firm most likely does not have awareness of the skills of the veterans and as a result misses out on a valuable talent pool. Post-secondary institutions grant credentials and own the assessment processes that offer individuals credit for previous learning. Transfer systems include processes such as PLAR. The post-secondary institutions are responsible for each student graduating, which in turn reflects positively on the institution, with a complete transcript, granting a credential themselves, or through an external regulator. Transfer councils and external regulators, such as the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfers (BCCAT) and Industry Training Authority (ITA), oversee transfer systems in their respective province.

Chapter 6.

Methodology

This chapter describes the chosen methodologies used for the analysis and a description of the rationale behind each specific case selection. There are two methods deployed. The primary methodology is the case study analysis, which identifies common variables for successful economic integration of the Veterans. The secondary methodology is an empirical examination used to assess the impact from the case study analysis. This method is used to assess the relevance of found results initially. The final stated findings inform the next determination of necessary policy options.

6.1. Case Study

In this analysis, I examine qualitative information from three jurisdictions in order to identify policy, case situations, and unique variables among those regions. Three countries have been selected for analysis: the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Military size estimates reflect year 2019. These countries each represent an effective transition program for the economic reintegration of military Veterans. The United States is the only case country with a federal hiring policy that gives Veterans priority when seeking a federal civil service job. Overall, the selected jurisdictions, as illustrated in Table 2, are allied countries with a military that provides transition programs to the labour market, that sent troops to Afghanistan[8], and that possess a comparable military makeup to Canada.

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[8] Afghanistan is used to represent the most recent wave of military Veterans. The war began in 2001.

Table 2.   Case Selection

	United States	United Kingdom	Australia
Military Size	1,359,000	149,930	76,362
Percent of population	0.42%	0.22%	0.31%
Transition Program(s)	Transition Assistance Program	Career Transition Partnership	Veterans' Employment Program
Veterans Affairs Department Cost per capita (CAD)	$696	No data	$497
Hiring policy	Veterans' Preference	No	No

Sources:
Overall: Campbell (2016), Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs (2017)
United States: Macrotrends (2019), U.S. Office of Personnel Management (2019).
United Kingdom: Armed Forces (2018).
Australia: Commonwealth of Australia (2019), Australian Government (2019).

The ratio of serving members to the population is relatively similar across all three countries (World Bank, 2019). Also, each case country has an employment transition program, a responsibility of the central government, and for those countries that have a Veteran's Affairs department, spending per capita is comparable. The hiring policy refers to governmental acts or regulations advantaging Veterans as preferred candidates while job-searching. Canada has a hiring policy that is described in section 4.5. The United States also has a policy in which a Veteran can earn points towards being a preferred candidate when applying for government jobs. The points vary depending on when a member serviced and various other characteristics, resulting in a complex preference policy. Currently, at the time of writing, both Australia and the United Kingdom lack a hiring preference policy for Veterans. All three countries, however, promote various initiatives intended to nudge Veteran-hiring behaviour in both the private and public sector.

The evaluation framework in Table 3, considers six aspects of an impact evaluation: program structure, funding methods, the type of employment support offered, social capital, the geographical target, and the overall target outcome of a given program or policy. The corresponding characteristics to the first two dimensions aim to gather administration variations in order to identify if these are important. The remaining characteristics are based on indicators extracted from the literature review either as lessons learned or empirical evidence. Each dimension, characteristic, and measure

allows for program variations that may be conducive to barrier reduction and sustained economic outcomes for veterans.

The first dimension compares jurisdictions in terms of two characteristics. The devolved or centralized characteristic identifies who is responsible for transition efforts (municipal, provincial, national); the second, government departments involved, identifies if the relevant program(s) are a shared responsibility among departments or the sole responsibility within one department. The funding seeks to understand how the transition programs distribute their operating dollars and employment support aims to identify whether or not respective career transition programs boast direct employment support into the civilian labour market. Employment support also has two characteristics. It considers whether these supports place Veterans in public or private sector jobs, or both, and what incentives or motivations, if any, are included in the efforts to encourage the private sector to engage with Veterans. With its two characteristics, social capital focuses on private sector awareness and stigma with respect to Veterans' re-engagement with the market. Specifically, social capital aims to understand if the programs are increasing awareness of Veterans among the private sector and if they seek to reduce overall Veteran stigma. Finally, the geographic target dimension identifies the intended reach of the Veteran career transition program(s), and education and skills recognition to be assessed. Education and skills recognition are both key areas for successful economic reintegration and can increase positive outcomes for reintegrating Veterans. This target outcome seeks to identify if access to education or skill training and credentialing is promoted and if previously learned skills gained from service are accounted for.

Table 3.   Evaluation Framework

Dimension	Characteristic	Measure
Program Structure	Devolved or centralized	Who is responsible for transition efforts?
	Single or multiple government departments	Does the process transition between 1 or multiple government units?
Funding	Government, revenue, donations	How is the program funded?
Employment Support	Public sector employment	Are there programs to place Veterans in public sector jobs?
	Private sector employment	Are there incentives to hire Veterans?
Social Capital	Private Sector Awareness	Does the program increase Veteran awareness among the private sector?
	Stigma	Does the program reduce Veteran stigma?
Geographic Target	Municipal, provincial, federal, or blend	What is the intended reach of the program?
Target Outcome	Education	Access to education/skills training/credentialing?
	Skills recognition	Does the program lean on the skills gained while serving?

The aspects of this framework have been derived from two main sources. The first source is an adapted evaluation approach used to identify common components among military transition programs in the United States (Morgan et al, 2018). The second source is the literature review.

6.2. Secondary Methodology

A second method is used to validate the variables identified by the case study analysis. The methodology also tests for effectiveness, or impact, and validity of case study findings. This is conducted through a literature review based on the indicators extracted from the case study analysis. Due to the importance of relevant choices, the chosen pieces of literature are listed after the first analysis in the following chapter.

Chapter 7.

Case Study Analysis

This section is the analysis for each dimension characteristic for the chosen case countries. These characteristics considers six aspects of an impact evaluation: program structure, funding methods, the type of employment support offered, social capital, the geographical target, and the overall target outcome of a given program or policy. Results are given in Table 4 at the end of the chapter.

7.1. Program Structure

Regarding the devolved or centralized nature of the program structure, a scan of services and administration procedures has determined that the United States has a centralized model (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2019). The United Kingdom uses a devolved approach for service/program delivery. The United Kingdom does not have a separate department for Veteran affairs. This resulted in the creation of Veterans UK, an organisation which is under the authority of the Department of Defence, but has had the authority to administer Veteran programming passed on to them (UK Ministry of Defence, 2019). Australia, similar to the United States, seems to be centralized in their approach to labour market transition with the government leading initiatives (Australian Government, 2019).

For single or multiple government departments, the United States Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and Australia's Veteran's Employment Program are partnerships with at least two departments, a department of defence and a department of Veteran affairs that administer both incoming Veterans and Veterans. Whereas, given the devolved administration, the United Kingdom's Career Transition Partnership, has a single government department, which handles both the administration of the transition program (Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs, 2017).

7.2. Funding

In all case study jurisdictions, the government programs are not-for-profit and they are financed by government tax revenue. The transition program of Australia is included in the federal budget (Australian Government, 2019), as is the United Kingdom's respective programming (Ministry of Defence, 2019). There are no costs to Veterans. In the United States, employers registering for the government recognition program, must pay an application fee dependant on the size of the organisation (U.S. Department of Labor, 2019).

7.3. Employment Support

Public sector support in the United States has mandated the Veterans' Preference policy that aims to ensure Veterans are given priority hiring over other non-Veteran public sector job applicants. This policy does not guarantee Veterans the job and seems to work on a complicated point system that depends on active service dates and specific honours/decorations (e.g. Purple Heart recipient) (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2019). Looking at the United Kingdom, the Tri-Service Resettlement Policy does not mandate priority hiring of Veterans into the public service. Similar to the United Kingdom, Australia also does not have a policy to hire Veterans into the public service. Both of these countries put much emphasis into private sector support, which is described in the following paragraphs.

Private sector support uses an outward looking lens to identify ways governments nudge the private sector to hire Veterans, as opposed to how the government prepares Veterans for their job-search. Through each country's respective transition program, Veterans are being prepared for career transition. While this preparation is at different levels, if the private sector does not value the military experience, there is then a gap. To start, in 2017, The United States signed "*the Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing American Military Veterans Act*" (HIRE Vets Act), which can be seen as a complement to the TAP as the Act encourages the private sector to hire Veterans through direct government recognition. This encouragement is through the HIRE Vets Medallion program. The TAP aims to encourage various positive outcomes regarding post-military goals, including but not limited to education and training (U.S. Department of Defense, 2019). Similarly, the

United Kingdom also works with the private sector to develop and provide employment opportunities for Veterans through the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) and The Armed Forces Covenant. While the CTP is more focused on preparing the Veteran, there is a private sector engagement component. This role focuses on advocacy and connecting Veterans with current openings ranging from executive to vocational (Ministry of Defence, 2015). Next, policy in the United Kingdom has allowed for the development of the previously mentioned Armed Forces Covenant, which is ultimately an outline of the obligation from the state to Veterans. This obligation outline includes the employment initiatives (Brooke-Holland et al, 2019). In order for the Armed Forces Covenant to fulfil its mandate, they work with the private sector by signing companies into a registry with a clearly defined action item or goal and they provide recognition. This group also measures effectiveness and is accountable for meaningful updates to Veterans' and employers (Armed Forces Covenant, 2018). Just like the United States, this facilitates cross-sector engagement and allows for a direct relationship between the department versus an arms reach, which has the potential to be lost in bureaucracy or suffer from a lack of communication. Finally, the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program of Australia also promotes the private sector to consider hiring Veterans. Members from the private sector have the choice to sign a non-binding commitment to hiring Veterans and also receive recognition from the central government (Australian Government, 2019).

7.4. Social Capital

Firstly, with respect to the private sector awareness, all three jurisdictions are found to nudge the private sector to hire Veterans. This has the ability to increase social capital (section 7.3). There are government-based incentives for employers that hire Veterans in the form of company-name recognition. The United States' medallion program charges employers a fee to join the program and both the United Kingdom and Australia have no direct cost or charge to employers. Again, all three jurisdictions are administering these programs from within their government departments as opposed to outsourcing to a private organisation.

For stigma, it was not clear if the programs administered by each jurisdiction's government engage in anti-stigma campaigns. While there are positive externalities associated with building the private sectors awareness with regard to the evaluation of a

Veteran, there seems to be no direct intention to reduce the stigma. More can be done to reduce the stigma associated with being a Veteran. Stigma may result in contradictory outcomes to the government efforts for Veteran hiring if there are inherent judgements about the population.

7.5. Geographic Target

Given the programs are administered by the central government (not outsourced), there seems to be a national reach. These findings may be positively associated with the benefit of consistency in a blanket policy.

Uniquely, the state of New South Wales (NSW) in Australia administers its own program, the "Veterans Employment Program", out of the NSW Office for Veterans Affairs. This program is state focused and is a Veteran advocate from the private sector prospective (NSW Office of Veterans Affairs, 2018).

7.6. Target Outcome

In terms of access to education (skills/vocational and/or credentialing inclusive), there is no set policy in any of the jurisdiction's transition programs. There are, however, opportunities for funding and grants for the Veteran. The United States administers the GI Bill in order to make funding and grant opportunities accessible and the United Kingdom offers various funding alternatives as outlined in the joint service publication 534 (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2019; Ministry of Defence, 2015). Australia's Defence Learning Branch allocates civilian qualifications and/ or accreditations automatically upon a training course completion if there is an equivalent civilian occupation. Currently, Australia does not offer direct grants or post-secondary payments (Australian Department of Defence, 2019). The private sector and post-secondary institutions are leading the way in terms of providing credit for service (see section 4.4). There is currently a geographic disconnect in terms of awareness as these programs were not made easily visible as complements to grant/funding opportunities.

Skills recognition attempts are found in all three jurisdictions. It is demonstrated that each region aims to build a program that recognises the skills and competencies a Veteran has accumulated while serving. The United States has been quite successful at

skills recognition by relating meaningful work by means of national occupational codes to military occupation codes and then to current job openings (CareerOneStop, 2019). The Armed Forces Covenant is doing positive work in the United Kingdom to have skills recognised by private sector. The program is aimed at increasing the private sector support and awareness to help legitimise the recognition through experience working with Veterans. Some of the companies that sign with the Covenant have developed specialised internal programs that see a Veteran take various job-relevant courses that build on skills learned during the Veteran's time in the Forces (Armed Forces Covenant, 2018). There is, however, no policy or criteria for skill standards set in the military that transfer to the civilian sector. Australia has a transition and recognition team whose mandate is to conceptualise the skills transferral for the civilian/private sector. The guidebooks this group produces are very useful in skills translation as they are focus on the training outcomes as opposed to the method used to teach a particular skill (Australian Defence College, 2018). This is unique to the case jurisdictions; however, while they serve Veterans well, the language is not consistent with that of the Prime Minister's Veteran Employment Program, which is aimed at the private sector. This results in missed opportunity and a lack of efficiency.

7.7. Key Findings

From Table 4, there are clearly different results for the three chosen countries. There are consistencies in terms of the private sector employment support, the private sector awareness, the geographic target of the transition program, the access to education, and the skills recognition.

Table 4.   Summary of Findings for the Three Countries

Dimension	Characteristic	United States	United Kingdom	Australia
Program Structure	Devolved or centralized	Centralized	Devolved	Centralized
	Single or multiple government departments	Two	Single	Two
Funding	Government, revenue, donations	Public + small application fee for employers	Public	Public
Employment Support	Public sector employment	Yes	No	No
	Private sector employment	Yes	Yes	Yes
Social Capital	Private Sector Awareness	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Stigma	No	No	No
Geographic Target	Municipal, provincial, federal, or blend	Federal	Federal	Federal + state advocate (NSW)
Target Outcome	Education	Yes - Low	Yes - Low	Yes - Medium
	Skills recognition	Yes - Medium	Yes - Low	Yes - Low

Overall, my analysis has discovered best practices in all three jurisdictions. While program structure varied slightly between the three countries, it was found to have no effect on the transition program itself. This resulted in the program structure characteristic being omitted from analysis. First, only the United States provides public sector employment support by offering priority hiring into the public service. It is unclear why this practice does not occur in the other two jurisdictions, especially given the work promoting Veterans to the private sector. All three jurisdictions work directly with the private sector to promote employment opportunities. This is not the practice in Canada. Instead, Canada contracts this work to third party service provider, Agilec (CAD$10.3 million over 43 months), whose mandate includes working with members to identify skills but not to promote the unique Veteran skill set to the private sector (Veterans Affairs Canada, 2018b). Thirdly, given the direct management of private sector relationships, which support Veteran entry into the private sector, social capital for Veteran awareness increases. This has not been the case in Canada; therefore, this missing variable is a lessons learned as to how to target the private sector better in Canada.

Next, it is found that none of the case studies are effective in the reduction of overall stigma. This makes it challenging as to how one should handle this variable. For

education as a target outcome, Australia is notable because it provides serving members with accreditations and/or qualifications as an active serving member completes her or his respective trades training for the military. This demonstrates successful collaboration between the trades and training sectors within Australia. Similarly, the United States has a distinguished system for linking the military jobs to the civilian counterparts. This system is distinguished as the military-to-civilian career linkages is made up not just entry level positions, but also meaningful work. This is achievable for the Canadian military as the system is based off of occupation codes for which we have our own version.

In conclusion, the case study analysis indicates that the most important policies are to provide private sector employment support through central government programming, while simultaneously increasing social capital through private sector awareness. Secondly, all three countries provide access to education and skills recognition. Australia grants credentials and/or qualifications to serving members and the United States is currently leading the way in terms of skills recognition by leaning on the skills Veterans gained in service. These policies are currently lacking in Canada (see Appendix B). The policies should exist at a national level as opposed to regional. With regards to how a transition program is funded, all countries use public funding model, including Canada. Public sector support, as in the United States, is a reality in Canada and does not require alteration. Next is the confirmation on these results.

Chapter 8.

Evaluation of Results

The secondary methodology is now conducted as a means for effectiveness and validity testing. The variables to be examined are focused on the policies from the case study analysis that are found to be most important and currently do not exist in Canada. These include 1) providing private sector employment support for employment support, which incorporates facilitating a national in scope program, 2) increasing the private sector awareness in order to increase social capital, 3) increasing access to educational credentials and/or qualifications for target outcome, and 4) skills recognition for target outcome.

8.1. Private Sector Employment for Employment Support

Given there is no policy in Canada to nudge the private sector, it is likely the status quo will remain. Employer recognition programs used by governments in other countries attempt to shift the status quo and build an appetite for hiring Veterans. Since the deployment of the private sector engagement in the United States, hiring targets have been set and Veteran unemployment has decreased (Amidon, 2019). While this is positive, it is not clear if this is meaningful employment due to a lack of data.

The employer recognition programs hold the private sector accountable as they make public commitments to support and hire Veterans and assist government in diffusing the behaviour nationally. Harell & Berglass (2012) and Dwayne Ford (2016) both state the importance of a business case to promote Veteran hiring. Employee skill recognition could be the driver that influences organisations to develop a Veteran hiring and on-boarding program. Further research to the effectiveness of these recognition schemes is to be carried out by the Armed Forces Covenant (United Kingdom) for their year 2020 Annual Report, which has not been published at the time of writing this paper.

8.2. Private Sector Awareness for Social Capital

In order to increase awareness of Veterans in the private sector, policy may seek to engage in a manner that is relevant, easily available, and outline the private sector as a key player in Veteran employment. While specific academic literature on increasing awareness of Veterans to the private sector lacks, overall business engagement and public-private-partnership literature is reviewed. To start, the OECD (2016) defines this type of relationship with the private sector as strategic and systematic. It is also stated that best practice for engagement to be mobilised is said to involve the relevant actors in policy dialogue to develop frameworks (OECD, 2016).

This type of partnership and dialogue can assist government to achieve development goals, such as how to raise awareness of a population to the private sector. Using the framework provided by Bilal et al (2014), this type of engagement falls into a coalition model. The authors state that these are best executed with a steering committee to provide standards, direction, and evaluation tactics. Lastly, Bammer's (2019) research focused on a modification of the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Engagement. This modified model is used in order to validate the method recommended by the IAP2. Given this type of engagement fits as a coalition model, the appropriate course of action, as stated by the IAP2 and Bammer, is to collaborate.

8.3. Education for Target Outcome

There is a significant amount of information assessing credential recognition and access to education for many population groups, including foreign credential recognition. The principle of this literature is to recognise education in alternative ways. This principle is similar to that of Veterans; therefore, this literature will be used to identify policy in this sphere. As mentioned, the assessed jurisdictions lack transferability between military training and civilian. Australia, however, is leading the way granting various qualification upon military course completion. This is not for all military occupations and while this is efficient, there remains a gap for the 'soft skills' (e.g. Leadership, communications, teamwork) and the acknowledgment that some individuals may not want to work in the same occupation they did in the military post-transition.

As previously stated, education after service is a significant facilitator to a civilian life for all Veterans. There is also a notable difference in outcomes given the level of formal education a member possess pre-release – the lower the education, the lower the chance of a successful transition (Rose et al, 2018). The European Commission (2013) confirms the importance of enabling access and granting reasonable exceptions to post-secondary through non-formal recognition. It is important to facilitate the recognition of military training not only for the governments' return on investment for training dollars spent on the serving member, but also for the individual Veteran's quality of life after service. This is important because qualifications signal a level of competency through the transparency associated with the given qualification. This results in the individual presenting as a standard recruitment case and more attractive to recruit (Kis & Windisch, 2018).

Demonstrated in section 4.4 are specific cases where a post-secondary institution will grant academic credit for training service. These institutions have assumed the risk of this alternative education path and are experts in their field of education and education policy. These innovative institutions reduce labour market disruptions individuals' face while re-training to obtain a required credential or qualification by recognising previous military training as block credit hours.

8.4. Skills Recognition for Target Outcome

This section assesses literature that has a general base versus a focus on military skills. To start, identifying transferrable work-based skills directly into the workplace brings an assortment of benefits. Kis & Windisch (2018) define skills recognition as looking at an individual's skillset that is not reflected by a credential or qualification and using a process to recognise it. The authors see this benefiting employers through highly productive employees that are able to build on past learning with complemented new skills and an expanded candidate pool. The paper also states that there is a level of equity associated with recognising non-formal learning as it bridges the gap for those who may not have access to formal learning. The challenge with pure skills recognition is credibility and bureaucratic barriers. Each province maintains authority over their education policy with no mandate to collaborate or remain consistent with other provinces in Canada.

In summary, the above research findings and best practices are very important when the goal is to economically reintegrate CAF members. Based on the literature, private sector employment initiatives to increase the overall employment support and private sector awareness to increase social capital are the most important pieces missing in the Canadian context. This has been indicated in the research given organisations are both willing to learn about Veterans and hire them if it can be connected to their overall strategic plan. Following this is skills recognition and access to education for target outcome. These policies are not mutually exclusive. Next, I suggest three policy options to handle these issues in Canada.

Chapter 9.

Policy Objectives, Criteria, and Options

The main objective of this paper is to propose policy that will reintegrate CAF Veterans into meaningful jobs; therefore, the long-term policy goal is to leverage the training and experiences of Veterans in order to ensure successful economic reintegration in most or all sectors. The short-term policy goal is to facilitate dialogue with the private sector to identify areas of opportunity. To meet these objectives, I begin by creating an evaluation matrix that is based on the findings from primary and secondary analyses. Next, I introduce the proposed policy options that are to be evaluated. Policy options include 1) implementing a direct employer program, 2) collaborating with training institutes/authorities to grant qualification at time of CAF trade training, and 3) develop national framework for skills recognition.

9.1. Evaluation Criteria

Criteria are the set of standards that are used to evaluate policy options. The aim is to identify the policy that will best facilitate economic reintegration of CAF Veterans. The criteria are effectiveness, cost, administrative complexity, equity, and stakeholder acceptance. The criteria measures are assigned a score of 1, 2, or 3, based on high positive impact, 3, to lowest positive impact, 1. In order to ensure neutrality, criteria with more than one measure are divided by the number of measures included. This ensures effectiveness, administrative complexity, and stakeholder acceptance have the same weight as cost and equity as they are all equally important. Next, policy option scores are tallied based on the matrix in order to give a rank to each potential option. The highest score is correlated to the most favourable policy. A summary of the criteria and measures matrix is in Table 5.

Table 5.   Criteria and Measures Matrix

Objective	Criteria	Measure	Score
Effectiveness: Mitigation of systemic barriers	Does the policy help Veterans gain employment?	Directly helps over time	3
		Indirectly helps over time	2
		Helps momentarily	1
	Impact on stigma reduction via non-Veterans engaging in participatory learning	High impact	3
		Medium impact	2
		Low/no impact	1
		Effectiveness/2 = score	
Cost: Federal budget impact	Annual cost to federal budget	< 1% of annual VAC budget	3
		1.01 – 2% of annual VAC budget	2
		> 2.01% of annual VAC budget	1
Administrative Complexity: Ease of administration/ implementation	How much involvement from the provincial government is required?	Little to no involvement	3
		Some involvement	2
		Much involvement	1
	How much involvement from regulatory bodies is required?	Little to no involvement	3
		Some involvement	2
		Much involvement	1
		Administrative Complexity/2 = score	
Equity: Policy helps all Veterans	Does the policy help all members of the Veteran community?	Helpful to all and targeted to all	3
		Helpful to some but targeted to all	2
		Helpful/targeted to only a subset	1
Stakeholder Acceptance: Support from stakeholders	Do CAF and VAC support this policy?	Support	3
		Neutral	2
		Oppose	1
	Does the education sector support this policy?	Support	3
		Neutral	2
		Oppose	1
	Do firms support this policy?	Support	3
		Neutral	2
		Oppose	1
		Stakeholder acceptance/3 = score	
OVERALL MAXIMUM SCORE: 15			

9.1.1. Effectiveness

Effectiveness is defined as the policy's capability to increase employment options for Veterans and reduce stigma via non-Veterans engaging in participatory learning. If the policy directly helps Veterans gain employment overtime, the policy is assigned a score of 3; if there are indirect impacts on employment gains for Veterans, the score is 2, and lastly; if there is only momentary employment gains, such as one quarter or period, the policy is scored 1. Looking at stigma reduction via participation of non-Veterans, if the policy promotes employers to learn, it is considered to have a high impact, which

scores a 3. If the policy is not forecast to promote change-makers within the organisation to learn or is appealing only to a select group, it will be scored a 2, as it then has medium impact, and finally, should there be low or no desire to learn from organisations, then the policy has no impact, scoring 1.

9.1.2. Cost

Cost measures the impact on the federal budget via the annual cost to Canada of the policy. Costs are estimated from similar policies in Canada, case study jurisdictions, and relevant market rates in Canada. This provides an estimation of willingness to fund a new program. Currently, VAC's total budget is $4.47 billion (Veterans Affairs Canada, 2019c). Should the policy have an annual cost of less than 1% of the Veterans Affairs Canada annual budget, it will be scored 3. If the policy costs between 1.01% and 2% of the budget annually, it scores 2. Finally, if the policy costs over 2.01% of the VAC budget annually to Canada, it scores a 1.

9.1.3. Administrative Complexity

Administrative complexity is the level of difficulty present to administer and implement the policy. This is measured by how much involvement is required of the provincial government and how much involvement of regulatory agency is required execute the policy. Both criteria score a 3 should there be little to no involvement required; a score of 2 indicates that some involvement will be required, and lastly; a score of 1 is an indication that much involvement of the province or regulatory body is required.

9.1.4. Equity

Equity is assessed in terms of the policy helping all sub-populations of the Veteran community. If the policy option is likely to be helpful and targeted to all members of the Veteran community, it scores a 3. Should the policy be helpful to some yet targeted to all, it is assigned a 2, and lastly; if the policy is only helpful and targeted to a population sub-set, it is assigned a score of 1.

9.1.5. Stakeholder Acceptance

Finally, stakeholder includes three types for evaluation of acceptance. Firstly, I evaluate the expected level of support from various stakeholder groups who have a significant level of influence. First, the level of support from relevant government departments, VAC and DND, is assessed. Next the likelihood of the education sector supporting or opposing the policy is assessed, and finally, the degree to which firms support the policy is measured. For all stakeholders, a score of 3 indicated support for the policy; a 2 indicated a neutral position, and lastly; a 1 indicates an opposition to the proposed policy option.

9.2. Policy Options

In this section, three policy options that are derived from the analytical methodologies in previous chapters, are presented and explained.

9.2.1. Option 1: Implement Direct Employer Program

The first policy option requires a direct relationship between firms in the Canadian private sector (employers) and the federal government. This option is based on the private sector employment support that is found in all three case countries and facilitated by the federal government. As stated beforehand, this type of program can hold firms accountable to commitments and simultaneously increase private sector awareness. Increasing the awareness among the private sector will allow employers to better understand the transferrable skills that CAF Veterans bring to an organisation, such as leadership, collaboration, teamwork, operations management, or project management for example. While there are different nuances among the three case countries respective programming, all three were similar in that there is some form of advisory committee, public recognition and awards for the firms that meet prescribed targets or pledges. All three cases also offer non-financial resources to firms to empower them in making and meeting commitments to Veterans. Australia was particularly strong in publishing effective brochures, which highlight some of the skills an individual may not be aware of unless having served. While there are no direct costs to firms, there are costs to government in marketing, administration/management, and resource development dollars, which would most likely be a recurring expense. Firms will face

indirect costs in terms of time spent learning from the resources, making commitments, and meeting them. Given the current lack of saliency of the issue and potential autonomy in creating commitments, there is not much risk in joining a program of this type. While the government bears the monetary costs, it may be challenging for smaller firms to release employee time, whereas larger firms may find this much more manageable. Even with this potential friction, it will not be recommended for the policy option to include financial or human resources for the smaller firms, as an overall shift or emergence should occur once able and willing firms participate.

9.2.2. Option 2: Collaborate with Training Institutes/Authorities to Grant Qualification at Time of CAF Trade Training

The second policy options requires coordination between the CAF and the provinces. The policy focuses on increasing efficiency through recognising the similarities between civilian and CAF training, such as Australia's Defence Learning Branch, which as previously mentioned, allocates civilian qualifications and/ or accreditations automatically upon relevant military training course completion. Currently, there are various regulatory bodies, such as the Industry Training Authority in BC, that offer paths from 9 military occupations to a civilian Red Seal Trade (ITA, 2019). Expanding on programs such as the ITA's, this policy would automatically grant the member both the civilian and military qualification at the time of course/program completion. Certain civilian trades are national via the Red Seal program, which makes them sufficient candidates for coordination between provinces. The goal would be to ensure consistency across Canada.

This policy option may also coordinate with institutions to provide a certificate or advanced diploma in leadership. This allows for the soft skills that have developed to be captured for those members who may want to pursue a civilian career that is different to their military occupation. This credential can be both recognised by firms and places of higher education.

This option is designed to work with Canada's decentralised approach to education (Waddington, 2018). It maximises returns of tax-payer investment as the number of individuals who have to retrain already present skills/competencies is reduced and they are contributing to the labour market sooner. Lastly, given the unique nature of

leaving the CAF, this policy could facilitate access to both education and meaningful work, which has been previously defined as an equity issue (Kis & Windisch, 2018).

9.2.3. Option 3: Develop National Framework for Skills Recognition

The final policy option entails creating a national framework for skills recognition. This option is drawn from gaps missing in all case countries and Canada. As mentioned in the background, there are disparities across Canada regarding how to understand and recognise the knowledge, skills, and abilities of Veterans. Each province is currently responsible for its own education and training with separate internal transfer systems, e.g. The British Columbia Council on Admissions & Transfer (BCCAT, 2019), and trades regulatory agency.

The purpose of this option is to promote education and retraining by creating a consistent education credit or pathway system, based on a standard military skills recognition agreement across the country. A national framework, which is an area researched typically under the foreign credential recognition field, will remove the burden from Veterans and pass it to the subject-matter-experts in education. Similar to option two, except this option requires a guaranteed national collaboration and buy-in to be possible. This policy would be administered by each province's respective admissions and transfers council, therefore reducing the risks associated with the Veteran assessment and enabling the receiving educational institution.

Chapter 10.

Evaluation of Policy Options

This chapter evaluates the three policy options presented prior, using the criteria defined from Chapter 9, Table 5. Findings are based on the case study analysis, the literature, similar programs, and government documents. Table 6 at the end of the chapter presents a summary of the findings.

10.1. Policy Option 1: Implement Direct Employer Program

With regard to effectiveness, policy option one preforms well. Increasing direct private sector-government relationships and acknowledgments increase employer buy-in and this results in reduced systemic barriers to employment, yielding a score of 3. This ensures Veteran gain in employment is positive and will increase overtime as seen in the case countries with this type of program. In terms of stigma, it cannot be guaranteed that all members of the organisation will engage in learning about Veteran competencies; however, with increased hiring and award initiatives, there will be a spillover effect that may make Veterans more salient in the organisation and society overall, resulting in a score of 2. Effectiveness gets 2.5 overall.

For cost, I use Australia as a case study. Australia's 2019 annual cost to administer the Prime Minister's Veteran Transition Program is roughly AUD$6.4 million, or CAD$5.9 million (Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2018). In terms of Canada's VAC budget, $4.47 billion as stated in the last chapter, this equates to roughly 0.12% of the current budget, resulting in minimal costs to Canada. The outsourced model Canada has today is based on a CAD$10.3 million injection over 43 months to Agliec. This option proposes to take over that service internally. This would allow for funding to be repurposed and avoid an increase in overall department budget. Cost scores a 3 for this policy option.

The level of administrative complexity for this policy is seen as quite low. This option consists of creating a new federal government initiative, which requires partnerships with the private sector. There is no requirement to coordinate with provincial governments, scoring this criteria a 3. Partnering with the private sector does

not require involvement from regulatory bodies, which scores this criteria a 3. Therefore, this option preforms well and the total score is 3 overall.

Next, equity is assessed. While the policy is targeted to all Veterans, it does not fully address the stigma around certain military trades, such as the non-commissioned combat arms (e.g. Infantry). The education provided to employers and the quality of the commitments made by the employer partners is a factor in addressing this potential segregation. There also may be unintended differentials for those who were released medically versus honourably or those with lower ranks. Overall, this policy scores a 2 for equity.

For stakeholders, the CAF and VAC are expected to be in support with this initiative as there are current attempts to connect with the business community though the previously mentioned SCAN seminars and also the CAF's Canadian Forces Liaison Council (CFLC), whose mandate is to advocate for Reservists and work in partnership with Canadian business (National Defence, 2019). Therefore, this option scores 3. In terms of the education sector, it would not be affected by the private sector implementing a direct employer program, resulting in a neutral score of 2. Lastly, in terms of overall firms' support for this, it has the ability to expand their candidate pool and provides the opportunity for recognition. That being said, the firms are operating just fine without the policy, resulting in a score of 2. Overall, the score for stakeholder acceptance is 2.33.

10.2. Policy Option 2: Collaborate with Training Institutes/Authorities to Grant Qualification at Time of CAF Trade Training

For effectiveness, this option does not perform well. The policy will indirectly assist Veterans in gaining civilian employment by ensuring they have the equivalent civilian credential or ticket, which is positive when job-searching, but organisations may not understand or comprehend the work experience. This provides part one of effectiveness with a score of 2. Next, this option will have low to no impact in terms of stigma due to the maintained divide of military and non-military. Due to the nature of the policy to not promote participatory learning by non-veterans in organisations, it is scored a 1. Overall, this policy scores 1.5 for effectiveness.

Regarding costs, this options would require high costs up-front in terms of gaining buy-in from authorities and determining which military trades will be granted qualifications. Looking at Australia, which is the most proficient at this activity, accreditations are administered by the Department of Defence through previously made partnerships with training organisations (Australian Department of Defence, 2019). It is not clear to exact cost to determining these equivalencies; however, I lean on BCIT's model for granting equivalencies in terms of the higher upfront cost, which is then minimised for each case thereafter the first, resulting in a score of 2.

In terms of administrative complexity, this option rates moderately. It is not necessary to have provincial involvement, therefore, this criteria scores a 3. It is, however, mandatory to work with the regulatory bodies. These regulators ultimately approve which qualifications will be granted to specific military trades. This can be complex to have the regulator understand the military training and experience, as well as to have each provincial regulator offer the same ledger of qualification matches. This criteria scores a 1. Overall the score result is 2.

Regarding equity, this option will disproportionally affect those who were in the military trades that have been cross-referenced for a civilian qualification. It is anticipated that qualification references will expand overtime; however, it will not be possible to capture all military trades. Therefore, this option receives a score of 2.

Lastly, for stakeholder acceptance, this is presumed to be supported by the both CAF and VAC as there is currently a program that accepts civilian trained members into the military trade at an advanced level (Canadian Defence Academy, 2019). This is also an attractive recruiting tool for the CAF; therefore, this option scores a 3 for support. In terms of the education sector supporting this policy, given the potential complexity of working with regulators and perhaps new standards that may be imposed, there may be some resistance, resulting in a neutral score of 2. Firms would also score a neutral 2 as while the policy has the ability to help with any skill shortages, the equivalency is given at the time of training in the CAF meaning the effect is lagged as the member's plan will be to serve for a number of years before becoming a Veteran. Overall, stakeholder acceptance scores 2.33.

10.3. Policy Option 3: Develop National Framework for Skills Recognition

In terms of effectiveness, a national framework for skills recognition has the ability to reduce systemic barriers to the labour market via post-secondary; however, this once again has an indirect affect on the Veteran's change in gaining meaningful employment, resulting in a score of 2. In terms on non-Veteran's engagement in learning, this policy option scores 2. A policy that is a national development in scope will ultimately diffuse once the equivalencies are determined and being practised in training institutions, resulting in an overall score of 2.

Next, the costs of developing a national framework for skills recognition is assessed. Given there are frameworks present, such as N-APPL, the Western Deans Agreement, and Provincial transfer guides, it is expected that collaboration is logical next step. The costs to Canada would include a steering committee to maintain the initiative and build relationships; however, as the former policy option, this is difficult to forecast given the exogenous factors have the ability to change. Exogenous factors include things such as leadership or key stakeholder changes and conflicting priorities. This results in a score of 2.

For administrative complexity, this option rates fairly moderate. There is collaboration with the provinces required in order to approve Veteran skills recognition, and any changes to training conducted by the military may create challenges. This would then need to be coordinated nationally in order to ensure continuity, resulting in a score of 1 for provincial involvement. On the contrary, regulatory bodies would have little to no involvement as post-secondary institutions are not accountable to a regulator, resulting in a score of 3. This policy option scores 2 overall.

Regarding equity, this option is quite flexible in terms of the amount of recognition granted and it is possible to look at all trades within the CAF. While the anticipated reach is all military trades, it is unlikely that will be a reality as it is not feasible for a blanket rollout. This policy also complements the VACETB, which means it could inadvertently result in some Veterans paying for higher education, if they received more skill recognition credit, and some not paying at all. Overall, the policy has the ability to be strong depending on implementation and scores a 3.

In terms of stakeholder acceptance, the CAF and VAC will be supportive of this policy given it is complementary to the work being conducted by CAF-ACE. This results in a score of 3 for acceptance. Similar to the previous policy option analysis, education institutions and firms score a neutral 2. An overall score of 2.33 is given to this policy option.

Table 6.   Policy Options Evaluation

Objective	Option 1: Implement Employer Program	Option 2: Collaborate with Training Authorities	Option 3: Develop National Framework
Effectiveness			
Does the policy help Veterans gain employment?	3	2	2
Impact on stigma reduction via non-Veterans engaging in participatory learning	2	1	2
Total/2	2.5	1.5	2
Cost			
Annual cost to federal budget	3	2	2
Administrative Complexity			
How much involvement from the provincial government is required?	3	3	1
How much involvement from regulatory bodies is required?	3	1	3
Total/2	3	2	2
Equity			
Does the policy help all members of the Veteran community?	2	2	3
Stakeholder Acceptance			
Do CAF and VAC support this policy?	3	3	3
Does the education sector support this policy?	2	2	2
Do firms support this policy?	2	2	2
Total/3	2.33	2.33	2.33
Total Score	12.83	9.83	11.33

Chapter 11.

Recommendation

Based on the analysis in chapter 10, in order to yield the most favourable results and impact it is recommended to implement policy option one: Implement Direct Employer Program. This federal employer program will increase the salience of the CAF Veteran community thus improving the employment outcomes post-service and facilitating transition ease. This option is cost-effective and in terms of implementation, administratively easy given it does not require coordination with other entities. There are no required legislative changes or buy-in from regulators, institutions, or provinces necessary. Federal involvement in managing the relationship between Canadian employers, and Veterans benefits both the Veterans, as they face fewer obstacles in seeking meaningful employment, and the firm in terms of expanding their job candidate pools and goodwill. While the policy leaves gaps in terms of skills recognition and credential or qualification access, it is deemed to be the most effective in mitigating the systemic barriers CAF Veterans currently face in Canada.

While this policy has been deemed effective in all three countries, the United States case was interesting in that the reduction in Veteran employment was unable to be disaggregated. The ability to disaggregate data can facilitate government and researchers to identify if the Veterans are being given meaningful work. In the short-term, it is advised to put emphasis on creating the program similar to Australia's Prime Minister's VEP. This program awards employers in various categories, which may act as a nudge to promote the firms to submit metrics or as a natural metric facilitator depending on the categories. Next, in order for firms to have a better understanding of the training and experiences of CAF Veterans, a long-term goal is suggested. Government is recommended to enhance the employer program with engaging learning modules. This goal aims to increase the appetite to learn about CAF Veterans and meet the ultimate goal of leveraging the suite of competencies a Veteran possesses. These learning models will increase awareness and inadvertently reduce the stigma surrounding the evaluation of a Veteran as an unintended consequence. This occurs in conjunction with allowing firms to create meaningful commitments to hiring Veterans. There may yield challenges in terms of the firm's human resource availably to learn from

the modules and commit to the program to their full capacity. This must be taken into consideration in program design. It is also recommended to ensure program is accessible to all Veterans by growing the program to suit many communities across Canada, including employer partners and award categories suitable for the urban, suburban, and rural setting.

While implementing the employment program is the best policy option, developing national skills recognition is a longer term recommendation. This option is equitable yet highly administratively complex. Also, it may be beneficial to form a steering committee to consult and engage with the array of initiatives that are offered by NGOs and the government. This can allow for a strong understanding of the career transition landscape and eventually identify areas of duplication and collaboration. The United Kingdom has formed a working group, comprised of liaisons and career consultants that focus on resettlement of Veterans. A working group as such can set initiative engagement precedence in order to facilitate more communication and awareness between the NGO and government career transition programs.

Chapter 12.

Conclusion

In this paper, I discuss the systemic barriers CAF Veterans face when transitioning into the civilian labour market in Canada. This capstone aimed to address these systemic barriers through first identification of the problem; second, through an analysis consisting of case studies and a literature review, and lastly; recommending a policy option to improve economic reintegration outcomes for CAF Veterans. This research contributes to policy literature by identifying gaps in the Veteran transition system, specifically in terms of career transition.

To start, I outline a basic understanding of how the current system is structured. I then gain an understanding of the critiques and areas of opportunity based on reoccurring themes. It is determined that the key factors inhibiting successful integration to the civilian labour market are: stigma, the private sector's motivation, skills recognition, and access to credentials and qualifications. Next a case study analysis and a review of the literature are conducted to confirm these themes and it is found that the most important aspects that are missing in Canada are the support from the private sector, in terms of hiring and enabling Veteran friendly programs, the awareness firms lack about CAF Veterans, access to educational credentials and/or qualifications, and the transferrable skills component. Based on the three case study countries, policy options for Canada are developed, analysed, and a recommendation made using various criteria and measures. It is determined that a federally managed employer program should be implemented in Canada in the short run. Similar to those of Australia and the United States, this would entail building an employer network that sets goals and receives rewards via government recognition for their Veteran recruiting efforts. Following this implementation, I recommend enhancing the program by offering employers learning modules to increase their knowledge and overall awareness of current and former members. This includes a Veteran's transferrable skills and competencies, such as the soft skills (e.g. leadership, collaboration, and teamwork) and the hard skills (e.g. cybersecurity, project management, or operations management) that have been acquired during military training.

Future studies may opt to identify how regulatory authorities and provinces can work together in order to offer and/or accept military skills and training at par with the equivalent civilian training. As an in-depth analysis on the differentials based on release-type was out of the scope of this paper, consideration should also be given to those who have been medically released to ensure programming is equitable and appropriate. I also recommend that the phenomena of underemployment be investigated as it currently is not captured in unemployment statistics. The ability to disaggregate unemployment data further has the ability to give insight not only to Veterans, but all Canadians. Researchers could then identify if the Veteran group is disproportionately affected by this phenomena.

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Appendix A.

Case Study Country Comparison to Canada

	United States	United Kingdom	Australia	Canada
Military Size	1,359,000	149,930	76,362	90,000
Transition Program(s)	Transition Assistance Program	Career Transition Partnership	Veterans' Employment Program	Canada Transition Services
Percent of population	0.42%	0.22%	0.31%	0.21%
Veterans Affairs Department Costs per capita (CAD)	$696	No data	$497	$129
Hiring policy	Veterans' Preference	No	No	Veterans hiring act

Sources:
Overall: Campbell (2016), Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs (2017)
United States: Macrotrends (2019), U.S. Office of Personnel Management (2019).
United Kingdom: Armed Forces (2018).
Australia: Commonwealth of Australia (2019), Australian Government (2019).

Appendix B.

Summary of Case Study Findings

Dimension	Characteristic	United States	United Kingdom	Australia	Canada
Program Structure	Devolved or centralized	Centralized	Devolved	Centralized	Devolved
	Single or multiple government departments	Two	Single	Two	Two
Funding	Public, revenue, donations	Public	Public	Public	Public
Employment Support	Public sector employment	Yes	No	No	Yes
	Private sector employment	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Social Capital	Private Sector Awareness	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Stigma	No	No	No	
Geographic Target	Municipal, provincial, federal, or blend	Federal	Federal	Federal + state advocate (NSW)	Federal
Target Outcome	Education	Low	Low	Medium	low
	Skills recognition	Medium	Low	Low	low