



INCOME STUDY: REGULAR FORCE VETERAN REPORT

What is this study about?

Income is an important dimension of transitioning from military to civilian life. Until now, no studies have looked at continuity of income before and after military release for a large population of Veterans. This first report of the Income Study describes income and sources of income over time for Canadian Forces (CF) Veterans who served in the Regular Force.

What are the questions addressed by this study?

The Income Study is one element of the Life After Service Studies program of research which focuses on four research questions:

1. How are CF personnel doing after transition to civilian life in terms of income, health (well-being), disability, and other determinants of health (factors that affect health)?
2. Are existing transition-re-establishment programs reaching those in need?
3. Are there unmet needs that call for new or revised programs?
4. How do Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) clients and non-clients compare in terms of income, health (well-being, illnesses and injuries), disability and other determinants of health?

The Income Study describes income trends, sources of income, prevalence of low income, and differences in income trends according to demographic group, service characteristics (e.g., rank), VAC client status (New Veterans Charter [NVC] client; Disability Pension client; non-client) and participation in VAC programs (Rehabilitation Program; and Disability Benefit program).

Why is this study important?

Findings will help VAC and DND understand how Veterans experience transition to civilian life and provide the evidence needed to determine how best to meet Veterans' needs.

Who was included in this study?

The study involved linking the records of approximately 37,000 Regular Force Veterans who released from the Forces from 1998 to 2007. One third were VAC clients. DND personnel records for these Veterans were electronically linked to Statistics Canada's historical tax files to provide information on income and sources of income before and after release from the military.

What are the findings of this study?

Highlights of findings include:

- On average, CF Veterans experience a decline in income after release.
- VAC's programs are reaching those with the largest declines in income after release.
- Of the small number experiencing low income, most are not accessing benefits from VAC.

Are there any study limitations?

The study does not include VAC disability benefits as income as these benefits are non-taxable and would not appear in tax files. The study does not include the impact of NVC programs as they only came into effect in 2006.

Veterans in the study released from the military during a relatively stable period of economic growth. Results may not be comparable to Veterans released during other economic periods.

Income shown on tax records does not necessarily represent wealth. Some Veterans with low income or large reductions in income may have assets that would reduce the impact on their income.

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