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## **Standing Committee on National Defence**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, November 8, 2018**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Stephen Fuhr**



## Standing Committee on National Defence

Thursday, November 8, 2018

• (1100)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Stephen Fuhr (Kelowna—Lake Country, Lib.)):** Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the defence committee. We're here to discuss the 2018-19 defence budget supplementary estimates (A).

I'd like to welcome the Minister of National Defence, the Honourable Harjit Sajjan; deputy minister Jody Thomas; defence officials and members of the Canadian Armed Forces. Thank you for attending.

We don't have a ton of time. I'm going to turn it right over to you, Minister.

The floor is yours for your opening remarks.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence):** Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the standing committee. It's great to be here again.

Before I begin, I think all of us are reflecting on Remembrance Week, and how everything that we have the privilege of doing as parliamentarians, and especially as part of this committee, is a direct result of the tremendous sacrifice by all our veterans from the past. Everybody here, in their own way, is going to be reflecting on that on Remembrance Day.

I am very pleased to be here today to present the supplementary estimates (A) for the Department of National Defence. Today I am joined by our deputy minister, Jody Thomas; Shelly Bruce, chief of the Communications Security Establishment; Lieutenant-General Paul Wynnyk, our vice chief of the defence staff, and many senior members of our defence team.

Mr. Chair, under these supplementary estimates (A), we are requesting approximately \$393.5 million. Of this amount, approximately \$282 million relates to capital investments, which will help drive our defence policy, "Strong, Secure, Engaged". It will help to move it forward. The money we are seeking today will help to continue delivering on our primary commitment to our people, and to all of the activities that support that goal.

"Strong, Secure, Engaged" provides a road map for all of our defence activities over the next two decades. Covering everything from procurement to innovation, from force development to operations, it encompasses our plan for the defence of Canada in the 20 years to come.

No matter how broad this policy is, every activity we commit to undertake comes back to our single most important objective, and that is to take care of our people. I have said it before, and I will say it again: There is nothing more important than the care and the well-being of our Canadian Armed Forces personnel and their families. When our people are well supported, our country and our values are well defended. That, in turn, allows us to remain capable and reliable partners to our allies.

Before I outline the details of our requested funds, I would like first to highlight some of our accomplishments over the last year. This will demonstrate how the funding we are requesting builds on the great work that has already been done by our team.

With respect to taking care of our people, we wasted no time in launching and delivering on as many initiatives as possible. One of our top priorities was to create a work environment free of stigma, harassment and discrimination, an environment where all Canadian Armed Forces members feel comfortable at work, regardless of race, sexual orientation or gender. I am pleased to report that we have made progress on this very important goal.

Following our Prime Minister's apology to the LGBTQ2 community, in order to right this historic wrong, we began implementing the LGBT Purge class action final settlement agreement.

In the last year, we also expanded the sexual misconduct response centre's service to offer 24-7 coverage from anywhere in the world.

We are drawing lessons from Operation Honour and applying them in support of our civilian defence team members. We are exploring options for extending the sexual misconduct response centre's services to them as well.

We have also worked tirelessly to expand services for the care of our military families. We have provided an additional \$6 million per year for our military family resource centres, and we have also implemented virtual counselling services for families. We launched the Seamless Canada initiative to make it easier on families when they have to relocate from one province to another.

We know that the Canadian Armed Forces members are at their best when they are given the tools and resources they need to succeed on operations at home and abroad. For that reason, we have also made it a priority to give them the modern infrastructure and equipment they need to do that.

We've made significant, long-term investments in the capabilities that our military needs to carry out current and future operations. For instance, this past August, I had the opportunity to visit Canada's Arctic. There, we delivered new ranger rifles in Yellowknife and announced infrastructure upgrades to our facilities in Nanisivik and in Alert. We have begun delivering new standard military pattern trucks at various bases across the country.

Mr. Chair, caring for our people and giving them the tools to do their jobs well is essential for our success. It is fundamental to our goal of advancing Canada's position as a leader in promoting global stability and security. On this front, we have made significant progress in the past year.

● (1105)

Last November in Vancouver, we hosted the United Nations Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial. There, in partnership with the Roméo Dallaire child soldiers initiative, we developed the Vancouver principles on peacekeeping and the prevention of the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Today, I am proud to say that 68 United Nations member states have endorsed these principles.

Mr. Chair, where the previous government stepped back, we are stepping forward to show true international leadership.

We are also working with Global Affairs Canada to support the Elsie initiative for women in peace operations. This forms the basis of our efforts to increase women's participation in peacekeeping around the world and to bolster gender equality and inclusion.

In March, we announced that we would deploy an air task force to MINUSMA, the United Nations mission in Mali. That task force is now fully operational. Since June, it has provided critical support to the United Nations, including medical evacuations. During more than 1,000 flight hours, it has transported 1,900 passengers and approximately 200,000 pounds of cargo. I am proud to say that 14% of our troops on this mission are women. This is above the UN average.

Our efforts internationally extend well beyond our peacekeeping mission. We continue to work closely with our NATO allies in Europe. Our support for Ukraine is unwavering, and we have been training Ukrainian security forces and building their capacity and capability.

In Latvia, we recently extended our commitment to NATO's enhanced forward presence battle group at Camp Adazi by more than four years. That's the wider Operation Reassurance mission.

In Romania, we continue to stand side by side with our NATO allies to deter aggression and ensure peace and stability in the region. We currently have Canadian Armed Forces personnel deployed in Romania as part of NATO's enhanced air policing mission.

As well, a Royal Canadian Navy frigate continues to be deployed with NATO's maritime forces. Currently, HMCS *Ville de Québec* is supporting NATO assurance and deterrence measures in the region. It includes the first operational deployment of the CH-148 Cyclone helicopter.

I would also be remiss if I did not mention Canada's participation in Trident Juncture 2018, the largest NATO joint training exercise

since the Cold War. Approximately 2,000 Canadian Armed Forces personnel participated in this exercise in northern Europe, which concluded yesterday. This large-scale NATO exercise was an important measure to ensure that our NATO forces are trained and ready to respond to threats against the alliance.

Now that I have summarized some of our most significant achievements in the areas of people and operations, I would like to move toward the requests we are making for supplementary funding today.

Everything we are requesting now will continue to drive "Strong, Secure, Engaged" forward and continue to deliver on its commitments.

Turning back to our greatest priority, I will begin with a request we are making to deliver even more world-class services and activities to care for our people.

We're requesting \$17 million that will go directly to the well-being of our Canadian Armed Forces members. These funds will cover our members' Blue Cross health benefits.

We're also requesting \$22 million for individual compensation, initial scheduled payments, administration and legal costs related to the LGBT Purge class action final settlement agreement.

With respect to capabilities and innovation, we are seeking \$38.4 million for additional infrastructure upgrades to our bases and wings across the country. This would help us complete 23 ongoing construction and repair projects.

As previously mentioned, we are also requesting \$282.2 million for capital investments. Among other things, the funds would go toward equipment such as vehicles, lab equipment and software. They would also go toward IT infrastructure modernization efforts and cyber and data security enhancements, which would improve DND's cybersecurity posture.

We are requesting \$2.5 million in additional funding for innovation for defence excellence and security—IDEaS, for short—our program to transform defence innovation. IDEaS will drive forward research and innovation projects across 16 defence challenges, such as better understanding of post-traumatic stress disorder and cyber attribution.

● (1110)

I would now like to highlight the requests that would allow us to deliver on our commitment to international leadership.

As part of our contribution to transatlantic security and NATO, we are requesting \$24.2 million for the NATO military budget. While the previous government withdrew Canada from NATO's AWACS program and diminished our reputation at NATO, our government knows that the world benefits when Canada steps up and does its part. That is why I was pleased to announce that our government would re-engage in the AWACS program.

I am also proud of our new NATO training mission in Iraq—an important signal that Canada can be relied upon to do its part when needed.

We will also transfer \$53.8 million dollars to the Global Affairs Canada counterterrorism capacity-building program to support the government's Middle East strategy.

Mr. Chair, before I conclude, as part of the supplementary estimates, I would like to highlight a transfer we are making that relates to our government's broader efforts toward reconciliation with Canada's indigenous peoples.

Building on the progress we made last year with respect to Kapyong Barracks, we will transfer over \$48,000 to Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada to help cover the salary cost of implementing the Camp Ipperwash final settlement agreement and now ultimately return the land to the Kettle and Stony Point First Nation.

Mr. Chair, we are committed to ensuring that the money we manage has a positive impact on our most important asset—our Canadian Armed Forces members and the families who have served alongside them.

I am proud of what we have already delivered, and we will continue to build on these priorities through smart investments.

On this note, Mr. Chair, I open it up to questions.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

To get through this so that everyone has an opportunity, I'm going to be really disciplined at moving us along. If someone sees this sign, either a questioner or a responder, please wrap it up within 30 seconds, and at the end of that I will be moving us along.

The first seven-minute question is going to Mr. Spengemann.

You have seven minutes.

**Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Sajjan, it's good to be with you. It's good to have you back, along with Deputy Minister Thomas and your senior leadership team.

It is, perhaps, particularly significant that we are with you today, as members of Parliament are returning tonight to their ridings to honour the lives and service of Canada's veterans, as you pointed out.

Minister, just before delving into some of the details of the supplementary estimates, I'll say that as a committee we travelled to the United Nations headquarters just last week, and the message we

heard from the United Nations was overwhelming and unequivocal—that Canada is back in peace support operations and that our contributions do matter.

We're approaching the anniversary of the 2017 UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial conference. I'm wondering if you could give the committee an update on what we've achieved so far and what we're doing with respect to our re-engagement with the United Nations.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Thank you for that very important question.

I think Canada is known, from its past, to have stepped up at a time when the world needed it. Canada has always played a very important role with its allies when it comes to peace and security around the world. The United Nations plays a very important role on the world stage, and especially dealing with conflict, trying to prevent conflict and reducing it.

Since the defence ministerial conference last year, we took a very thoughtful approach in terms of consulting with the right people to make sure what Canada's re-engagement in peace support operations was. We wanted to support the United Nations' goals and reforms. Even though Canada had a very strong reputation for peacekeeping, we know that the peacekeeping of today is not the peacekeeping of the past.

We looked at what the missions require and what whole-of-government means. When we put forward our pledges, our whole-of-government approach, from military, development and capacity-building, it was about providing the right resources.

One aspect that was very important was understanding the realities on the ground. There is great work happening with the missions, but there's a lack of high-level capability, which only a select few nations can provide. That's how the smart pledges concept was created, and that's what we are doing in Mali at this time. We are providing a high-level capability, but at the same time no one nation will be burdened with that capability. It allows commanders to make sure the mission evolves and continues within a good progression.

The other aspect was the increasing number of women in peacekeeping operations. The Elsie initiative is making sure we incentivize nations to increase the participation of women and do it in a meaningful way. We are working very closely with Minister Freeland and Global Affairs to help deliver on this.

The other aspect was the challenges that the current conflicts create of the increasing number of people being recruited into radical organizations. This is where the child soldiers initiative and the Vancouver principles play very important roles. How do we reduce the number of recruits going in while also being able to train our members and also member states—the troops—to deal with child soldiers?

So, the work is progressing, but we have been doing it in a meaningful way that's going to have a tangible impact, not only for the United Nations but on the ground.

•(1115)

**Mr. Sven Spengemann:** Minister, thank you very much. It's very helpful to hear these thoughts, that complementarity that you're speaking to there, especially in the context of the Secretary-General's action for peace reforms and also the Peacebuilding Fund.

On the supplementary estimates, Minister, DND is requesting the authority to transfer some \$53.8 million to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development in support of the Middle East strategy. I'm wondering if you could take this opportunity to let the committee know your thoughts on the Middle East and the key elements of the Middle East strategy as you see them in co-operation with Foreign Affairs.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** There is a much wider strategy for the Middle East. When we're conducting any types of dangerous operations, and especially with a decision of the government, we believe that a whole-of-government approach is extremely important. It's not just strictly about the military; it's about looking at the realities on the ground. What do our coalition partners need? That's what this is about. Global Affairs Canada has programs it runs in terms of counterterrorism, the capacity-building piece, which our members help to support in many different countries.

General Wynnyk, perhaps you want to elaborate on that.

**Lieutenant-General Paul Wynnyk (Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff, Department of National Defence):** Thank you, Minister.

I could provide some additional details with regard to Operation Impact. As I'm sure you are aware, over the course of three years Canada has committed to invest \$2 billion in support of the Middle East engagement strategy. The specific transfer you're referring to, sir, is going to be dedicated to a number of things, including road construction and rehabilitation on Jordan's northern border with Syria; a significant contribution to Jordan's Directorate of Women's Military Affairs to advance the agenda in that regard; providing some winterization to logistics vehicles to operate in forward-operating bases in higher areas; and providing non-lethal equipment and aid to Iraqi security forces.

There are other things as well, but those are the major elements of the contribution you referred to.

**Mr. Sven Spengemann:** Thank you very much.

Minister, going into Remembrance Week, many of us in our communities see the air cadets out in full force collecting money for the Royal Canadian Legion and showing their presence in the community. I'm wondering if you'd take the remaining 30 seconds of my time to give the committee your vision of the cadet program, and what we could do to support it.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Every time I visit the cadets or talk about the cadet program.... It is the number one leadership program for our youth in the country.

What's the number? Is it over 50,000?

**LGen Paul Wynnyk:** Yes, Minister.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** What we're trying to do with the cadet program is enhance it. I want to see if we can enable more cadets to participate in summer camps. That's something I have seen when I visited the camps across the country.

The other aspect is diversity. I was extremely impressed with what the cadets are doing, and what we can learn from that. They have a lot more girls in the cadet program and a diversity that represents the population. That's something we need to extrapolate for the Canadian Armed Forces as well.

•(1120)

**Mr. Sven Spengemann:** Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

MP Bezan, go ahead.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Minister, departmental officials, and members of the Canadian Armed Forces for joining us today.

This being Veterans' Week, and Remembrance Day fast approaching, for those of you who have served and those of you who are currently serving, I want to say thank you so much for your service. On behalf of the official opposition, I hope you pass on to all the members of the Canadian Armed Forces our sincerest appreciation for what they do in standing on guard for all of us.

I was a little disappointed when I was looking through the supplementary estimates, Minister. Under vote 5a, the allocation is \$4.1 billion in total now; however, in your "Strong, Secure, Engaged" defence policy, you pledge \$6.6 billion for the same year. You're \$2.5 billion short. Last year, you were short and missed the mark on your defence policy.

Also, the amount for pensions in the public accounts for 2017-18 was supposed to be \$3.4 billion, but in supplementary estimates (A), it's \$1.2 billion, so it's \$2.2 billion short on pensions for our military members.

We've said all along that we had concerns that "Strong, Secure, Engaged" was a book of empty promises. You're underfunding it. I don't know how you plan on catching up.

Now, you did talk about Latvia and the important role we're playing with NATO in dealing with Russian aggression in the region. You talked about Operation Honour, respecting female members, and all members of the Canadian Armed Forces who deal with sexual misconduct and sexual assault.

However, last week we saw a disturbing report in the media related to the Team Canada flight that went over to Latvia to build morale with our troops in Latvia and Greece. There's been a misinformation campaign coming from the department, from your office. So I ask you this, Minister. Did you or your press secretary Byrne Furlong approve statements suggesting that the VIP party flight would cost only \$15,000, which was reported earlier this year?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Thank you very much for the question. Also, we will make sure that the message to the troops is going to be passed on, for the tremendous support that all parliamentarians give them.

First of all, I'll answer your question in terms of the budgetary side, SSE and what we're trying to achieve here. It's also important to keep in mind that the Canadian Armed Forces need predictable and sustainable funding to plan out for the long term. The defence policy does that. At the same time, we had to create a structure in place to take the investments and be able to do more with them. I'll talk about it in a second.

Probably the most important piece to this was making sure that we didn't have lapsed funding, and that has been now—

**Mr. James Bezan:** But you're underfunding—

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Now that has been, the lapsed funding.... I would be happy to explain that in more detail.

When it comes to the other projects, in terms of our capacity to spend, we are trying to spend on projects as fast as possible, but as responsibly as possible. As we are increasing our capacity to take on greater projects—you'll see the increase in that—we will be able to do more. That is also part of the legacy that we had to deal with in terms of not having enough people to manage a project.

Not only will that continue—

**Mr. James Bezan:** You set goals and you're missing those goals now.

My question, Minister, was actually about the flight—

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I'm getting to—

**Mr. James Bezan:** —and the claim that it was \$15,000, which we know later came in at \$337,000. Does your office—

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** To answer your question, [*Inaudible—Editor*] about pensions and.... I'm just trying to answer the question you asked.

**Mr. James Bezan:** No, that was a statement.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Oh, it was a statement. Okay, I'm happy then.

**Mr. James Bezan:** My question was, did you or your press secretary, Byrne Furlong, approve statements suggesting that the VIP party flight cost only \$15,000, when it actually cost \$337,000?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I just want to make sure that even during the statements we provide accurate information to you so that the context is given to you, and we don't want any falsehoods to be left on the table either.

You were talking about ATIPs. First of all, our government has made it very clear that we want to be open and transparent so that Canadians can have a better look at how their government functions and how the expenditures are done. With regard to your question, ATIPs work not in terms of a question; ATIPs function in terms of the amount of time and information required. From that, somebody can glean the information in terms of how they want to drive that information.

In terms of the information provided, we have provided multiple pieces of information. We had a significant backlog of ATIPs, which we are trying to deal with, but one thing—

• (1125)

**Mr. James Bezan:** This wasn't a backlog. This was a statement that your office put out about the cost of the flight. It said it was

\$15,000. It was signed off by Byrne Furlong. I assume that you approved that before he signed off—

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** ATIPs and the questions are different things.

We want to make sure we provide accurate information—

**Mr. James Bezan:** But you missed the marks—

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** ATIPs are...don't provide the necessary structure to do just that. When it comes to the actual flight, first of all I want to say directly that any type of behaviour that was taken, we take that thing very seriously. We have not only looked into this in a very aggressive manner, but also taken action on this.

We have been very clear in terms of the information that we want to provide, making sure that it is as accurate as possible.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Well, we question the accuracy because the story has been changing over the last eight months.

Did you or Chris Henderson, your ADM for public affairs, approve a statement that suggested that the level of drinking on the VIP party flight resembled that of a commercial flight? When you see the video, it sure doesn't look like any commercial flight I've ever been on.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** The Team Canada concept, as you would know from your time as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, is done for increasing morale. At the same time, regardless of what is done, we have committed to very high standards in the environment of the Canadian Armed Forces.

When this was—

**Mr. James Bezan:** Does that high standard result in our planes getting soaked in booze and urine? This was a real debacle that happened. It was debauchery.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** So—

**Mr. James Bezan:** Were you briefed, Minister, on the sexual assault that happened on that flight?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** When this was discovered, not only—

**Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.):** On a point of order, Mr. Chair, is this related to the supplementary estimates (A)?

**Mr. James Bezan:** Yes, we're talking about Latvia. We're talking about morale, and we're talking about Operation Honour, which the minister mentioned. This is about Operation Honour, so I can.... There has been a cover-up going on by the department and by the minister's office, and if the Liberals at the committee here want to try to cover up the sexual assault that occurred on that flight, then I leave that to you guys to—

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Actually, I'm happy to take on this question. The point that you raised.... One thing I can assure everybody on this committee is that we have an absolute, aggressive zero tolerance policy on this. When this was discovered, we conducted the appropriate investigations to find out exactly what happened.

We have now gleaned on the lessons, and I'm looking forward to the findings on this from the chief of the defence staff. Team Canada has been suspended until this time, but one thing is very important: A culture like this is not created overnight when it comes to Operation Honour. It had started some time ago. This is something that we, as a government, have taken very seriously, from the Prime Minister down to me and the leadership you see here. We will continue to aggressively deal with this and make sure that we create an environment such that every Canadian Forces member, when they join, has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mrs. Gallant, go ahead.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** As a point of clarification, was that a yes or a no?

**The Chair:** Time's up.

MP Garrison, go ahead.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Thanks very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the minister and officials for being here with us again.

I think it is appropriate that you're here during Remembrance Week, and I'd like to take this opportunity, as others have done, not only to thank veterans but to thank those who are currently serving for their service.

I find that there are some good things in the supplementary estimates. In particular, I am very pleased to see the additional funding for the military family resource centres, which I know do a fabulous job in my riding at CFB Esquimalt and across the country. It's almost a cliché to say that it's not just the member who serves but the family, and I'm glad to see us doing more to resource those services and families. Thank you for that, Minister.

I'm also glad to see the provision for compensation for those LGBTQ2 service members who were prejudicially treated pre-1992. However, what I see here, based on the class action lawsuit, is a very narrow approach to that problem.

In November 2016, this committee made a request to the minister to authorize the revision of service records, a separate issue from the compensation, so that the service of those members who were kicked out could be recognized as honourable. We had the military ombudsman here before the committee. He said that, on request, he would be able to deal with those if he was authorized by the minister.

I'm asking you today to go beyond the class action lawsuit and follow the advice of this committee, which was unanimous, to revise the service records to recognize as honourable the service of those who were kicked out.

• (1130)

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I want to thank you for your tireless work on this. I want you to know that we not only fully agree, but we are working toward making sure that we are righting a historical wrong. It's not just about the apologies, but that we continue through with the requests that were made.

In terms of how we're going about this, it's very important to note that the final settlement agreement that we follow is what was agreed upon. That's what, from the class action lawsuit, the plaintiffs themselves have agreed to. We need to follow that. That's very important.

On the expungement process that we talked about, that process goes through a separate channel. Once it gets expunged, it comes back to us, and then it goes through the actual text of what's required that was actually agreed upon. That's also very important. At the end of the day, I need to make sure that we follow the final settlement agreement, because that was the agreement it was based on.

I do agree in terms of what you're saying when it comes to honourable discharge. That's exactly the whole spirit of this that we're trying to achieve here. Our team has been working on this, but we have to be able to meet our commitment to the final settlement agreement and the language that was agreed upon.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** I agree with you that you have to meet those terms, but the class action lawsuit was the minimum the government agreed to, and what we're hearing from those who served is that the service record thing is important—not the compensation, not the money, but recognizing their honourable service. I am going to continue to come back to you and ask you this. Probably the simplest way is to authorize the military ombudsman, once the other things are done, to revise those service records. You're going to hear from me again in the future.

One of the good things in these estimates is the extension of Canada's commitment to the enhanced forward presence in Latvia. I was privileged to be part of this committee when we visited the troops there. I want to relate that to our visit to New York, where the committee met with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and also UN missions associated with the Mali mission.

One of the things we heard there fairly consistently—I can't say from whom, because we were under the Chatham House Rule all the time—was that, now that Canada is there, we've taken the careful steps needed to get the mission up and running.

Will Canada consider staying a second year? One year is a fairly short deployment, given the effort we've made to get there, and it would mean some other country having to make a similar effort very soon to ramp up.

I'm asking whether you are actively considering extending our commitment to the Mali mission for another year.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Thank you very much for that. It's a very important question.

In terms of a re-engagement, we've looked at the analysis. This is not strictly about what Canada can provide and offer.

The Prime Minister is very careful when he talks about multilateralism. We want to be a responsible coalition partner, whether it's part of countering ISIS, at NATO or at the United Nations. In this case, we did a very thorough analysis by talking not only to the United Nations, but also in meeting with some of the nations themselves and their leadership on what was needed.



There is a reason the smart pledging concept is important. This is not just about one or two years. This is about sustaining key capabilities for the long term.

As part of our commitment, we have not only offered this. This is about our doing our part, potentially, for other missions as well. The ultimate goal is making sure the mission itself is sustained. If we do not get into smart pledges, one nation will get burdened with this. In the past, capabilities for these missions were being lost or diminished. We want to make sure that the great work that's been happening on the ground can be sustained.

That's why this is done. This is not about one or two years. This is about creating the smart pledging concept and making it happen, which has worked well in other places.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** We very consistently heard that our contribution is welcome and it is the right contribution to this mission. We also heard there's a need for countries around the world to provide the diplomatic and political support to this mission in Mali, and that it is very much in the interest of everyone to make sure Mali does not collapse, in terms of human trafficking, weapons trafficking, drug trafficking—all the very negative international repercussions, not to mention the very severe repercussions on the civilian population of Mali.

I understand what you're saying to me, but I still think we promised a bit more than we appear to be delivering. By extending that, we would provide significant diplomatic and political support for the mission in Mali. I'm hoping you will consider a second year of that commitment.

• (1135)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I'm going to have to move on to the next speaker.

MP Fisher, go ahead.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you so much, Minister, for being here. It seems like the second time in about a month.

Deputy Minister, it's always great to be at the table with another Nova Scotian. Thank you and your team for being here. I appreciate it.

Minister, I'm interested in some of the more important capital projects we've been able to deliver on recently for the Canadian Armed Forces.

I don't need to tell you that Halifax Shipyard is right across the harbour from Dartmouth—Cole Harbour. As you also know, the steel for our wonderful AOPS is cut in Dartmouth. Shipbuilding is very important to my community.

I wonder if you could tell us a little more about the announcement you made last week in Halifax and its impact on the Canadian navy. Maybe you could touch on the naming and recent launching of the *Harry DeWolf*, its impact on our navy, and the next steps before it becomes operational.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** The national shipbuilding strategy is extremely important to the Canadian Armed Forces, to our navy. It's

extremely important to communities where the direct work is being conducted. There are also indirect benefits that it has had across Canada.

Every time I'm able to visit the shipyards, especially in Halifax, I get to see the workers directly. The pride that they have in their work is amazing, actually. There's ingenuity that they're bringing into place, in terms of having more women coming into those trades and having more indigenous people. I met one member of the union who gave me his poppy and talked about how he remembers the indigenous members of his family. That's the human aspect of what this actually delivers. In terms of the capability for the navy, it's tremendous.

I should go back, though, to when the defence policy was created, when we did the analysis. It's not about just saying what number we want. You have to be able to put the money behind it so that it can be sustained. That's something we committed to in the defence policy, to make sure that we're going to have five Arctic patrol ships, with the possibility of a sixth. We went through the analysis and then determined the right funding.

I was very proud to announce, on behalf of the government, that we will be having a sixth. The sixth provides the additional capability for us to do simultaneous operations on both coasts, while at the same time making sure that our ships have the proper maintenance cycles as well. It's a tremendous capability, and let's not forget that they're called "Arctic" for a reason. This sends a message to our northern Arctic communities about how Canada is serious about the communities that are up there and how they're going to be supported. We are serious about our Arctic sovereignty, and it sends a message to our allies that we will do our part for our own sovereignty. Let's not forget the message that it also sends to our adversaries about how seriously we'll be taking it.

The process is moving steadily along for the Canadian surface combatant as well, but let's not forget that all the investments that are being made into our navy through the national shipbuilding strategy, and the jobs they're creating, are part of a wider plan of making sure that Canada is not only able to support itself and to project properly when it comes to our sovereignty, but to do more.

At this time, we have 11 ships, either on operations or in training exercises. That is a significant accomplishment for our people in terms of what the navy is actually capable of doing. I'm very proud of the work of our women and men in the navy. I also acknowledge the tremendous pride that the workers at the Halifax Shipyard have put into this.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** The *Harry DeWolf* is done. It is launched and will be operational next year. The *Margaret Brooke* is in the process, and the third one has been started already. Am I correct in that?

• (1140)

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Yes, the third one has been started.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Amazing. I was thrilled when you were able to make that announcement last week on the sixth AOPS. That's huge for our community.

When you were last in Petawawa, you unveiled a few of the new military trucks purchased under the medium support vehicle system project. Can you tell us a bit more about this project and how this is going to make a difference to the troops?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I'm glad you raised the logistics piece. When we look at supporting our military, we sometimes talk about a lot of the armoured vehicles. They play an essential role. There has always been discussion about "more teeth, less tail". To me, that is a ridiculous statement to make because without the proper logistics, a military cannot properly function. We identified very early the need for these trucks. I was very happy to see that the delivery was happening in Petawawa.

There is not only the flexibility that's going to allow our military to function and better support itself, but when I was there and talked to some of the folks, the soldiers were saying what a tremendous capability it is, how thrilled they are to actually drive the vehicle, and what it actually provides. You know that you're delivering high-quality equipment for our women and men. The interesting aspect of it, as we see these vehicles, is that they are going to be able to find even more ways to get use out of these vehicles.

The logistics sustainment piece for our military is absolutely essential for them to conduct the exercises, the training, and the operations that we as a government ask them to do.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Is there more time, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** You have a little less than a minute.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Mr. Gerretsen has a quick question.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Thanks very much.

Minister, thanks for coming. Like Mr. Garrison, I'm always happy to hear of more funding going into military resource centres. I have one in my riding, at CFB Kingston, and from my time as a municipal politician to the current day, I can testify to the amazing work they do in terms of making sure the resources are put there for our military families, in particular when their loved ones are deployed.

Can you comment a little bit on the funding that's going into that?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Ongoing additional money has gone into the military family resource centres. Our teams right now are doing a lot of work on the longer-term projects in terms of the military family resource centres. We're looking at it across Canada, making sure the families will be well supported.

We'll have more to say as the concept is further developed, but one thing I can assure you is that the infrastructure piece to it has top priority from me all the way down. This is also in line with the Seamless Canada work that General Lamarre has been working on tirelessly, to make sure that as families relocate from province to province, they have less burden on them.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We'll start our five-minute round of questions with MP Dzerowicz.

The floor is yours.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.):** Wonderful. Thank you so much.

Thank you for being here, Minister Sajjan, and thank you to the deputy minister and her team. Thank you for honouring the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I.

Few people know this, but in my 13-square-kilometre riding of Davenport in downtown west Toronto, I have a cemetery that has the largest number of burials of World War I veterans and allied members, at 5,300. It's actually very beautiful. We have an extra-special celebration taking place this Sunday. I just wanted to mention that.

Minister, as part of your remarks, you talked a bit about diversity. Our committee will be moving on to a study of diversity after we've concluded Bill C-77. In light of the events in Saint-Jean reported this spring, and the recent media articles around extreme right and white supremacist views in some Canadian Armed Forces members, I wonder if you might go on record saying something about this.

As well, could you take a moment to talk about diversity and how it is indeed our strength and an essential part of mission success?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Thank you.

Across Canada, there are a lot of cemeteries of our World War I veterans, and it is important to acknowledge and know where those cemeteries are. I have one actually just across the street from my riding.

I'm glad you mentioned the armistice. An honest request in terms of the diversity and how important it is... If you go back to World War I, and the detailed history of that, the world came together at a time it was needed. The British Empire was Canada, India and many other nations, and they all came. Within six weeks of World War I being declared, you had Indian divisions landing in Europe, in Belgium, trying to block the Germans. You had units coming from Africa, Canadians coming together. I remind everybody that when conflict is there, no one looks at the colour of your skin. It's just about "Are going to back me up?"

We cannot forget those lessons, especially at a time like this. We have forgotten those lessons, and this is why we have dealt with a lot of problems within the Canadian Armed Forces. We need to acknowledge that, and we have. Whether it's Operation Honour or the issues of racism in the Canadian Armed Forces, we as a leadership—our government and also the senior leadership in DND and the military—acknowledge this and are actively working very hard and aggressively to deal with it.

The importance of creating that environment and making sure that we have superb, diverse Canadian Armed Forces makes us more effective operationally. I personally witnessed this overseas, and other nations also see this as a value. We have the ability to do so, but we need to make sure that we recruit the best.

Regrettably, I am concerned about some of the things that I have seen and read about. One thing I can assure you is that any incident that is discovered in the Canadian Armed Forces, any incident that is reported, is investigated and aggressively dealt with. We are committed to making sure that we create that environment with every Canadian Armed Forces member to have the honour of serving with this uniform and to remember the lessons that were learned, because when you work together overseas, no one looks at the colour of your skin. We are working very aggressively. I am monitoring this situation very closely. This is, regrettably, a result of what we also see around the world.

One thing in Canada, for us, is that we need to take a leadership role. The apology the Prime Minister made just yesterday is a reminder to all of us that we as leaders, as parliamentarians, need to ask what we are doing and what our responsibility is in this to make sure that our entire nation stays on the right path so that our grandchildren or great-grandchildren down the road don't come back and say, what were they thinking?

We in the Canadian Armed Forces have a tremendous responsibility on this. One thing of which I can assure all the members here is how seriously we take this, and we will aggressively continue to deal with it until we have stomped it out completely.

● (1145)

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Thank you so much. I was told I have no more time, sadly.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** MP Gallant, go ahead.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Since the minister takes the issue of sexual assault so seriously, when was it that he was briefed on the alleged sexual assaults that occurred on the VIP party flight to Latvia?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I don't have the exact date, but I can assure you that these incidents are not only —

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** When? If you don't know exactly when, give me a time frame. Was it a week, a month, a year? When were you advised?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** As I stated, I don't have the exact date. But when it was reported, immediate action was taken to make sure that there was appropriate investigation and that our members at that time were well looked after. It not only allowed making sure there was a thorough investigation, but the military leadership also made the right decision to put a cease on this.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Thank you. Since the minister does not have the date and I told him the time frame was good enough, perhaps he would be so kind as to get that date to us at a later point in time within the week, before these have to be reported.

Did the minister or his office approve the statements that went out from the Department of National Defence public affairs that have since been proven to be false? Did the minister approve them?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I don't understand your question, because the premise that you're insinuating is....

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Did you approve the statements that went out from DND public affairs about the VIP flight to Latvia?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Which statements are you referring to?

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** I am referring to the statements that it was just a normal flight and that alcohol was served to the extent that a commercial flight would serve it.

● (1150)

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** For me to answer that question, I need the accuracy to know what we're talking about. If you're talking about the ATIPs....

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** I'm not talking about the ATIPs. I'm talking about the statements that were approved and submitted by public affairs.

Did you approve those statements put forth by public affairs?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The point has been brought up twice now that this is not directly related to the supplements we're discussing here. The point has been brought up. I would like a ruling from the chair as to whether or not this is appropriate questioning.

**The Chair:** Before I do that, to be fair, let me refer back to Mrs. Gallant and ask her how she's tying this conversation back to the notice of meeting and the supplementary estimates (A).

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** It's about Operation Honour. Quite frankly, having this collaboration with members of the government on this committee is quite disconcerting. If the minister and other members of the government are not serious and are not asking the questions that relate directly to Operation Honour, how are the women in Canada's national armed forces supposed to have any faith in Operation Honour and use it themselves?

**The Chair:** I'll allow it. I would remind you all that we are parliamentarians, and I'll let the minister answer that question.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I'm very happy that you're outraged by this, because we, too, are outraged. We're outraged at the fact that these things are happening in the Canadian Armed Forces. This is why we take this very seriously. As I stated, when this was discovered, immediate action was taken. All Team Canada initiatives have been suspended until we do a thorough review and recommendations are made.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Thank you.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** With regard to information that we had, we want to be more transparent, and we have been. We push out as much information as we can—

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Have any of the military flight crew members been transferred, reassigned or discharged after reporting the sexual assaults committed against them? That's more the norm than the exception.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** One thing I can assure you of is that we will hold people to account when it's been thoroughly investigated. This is a culture aspect that needs to be addressed, and we are doing this. We have taken, with Operation Honour, many steps when it comes to incidents like this and making sure that people are held to account, regardless of position or rank.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** What were the costs of flying out the new military flight crew for the VIP flight back from Greece and Latvia?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Could you repeat that, please?

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** The crew that was assaulted was flown back to Canada on a commercial flight, but somebody had to be on that crew to return the flight from Latvia back to Canada. What were the costs for those flights?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Do you mean the cost for returning our people back to Canada?

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** I mean the cost for having a new crew come from Canada to Latvia to be the flight attendants on the return flight.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** When we're talking about how our people are going to be assigned or where they're moved, I think what we're talking about is how we're looking after our people. When we looked at the situation, our first priority was to make sure that our people were well supported—

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** We have the \$24,000 that it cost to send back the crew that was abused—

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Decisions were made at that time to make sure that our people were looked after.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** —but we don't have the amount that it cost to send a new crew to Latvia to take their place because they were gone.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I don't have the answer to your question. Obviously, they can't—

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** We would like that at a future point in time, within the next week or so, so that we can account for it within our estimates.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I just want to make sure—because of the passion that you have for something like this—that we can all agree. I want to make sure that we give you the confidence and answer your question with regard to how we look after our people. When any incident like this happens, our first action is always to look at how the person is going to be treated. That's the first aspect we look at. The investigation was immediately launched to make sure that we get to the bottom of exactly what happened so that the appropriate action can be taken. That's exactly what's happening now.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** When did—

**The Chair:** That's your time, Mrs. Gallant.

I'm going to give the floor to MP Robillard. The floor is yours.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank the minister for his excellent presentation.

The Communications Security Establishment is the only organization in your portfolio to request funding in the budget, apart from the Department of National Defence.

Can you elaborate on how the CSE will play a key role in the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security announced by our government last month?

• (1155)

[*English*]

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Thank you for your question. I also want to acknowledge the tremendous support you've always given to the vets. I've never forgotten our conversations regarding that.

CSE plays a very important role in giving Canadians confidence that our institutions are well protected when it comes to cyber, and in the important function it has in educating regular Canadians about how to be cyber safe.

Our government has taken cybersecurity extremely seriously, with the recent investments we have made in cyber. Centralizing the cybersecurity aspect of the work of CSE is another step towards making sure that we evolve and continue to have the right resources, capabilities and governance structure to make sure that Canada remains safe.

I am proud that the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security has been virtually launched. The people who have been assigned to it, I can assure you, have the right expertise and are working towards making sure that we are able to continually evolve and that any future threats not only to our institutions but to our democracy are looked at. CSE has been working with Minister Gould and supporting her and her very important work in that regard.

I'll now pass the rest to Shelly, if she wants to expand on the cyber centre.

**Ms. Shelly Bruce (Chief, Communications Security Establishment, Department of National Defence):** Thank you, Minister.

CSE has a unique mandate within the government to provide advice, guidance and services to infrastructure of importance to the government. There's a wide range of target audiences, whether it's small and medium enterprises, critical infrastructure and government systems, or the Canadian citizenry at large.

The minister mentioned that on October 1, we launched the cyber centre. It amalgamated all the operational cyber expertise within the government in a single centre, which is virtual right now but will be substantiated in a physical space within a number of months. In that space, we have established a federal point of presence so that Canadians of all stripes and from whichever constituency they belong to can come and ask for advice and guidance, which is very broadly delivered. It will also allow us to respond more effectively and in a single way to any major incidents the Canadian government might have to manage.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Robillard:** Thank you.

As members of Parliament, we often hear about the difficulties faced by military families. We hear and we know that deployments and all the moves around the country are a challenge.

Can you provide an update on the Seamless Canada initiative? What has been done with regard to the military family resource centres and the relocation policy?

[English]

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Looking after the families of our military members is extremely important. I think we can all agree that regardless of what job you have, if in your family situation at home things aren't good, how can you function at work? Imagine what we ask our Canadian Armed Forces members to do, whether it's in training or operations. That's what this is about: making sure that we look after our families. Relocation is a significant challenge, which I learned when I became a minister. Most of my experience was in the reserves.

We wanted to figure out a way we could support the families. The military did tremendous work bringing together the leadership from the different provinces to talk about the barriers. We had a meeting I was able to attend in Toronto, where we brought representatives from all the provinces to talk about barriers and figure out the things we can actually do. Sometimes it is by simply changing the rules, whether it involves driver's licences or accreditation for various employment. That conversation has started.

One very important aspect we're trying to improve upon is having more doctors. Every time a military family moves, members lose their doctor. We have been working to rectify this. This is one important aspect. We have another meeting coming up in December.

• (1200)

**Mr. Yves Robillard:** Thank you, sir.

**The Chair:** I'll just remind all members that we are here to talk about supplementary (A)s. I have provided some latitude for us because it's a pretty big topic, but I would encourage us all to stay on point.

Thank you for your great questions. Thank you for your answers, Minister.

I'm going to yield the floor to MP Martel.

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Thank you for joining us today.

The Canadian Forces Base Bagotville is located in my constituency. Right now, we're concerned about the Australian F-18 fighter jets that you purchased and that are older than our own CF-18s. I want to know how much money in the budget was allocated to the repair and maintenance of these aircraft.

[English]

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I've had the privilege of visiting Bagotville a number of times—I've seen the tremendous work they do—to get a better sense of what type of future investments are needed, not just on the aircraft, but also for the base; infrastructure plays a very important role when it comes to our NORAD mission.

My discussions very early on looked at the requirements for the number of aircraft needed. First, we needed to focus on the requirements of what we actually needed it for. The previous government said we needed only 65. When we did the analysis, we realized we needed far more than that. That's the reason we have 88. This is good news for Bagotville, in terms of where the future fighter replacement is going.

To do that transition responsibly, for the CF-18s, we are going to be investing \$360 million in that. A price tag is only a price tag. We have to understand why and where it's going. This is not only about modernizing the aircraft for the life extension, but also giving it the capability to make it better.

I'll give you an example. New helmets were purchased by the previous government. It's great to have a proper helmet, but if you don't have the right missiles to do the right targeting, it doesn't provide much value. We're upgrading that to make sure it has the right weapons system. So the current platform.... As we transition into the new fighter that will eventually be selected for the process, we're investing in that so Bagotville has not only the right number of aircraft to carry out the missions, but the upgraded pieces so they can actually do more, because it's not just a NORAD mission. Right now, we have air policing in Romania, and we have approximately 10 fighters in Trident Juncture. That's around 18 aircraft that are doing other missions.

The point is that we are not only looking at the fighter fleet but we're looking at the important aspect of Bagotville. The air task force, the deployment pieces, has gone into Bagotville as well.

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Martel:** Right now, we're talking about the budget. I want to know exactly how much the government paid, in Canadian dollars, for the used aircraft. Since we're talking about the budget, I'm mainly interested in the figures.

[English]

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I'll pass it on to Pat. He'll be able to provide the detailed aspects of that.

[Translation]

**Mr. Patrick Finn (Assistant Deputy Minister, Materiel, Department of National Defence):** Thank you for your question, Mr. Martel. As the minister said, the \$360 million set aside includes many things, such as infrastructure. In the immediate future, there will be a maintenance period to ensure that the aircraft have the same configuration as the Canadian aircraft. The aircraft are approximately the same age and have about the same usage rates to date.

We've set aside about \$160 million for procurement, spare parts, engines, and all upgrades. We want to change certain aspects to ensure that the configuration is identical. The goal is to have 94 completely identical aircraft for the pilots who will fly them.

**Mr. Richard Martel:** Mr. Sajjan, you know that we're facing difficulties with regard to the next generation of pilots. The pilots' motivation is continually declining given that the aircraft aren't up to date in Bagotville. Recruitment is difficult.

Have you considered including funding for pilot training in your budget?

•(1205)

[English]

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** It's an important question in terms of our recruitment. I'm glad you raised it. In fact, even before we made the final decision on the defence policy, we knew that we needed to recruit pilots. The Canadian Armed Forces started recruiting almost immediately.

I'm glad you brought up the issue of morale. Previously, before you became an MP, in the previous government, if you went down that path you would have had not only fewer aircraft to be used but also less investment in the current CF-18s. The aspect of morale is also in the missions that we're using them on. We're actually doing more with them, being responsible around the world. The final aspect of morale is addressing some of the things on retention, and we're tackling those directly as well.

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Martel:** I have one last question.

[English]

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, you're out of time.

I will pass the floor to MP Dzerowicz.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Given the fact that the chair has asked us to be a little more focused on the supplementary estimates, Minister, I want to talk about votes 1 and 5 and the funding that has been asked for to maintain and upgrade federal infrastructure assets as they relate to the north.

I was honoured to take part in the Canadian leaders at sea program. I sailed with the navy from St. John's to Iqaluit. I had a chance to meet with Canadian Armed Forces on the ground in Iqaluit and see some of the work they're doing, the joint training exercises they're involved in. I saw the work they were doing to support the community and to build relations up there. It is absolutely crucial work. I saw how thinly supported they were up there, and I'm delighted to see that there's some additional support planned for them. I also had a chance to meet with the rangers, as well, and see and hear of some of the amazing work they do.

Could you tell us how this funding is essential to maintaining and upgrading the assets we have in the north? Also maybe you could talk a little about the rangers program and its importance.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** Thank you.

The infrastructure in the north, as we start to focus and put greater emphasis on the Arctic tangibly, is very important. The investments we have made, I've seen them tangibly. For example, we have a state-of-the-art refuelling station in Nanisivik that will eventually support our ships going through that area. This is not just about being able to operate there for a little bit, but about being able to sustain those operations. Part of this is the \$2.5 million that's going to Natural Resources.

With the infrastructure we're putting into place, it's also important to look at how we support our rangers better and how we then look at supporting the communities better. As we talk about our sovereignty, sovereignty isn't just a word. It's about how we can

sustain and support our communities in the north. We conduct a lot of exercises. What a lot of the rangers were asking for is not more rangers. They wanted more ranger instructors, and we are now addressing that issue, making sure support is also provided. One aspect of it was rifles, and we're looking at other equipment.

Another thing we will be looking for in the north may not be on the ground but in the air—remote piloting systems, which we eventually will be procuring, and also the satellites that we'll be putting up. We're making sure we have the right structure in place, not just on the ground, but the communication, the command and control structure throughout the north as well.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Great. Thank you so much.

In a completely different area, DND is requesting more than \$24.1 million in funding for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. For what specific purposes will the requested amount be spent? To what extent, if any, is the requested amount needed to fulfill commitments made by Canada at NATO's 2018 Brussels summit?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** The biggest parts of the investments we're making into NATO are obviously with our people and the work they're doing, for example in Latvia, our navy and the air policing that's going on. I have to mention that, even though it's not in NATO, Ukraine is also very important, what our troops are doing there.

On the AWACS program, the investments we have made, the first decision to go back to the AWACS program was about the investment side, and we've done that. We are now also adding additional people into that.

Do you want to talk about the details?

•(1210)

**Ms. Jody Thomas (Deputy Minister, Department of National Defence):** Thank you.

We are transferring to NATO this year \$2.2 million for the 2017-18 security investment program; \$1.5 million for the NATO command structure, their entities and programs; and then the increasing support for ongoing programs is \$20.5 million that is being transferred to NATO.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Great.

Do I have any more time?

**The Chair:** You have 45 seconds for a question and a response. Then we have one quick question from MP Garrison, and then we'll move on.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Maybe I'll just ask a quick question.

DND also requested more than \$17 million of funding for Canadian Armed Forces benefits. What specific health benefits would be financed by the requested funds?

**Mr. Patrick Finn:** I'll pass this over to the CFO.

**Mr. Claude Rochette (Assistant Deputy Minister (Finance) and Chief Financial Officer, Department of National Defence):** This funding is basically for Veterans Affairs, to help them with the contract we have as part of taking care of our members, especially when they are in transition. Basically we have a health contract that is managed by Veterans Affairs on behalf of National Defence, Veterans Affairs and the RCMP. In this case, we had some payments from last year that were not completely paid, so we received the invoice later on. Now we are transferring the funds to pay that invoice for them.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

The last three-minute question goes to MP Garrison.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

The minister will remember that two years ago—I think it was in the supplementary estimates—I brought three of my constituents with Phoenix pay problems to this committee. I know you're not generally the minister in charge, but we still have problems, and Phoenix continues to generate new cases.

I have to say that the case of one of the people who came here two years ago is still not fixed. I also met very recently with a person in my constituency, a civilian worker, who is trying to arrange her retirement. Due to the ongoing problems with the Phoenix pay system, she can't get a statement of what her income will be on retirement, and so, until this is cleared up, she is unable to decide when she will retire.

We know Phoenix is still generating new cases. While I disagree with the chair's narrow focus here, there is actually a line in the supplementary estimates asking for money to address pay administration problems. I'm going to ask again: When can the civilian employees of DND expect to see an end to new cases under Phoenix and a resolution to cases that are sometimes two years old?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** First of all, it is unacceptable. When we talk about looking after our women and men in the Canadian Armed Forces, our civilians in DND are an equal part of that. As I stated before, we made a conscious decision not to put the military on the Phoenix pay system.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Thank you.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** However, I can assure you that we're leaving no stone unturned in our efforts to deal with this. Please give me the information again. We are probably tracking the files.

Any file that is brought forward is going to be dealt with. Nothing is being ignored. That's one thing I want to assure you of, because this is unacceptable and we will leave no stone unturned.

Do you have anything to add on that?

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** I support everything the minister has said. Thank you for the question.

Essentially, 100% of my HR team's time is spent working on Phoenix. We have 59,000 outstanding cases.

Unfortunately, with some of the more complex ones that go back two years, we have done as much as we can in the department. Then they go to the queue in Miramichi to be looked at.

We have now hired 150 people. To resolve our problems, we're re-establishing our compensation units, which we reduced when Phoenix was rolled out.

We're working very closely with our colleagues at PSPC and Treasury Board to do this. We're very active on the deputy minister- and ADM-level committees to try to find a resolution to the problem.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** I accept that the minister and deputy minister have, in good faith, tried to address this problem, but at some point a government has to be judged by the results. I have heard from some people who are concerned that they have become a squeaky wheel over their pay issues. They worry that, because they keep coming back again and again, it will have impacts on their careers.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I can assure you that it will not. In fact, we encourage anybody to come up if they have any concerns.

It's not just dealing with the current thing. It's a reminder to anybody in any future governments that when you start to look at trying to save money, you have to look at what the repercussions might be down the road. This is something we take very seriously.

Now, when we look at our defence policy and the implementation piece to it, with anything we do—any transition to a new software program—we make sure that we have the right resources in place to manage that, so that our people do not ever get left behind. The pension cheques were a big issue for us in the past. We have now brought that down.

This is something we'll have to keep working on very hard.

•(1215)

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Thank you.

Mr. Bezan, go ahead.

**Mr. James Bezan:** On a point of order, earlier in my questioning of the minister about vote 5a and that it was underfunded by \$2.5 billion, as well as pensions being under by \$2.2 billion, I believe the minister said there's going to be zero lapsed funding. I'd like him to provide that information to the committee.

I'm looking at last year, the 2017-18 public accounts, page 407, where a column called "Lapsed" funding shows a lapse of \$677 million.

**The Chair:** Minister, go ahead.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** With what you're referring to in terms of the \$2.5 billion and also the lapse, we have not only showed a demonstration of reducing our lapses, but we don't have that.... See, if we want to go—

**Mr. James Bezan:** But it's actually called, by the definition of the Government of Canada, under public accounts—

**The Chair:** This is not a point of order. This is debate.

**Mr. James Bezan:** No, but I asked for that information.

**The Chair:** Fair enough.

**Mr. James Bezan:** He said zero.

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** I'm happy to answer those questions.

The \$677 million was what we carried forward last year in vote 1. That allows us to open the year. You can't carry forward zero. There is an expectation that we will have funds to open the books on day one, April 1.

Last year, we did not spend about \$2.2 billion in vote 5. This year, we have that down to about \$1.3 billion. At this point in the year, we are working toward reducing it below \$1 billion by March 31.

Some of that is efficiencies. We've saved about \$700 million on projects, and that's really good news. We've achieved and delivered the project for less money than we anticipated. That's in the \$2.2 billion that you referenced.

The rest of it is projects that we are working to move. We're working with our colleagues at Treasury Board, PSPC, and PCO to move money and projects through the system more quickly. We're looking at our internal processes, as I said previously, to increase the speed with which smaller, less risky, less expensive projects can move through the defence system.

The CFO, my senior associate deputy minister, and the vice chief of the defence staff are running a program where they bring forward projects and move them through the system more quickly. They reduce the number of steps in the system, not to reduce the oversight, but to ensure that we don't let things sit for too long in the bureaucracy, that is, National Defence.

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan:** I also want to say, on a previous point we were talking about, that when you don't have enough resources to move those projects forward, this is what we're dealing with from the past.

My question to you, Mr. Bezan, is this: When you were parliamentary secretary and got rid of all those people in procurement, did you look at the future and how to spend that money? That's what we're dealing with now.

We are not only trying to increase the spending of more money and deliver for our people, but we have to now build the right structure in place to be able to deliver on that. It's a very complex task that we're asking of folks. I would like to thank them for the work they do on this, plus the aspects in terms of the carry-over.

What was the carry-over during the time when you were parliamentary secretary? How much money went back that had to go to balance the false budget you wanted to do on the backs of the military?

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Minister, thank you very much for your time. This is important funding that our military needs. I also want to thank you for your service to Canada.

I'm going to suspend so the minister can depart.

•(1215) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

•(1220)

**The Chair:** Thank you, everyone, for sticking around to finish off the rest of this hour talking about supplementary (A)s.

I'm going to turn the floor over to Mr. Spengemann, for the first seven-minute question.

**Mr. Sven Spengemann:** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, everyone, for remaining with us for the additional time.

I want to circle back to the discussion we had with Minister Sajjan on our mission to the UN headquarters and the opportunity to engage with you in a conversation on the details of UN peacekeeping and peace support operations.

Would you give the committee your view on the implications of the Secretary-General's reforms, including the action for peacekeeping, the new peace support operations, the merger of the Department of Political Affairs with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and in the context of the estimates, the impact that will have for our thinking about peace operations as we go forward?

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** Thank you very much for the question. I'm happy to answer, and if the VCDS would like to weight in, I would certainly welcome that.

•(1225)

**Mr. Sven Spengemann:** Yes.

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** We welcome the reforms at the UN. The chief of the defence staff and I went to visit the UN in the spring, and I had quite a significant discussion about the reforms. It is interesting that they are aligning operations and policy, the two separate entities of the peace support operations, in order to facilitate getting troops on the ground, to move forward with operations and to make the process simpler. It's daunting to try to move an operation through the UN, and we're very supportive of what they are doing.

We're very proud of the work that's being done in Mali. We were able to move from the word go to being on the ground very quickly. I think that's a testament to the Canadian Armed Forces' agility and willingness to deploy as required.

Any reform within the UN that reduces the bureaucracy, reduces the time and reduces the complexity is a positive thing, from where we sit.

**LGen Paul Wynnnyk:** Just to add very briefly to what the deputy minister mentioned, I think you are aware that as part of our permanent mission in New York we have a brigadier-general there who facilitates that planning. This will pick up the pace once again, as the deputy minister noted, to allow us to do tighter planning cycles and better contingency planning, so I think it's quite positive.

**Mr. Sven Spengemann:** Operationally, how would the merger of the political and peacekeeping operational unit at the UN reflect itself in the work we do here, with respect to the foreign policy questions and the defence questions? Is that line now becoming more fluid? Is there even greater interdisciplinarity and greater departmental collaboration, especially in those cases where people are expecting early and quick action?

Many of us are getting emails from our constituents on the situation in Yemen. Hopefully, I'm going to have time to ask you a bit more broadly about the Middle East.



However, regarding this merger of political and peacekeeping ops at the UN, are there direct implications for how we structure ourselves here in Ottawa?

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** I actually think they are more reflecting our structure here.

**Mr. Sven Spengemann:** Okay.

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** Any time we speak to the UN, we are hand in glove with the Department of Foreign Affairs, Global Affairs Canada. We do nothing without the Foreign Affairs direction, the armed forces policy team and, of course, the foreign policy experts from Global Affairs.

We commit and speak to the UN together. We're now speaking to the same people in the same room. Their structure reflects our structure.

**Mr. Sven Spengemann:** Excellent. That's very good news. Thank you for putting that on the record.

I would like to go back to the question I asked earlier on the allotment of \$53.8 million to the Department of Foreign Affairs by DND, the transfer in the supplementaries. From a defence perspective, I'd like to ask for your view on the Middle East, as it currently stands, and what evolutionary trajectories you see when you look at Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya and the constellation of powers around that. How does that affect your thinking, in terms of advance planning for potential Canadian support of peace operations in the Middle East?

As an adjunct to that question, do you see an opportunity for us to be active not only in Mali, but potentially in other future missions, such as Yemen, if and when the time is right for that?

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** Of course, in the Department of National Defence, we work with Foreign Affairs on the foreign policy direction they would like the Canadian Armed Forces to take. It goes without saying that we are very concerned about the situation in the Middle East, with Syria and Yemen of profound concern. Obviously, the photos that are coming out of Yemen are disturbing Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

We don't assert the direction that the Canadian Armed Forces should take in the operations. Of course, we await government direction and are ready to respond as required.

**Mr. Sven Spengemann:** I'd like to shift gears for a minute and ask you about the well-being of members of the armed forces and also our veterans. At the introductory stage of this meeting, we made reference to the fact that we're entering Veterans' Week and that we are honouring the lives and service of our veterans.

Can you tell us about the joint suicide prevention strategy of the armed forces? Yesterday here on Parliament Hill we unveiled the maquette of Lieutenant-Colonel Sam Sharpe. Injuries sustained in battle are not always visible. Can you tell us what the armed forces are doing on this very pressing issue of suicide prevention?

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** I'd be very pleased to ask the commander of military personnel, General Lamarre, to speak to the suicide prevention strategy.

I'll preface it by saying it is joint with Veterans Affairs Canada. It is a ground-breaking document whereby we combine operational

response, policy and science to try to understand the cultural tragedy that is suicide. We don't pretend we have all the answers. We are trying to understand, support and prevent, but I'll turn it over to General Lamarre.

• (1230)

**Lieutenant-General Charles Lamarre (Commander, Military Personnel Command, Department of National Defence):** Thank you, Deputy Minister.

The joint suicide prevention strategy was issued a year ago. Since that time, the strategy has become a number of plans and concrete actions that are moving forward to help us deal with the situation.

First of all, we have 37 medical clinics across Canada, 31 of which are equipped with their own mental health professionals. Some of them are too small for that. However, we also have a network of over 4,000 physicians and mental health specialists in all fields and aspects, who are available to help our people specifically deal with that.

On top of that, we partner with various organizations—not only Veterans Affairs Canada, but outside organizations—to specifically address how we reduce the stigma of seeking help when you're dealing with mental health.

These put an emphasis on how we want to prevent suicide: training for individuals, resilience training for all sorts of specialist trades that are perhaps more exposed to things, but first and foremost making sure that care is available for the members and for their families in referring them to the right authorities and the right support networks to assist them along the way.

**Mr. Sven Spengemann:** Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

MP Bezan, go ahead.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Thank you, Chair.

I want to touch quickly on the order for a new Arctic offshore patrol ship. My understanding from the media is that it's \$800 million.

Is that substantially more than the cost of the ones in production right now?

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** We're very pleased this ship was ordered for the Royal Canadian Navy. As you know—

**Mr. James Bezan:** It exercises the option that was in the original contract.

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** It does, and it is very good news. ADM Pat Finn will get into the details for you, but as you know, as we're building ships, the costs decline as we go down the line of ships. Market variables play a role; the cost of steel is a prime example. That cost is an estimate at this time, but Pat can give you the details.

**Mr. Patrick Finn:** One of the things we're trying to do through ship six and beyond is the approach to the strategy, in this case how we take a more business approach to how we're building ships through the AOPS and into the surface combatants.

To your question, the sixth ship is approximately \$400 million, which is continuing to see a reduction ship over ship in real dollars. A decision was made to extend the build period. We're going to make a point of stretching out the overall program for two years so we can maintain workforce and continuity in the yard.

Why is that? As we've implemented this strategy on both coasts and other work that we've done, a huge cost driver for us is labour and what the industry calls "green labour", which is getting a workforce up and running in the context of a shipyard. We put in \$150 million to wilfully stretch out the work, but at significant savings, to maintain the workforce for surface combatants.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Let me get this straight. Is the fifth ship estimated at \$400 million?

**Mr. Patrick Finn:** The fifth ship is more than \$400 million. The sixth ship is approximately \$400 million, so it is lower in cost, but we're stretching out the whole program by an extra two years.

**Mr. James Bezan:** That's adding cost to it, so if it's around \$400 million per ship, and if \$800 million is going to be the total cost of the last ship, why don't we just build two?

**Mr. Patrick Finn:** We're just delivering the first ship. We're moving to the drumbeat of a ship a year. It's drawing cost in ships two through six. The point is that, in the analysis we've done, not taking action, the delay in surface combatants, and the additional cost of green labour would be three-quarters of a billion dollars to \$1 billion. We're trying to be much more rational in our strategy, in how we bring in and how we use the industry.

The additional \$250 million does not go to the yard, so we're extending. There are project costs, and there are contingencies and other things we're setting aside, such as economic price adjustments around steel, and what could happen to labour costs. We create a reserve, which is the normal practice and what we do. For us, the \$800 million is the overall project versus the contract.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Thank you.

I'm going to switch gears, to Operation Impact. When we were working alongside the Kurdish peshmerga, we bought up some weapons that were going to be transferred to the Kurds, about a year and a half ago. They included things such as anti-tank missiles, sniper rifles, mortar systems and rocket-propelled grenades. What happened to that stock of weapons? They were stored in Jordan and in Montreal. Were they ever repurposed, or are they still collecting dust?

• (1235)

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** They have not been repurposed, to my knowledge.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Is there any money in the budget here to continue to work with and train the peshmerga in dealing with ISIS and the security in the region, under Operation Impact?

**LGen Paul Wynnyk:** I'm not aware of anything in that regard. The money that's allocated for it is toward the key contributions of the aircraft—the Polaris, the Hercules and the Griffon; the All Source Intelligence Centre; the role 2 hospital; the engineers, the arms instructors and the special operations task force. It's to the overall mission contribution thus far.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Thank you, General.

When you look at Operation Unifier—General Wynnyk, you and I are very familiar with this of course, as proud Ukrainian Canadians—the Ukrainians have been asking for lethal weapons, and we have purchased some that are making their way to Ukraine.

Are there any thoughts of helping Ukraine deal with the heavy tanks that are in Donbass and the mortar fire they're encountering on a daily basis? Is there more Canada can do to provide them with the kinetic capability to defend their territory?

**LGen Paul Wynnyk:** Thus far, as you're aware, the money that's allocated to the mission is toward collective combat and leadership training—the training to actually engage in that area. As I think you're aware, we've contributed over \$16 million up to this point in non-lethal military equipment, which is to be delivered by the end of March 2019.

I just spoke to the deputy minister of defence of Ukraine about two weeks ago, and I can assure you that he was extremely pleased with the training they were getting. He was saying it was having a marked impact on their struggle at this time.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Thanks. We are very proud of our troops who have been over there doing training that has helped save lives, for sure.

One of the things we're dealing with in Op Unifier, of course, is the Russian cyberwarfare, the misinformation campaigns and the entire hybrid war they are conducting in Donbass and Crimea. Are we providing any assistance in dealing with misinformation and cyberwarfare? What are we ourselves to learn from it, as Russia increases its activities in Donbass?

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** I think we'll ask the chief of the CSE to respond.

**Ms. Shelly Bruce:** The CSE works very closely with the Canadian military, supporting their missions abroad. We are uniquely placed, with a mandate that looks at monitoring foreign threats, as well as cybersecurity advice and guidance. In that sense, we are very much focused on looking at the risks and threats to the mission, and we provide advice and guidance to the Canadian Armed Forces.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

MP Garrison, go ahead.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

One of the items in the supplementary estimates deals with the assessment, management and remediation of contaminated sites. My question is, does this include removal of asbestos from Canadian Forces bases, and what progress is being made?

I know we've had some severe problems with asbestos in some of the older buildings at CFB Esquimalt, especially classroom buildings. I know it extends across departments, but does this item include removal of asbestos in buildings on bases, or is that covered somewhere else?

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** I believe it's covered somewhere else, but we have the ADM of infrastructure here to respond to your questions.

**Mr. Rob Chambers (Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Infrastructure and Environment, Department of National Defence):** It does not include asbestos removal.

We have a multipronged strategy in place to deal with asbestos. Primarily, when it's stable and sealed off, we don't like to mess with it if we can help it. That's a fairly standard industry practice. We would deal with that on an as-required basis, mostly through our maintenance and repair budgets at that local level.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Budgets wouldn't be a major obstacle in dealing with asbestos, then. It would be a question of assessing specific hazards and seeing if they need remediation.

**Mr. Rob Chambers:** Yes. We always take a health and safety approach, obviously, first and foremost. Funding would not be an issue, given that, as I said, we don't like to mess with it if we don't have to.

• (1240)

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Great, thanks.

My colleague Mr. Fisher raised the question of trucks, and he asked some of the questions that I'm going to ask about trucks. Certainly I know that people in the Canadian Forces are quite happy to have new logistics trucks being delivered, and the standard jokes will hopefully go to the past: "Is this a military parade or is this a museum parade?" Let's hope we get beyond that.

Can you tell me something about where these trucks are being produced and the state of contracts? I understand it's been phased, because there are lots of trucks needed, and I believe we're getting close to finishing a phase. Will there be new contract competitions for more trucks?

**Mr. Patrick Finn:** Thank you, sir, for the question.

For the specific trucks we're talking about, the medium support vehicle system, as you indicate, this is the last of the phases. We did a military off-the-shelf variant some years ago, fully delivered for domestic operations. This particular variant is coming out of Mack Defense, but the final work and delivery is done by a company called Prevost in Quebec. You may recognize it from buses and other things that they do.

This particular variant is an expeditionary vehicle, so we can have an armoured cab. All the vehicles have modules that go on the back, so it's fairly complex in the context of vehicles. There are many variants, from dental labs and medical labs to workshops and transportation. It's a fairly complex system. As you indicate, this is the fourth phase. We're well into delivery now—about 1,500 vehicles to come in the next 18 months or so.

We'll then move on to some other things, and there are a number of vehicles that are more traditional, such as the commercial pattern vehicles you would recognize. We bought that on an ongoing basis. In fact, there's some money in the supplementary estimates that's given to the army, navy, air force and others to do a recapitalization of vehicles. We have a fairly large undertaking with my colleagues in Infrastructure and Environment on greening commercial pattern vehicles.

The next big one will be a competition for what's called the logistics vehicle modernization. These speak much more to, again, the older trucks. Our priority has been all the combat vehicles—light armoured vehicles, tactical armoured patrol vehicles, Leopard 2s. We've now done these medium support vehicles.

Moving into the logistics vehicle modernization that we'll be undertaking, we're looking at approximately \$2 billion, from heavy vehicles—you can imagine the kind of vehicles you need for moving tanks around—all the way down to some of the vehicles you'd recognize, which we've had for a very long time. As you indicate, a number of them are overdue for replacement. Through "Strong, Secure, Engaged", we have a drumbeat now to go through the rest of those, sir.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Will they be competing for a single large contract, or will there be separate contracts for different vehicles within that range?

**Mr. Patrick Finn:** With the specific project for logistics vehicle modernization, we've looked at a couple of options and we've landed on one competition. It could beget a number of separate contracts, though, to look at a fleet of them.

We're about to enter what we call the definition phase, where we'll have more engagement with industry. In some of our other ones, where we've been quite successful, we pre-qualify a series of quite capable companies that deliver this, with the usual offset policy so the industrial and technological benefits will apply. For whatever is not done in Canada, per value, there will have to be an equivalent amount of work found here, and other work will be done as well, sir.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Would companies like General Dynamics, which is producing the LAVs for export to Saudi Arabia, be potential bidders on these kinds of contracts?

**Mr. Patrick Finn:** Really, it's up to them, I would say. We're working with the General Dynamics Land Systems. They're also doing work for us. They are updating the last of our light armoured vehicles. We've advanced a fair bit of that work through next year, some in-service support contracts. It is really up to them what they want to do, whether it's the plant in London or otherwise, but absolutely, this would be open to people who produce those types of vehicles. It would be up to them to determine what role they might want to play in this, sir.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Will this contract be different from some of the other procurements—say, for ships, where you establish qualified bidders? Would this be a more open competition?

**Mr. Patrick Finn:** For ships, competition was done for the shipyards, which resulted in the umbrella agreements, as you know. If you look at the model we're doing for future fighters, I think the big thing is that we want to make sure we establish value for money and have partners who can really deliver this in time and at a reasonable price.

What we have done with fighters and other things, for example, is what we call an invitation to qualify. It's pretty straightforward, and we would likely do something similar. It's completely open—if you can reach the benchmark of qualification, you'd be in that pool. We do that so that we can really have a detailed dialogue with the companies that are really close in this line of work, sir.

• (1245)

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** It's my hope that the contracts with Saudi Arabia will be cancelled. There's a need to make sure there is work available that would replace those if we lost that. Thank you for that answer.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

MP Fisher, go ahead.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks, folks, for sticking around and putting up with us for another hour.

Could the deputy minister elaborate on comments made earlier regarding the Team Canada flight and the Department of National Defence's public affairs? There was a lot of back and forth when the minister was here, and I didn't really get a clear answer.

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** Thank you very much for the question. I'm pleased to answer it.

The Team Canada situation is very much regrettable, but I would like to get on the record—and I appreciate the chance to do so—that there was no attempt to mislead by my ADM of public affairs, Chris Henderson, or by the minister's spokesperson, Byrne Furlong. Information was released as it became available. Two investigations have been done, which revealed more information, and we ensured that it was released. In fact, the investigations have been made public, and the chief of the defence staff responded formally to it.

We are now doing an end-to-end review by the ADM of review services to look at just what the process is for these kinds of flights when the armed forces host or take people overseas on armed forces aircraft to take part in this kind of event. The inference that there was an attempt to mislead is unfortunate, but it is not true. As information became available, we corrected the record. We answered all the questions that were asked. The information came out in stages; there's absolutely no doubt. That's because information became....

We knew what we knew when we knew it, and we made it public.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you for that.

I think another member may have touched on the NATO money, the \$24.1 million for NATO. Could you elaborate on that? Is it operational funding? Tell me exactly how that is going to be spent. As a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, I'm interested in our relationship in that regard.

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** We have an expert on NATO funding in our CFO, so I'll ask him to answer the question.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** I was hoping he'd get to speak.

**Mr. Claude Rochette:** Thank you very much for your question, sir.

I'll just explain NATO funding a bit. We have three different budgets with NATO. We contribute, normally, approximately \$140 million a year as part of our contribution. We are the sixth largest contributor among the 29 countries in NATO.

NATO has a different fiscal year. Their fiscal year is September to August. Our fiscal year is from April to March. It happens, once in a while, that they have invoices that we plan to spend in our fiscal year that they have delayed and that occur in the following fiscal year. This is the case with that \$24 million. It was for different infrastructure projects in NATO.

The first one was what they call the NATO command structure in space and that program. They had \$1.5 million there. There was also a project by Norway that was delayed a bit, and the invoice came to

NATO a bit later. That was another small amount we had to pay. They also had ongoing projects for \$20.5 million. All that together is that \$24 million.

This year, we still have the \$140 million, plus the \$24 million carried forward from last year. We will profile it this year. This year, for NATO, we have \$164 million.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you.

Within “Strong, Secure, Engaged”, there's a program called innovation for defence excellence and security. Could you give me an update, Deputy Minister, on where we are today in this program? The supplementaries include \$2.4 million for funding for the program. Can you elaborate on what that is used for and where we are in rolling out that program?

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** Thank you.

IDEaS is one of the shining stars of “Strong, Secure, Engaged”. We're very proud of it. It has taken off in a way that none of us could have imagined at its inception. We're using the money to fund the challenges that have already been announced. It's \$1.6 billion dollars over 20 years. It's \$2.5 million this year to fund the competitive projects.

The kinds of things we're looking at are things like improving gender diversity, a study to help us do that. The University of Waterloo is doing it. The University of Ottawa is looking at a multi-stage approach to addressing sex disparities in musculoskeletal injuries in military operators. We go from the very big to the very specific in the IDEaS program. We have an AI project on smart recruiting using deep learning.

The money requested in this year's supplementary (A)s is to fund those challenges. We put challenges out four times a year, and we're overwhelmed by the response to them. It is a huge success.

● (1250)

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** When you get that, how do you let the success of those projects inform your future decisions?

**Ms. Jody Thomas:** At the ADM level, the three-star generals and admirals and the ADMs in the department put forward challenges for problems they need solved. It is either a study to help inform a next step in something, or it is a challenge to help procurement. We are doing these with very specific end goals, and it just depends on the nature of the challenge. ADM Pat Finn, in materiel, would use a challenge to help him procure so he can buy and try something. It allows us to test a product or several products and decide which one we're going to procure. Instead of saying we need a specific boot, we see which boot works.

Some of them, which are being run by the chief of military personnel, through the S and T program, are to help inform how we recruit, how we retain and how we improve living conditions for members of the armed forces. Every challenge has an end goal; it just depends on the nature of the challenge.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Just following up on that, maybe I'll go to Pat for a quick second, then.

This is new. This is very new and it is groundbreaking stuff. I think this is unique, but perhaps it's not. Perhaps you know whether this is unique in the world or not. With this program, have you gone far enough yet in the rollout to be able to put this, so to say, on the street?

**Mr. Patrick Finn:** We have not gone that far yet. We're at the initial stages. The whole point is to really start at the low level and say, here is the problem. A classic one we put out recently is for gas masks and facial hair. It sounds simple, but it has actually been a problem for a long time, such that operationally we don't allow that. As the minister often talks about recruiting more people, it's about being able to do something like that. We've just started it. We've put it out. We may be some years away.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** It's very exciting.

**Mr. Patrick Finn:** It is exciting.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Given the time we have left, I can give the floor to MP Dzerowicz to do a quick couple of questions, maybe four or five minutes, and then she had a notice of motion she wanted to bring up. I have undertaken to allow her to do that. I'm going to give the floor to her, and then we'll need a couple of minutes, administratively, to vote.

The last question will go to you, MP Dzerowicz.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Thank you so much, Mr. Chair.

I do want to give notice of motion. I'd like to read it into the record, if that's okay:

That in relation to its study on diversity in the Armed Forces and the motion adopted on Tuesday, September 18, 2018, the Committee broaden the scope of its enquiry to include no fewer than 4 meetings to study the issue of extremists and racist attitudes and beliefs within the Canadian Armed Forces, including their impact on recruitment, morale, and operational effectiveness and that the Committee report its findings to the House.

**The Chair:** Okay. The floor is yours for the remainder of your time.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Thank you so much.

One topic that is quite du jour is cybersecurity. It's something that I know is becoming much more part of our common discourse.

I believe that the Communications Security Establishment has asked for more funding as part of the supplementary estimates. Can you tell me what role the CSE is going to play in the Centre for Cyber Security, which was announced last month? Also, in general, how are we trying to beef up our cybersecurity operations?

**Ms. Shelly Bruce:** Thank you for your question.

As I mentioned before, the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security is actually the amalgamation of all the operational expertise from across the government into a central branch. That branch actually reports inside CSE, so what used to be our IT security branch has now been augmented and will have about 750 people who are focused on being and promoting what the cyber centre can deliver for Canadians. There are many foundations that exist. We've been working on protecting Canadians' information for 70 years, but as you know, the challenges are many in terms of the technological changes that are before us, as well as the threats that are evolving.

The focus of the cyber centre will be to continue to provide advice, guidance and services to raise Canada's cybersecurity bar for Canadians, all the way through to critical infrastructure owners and operators. It will also be to raise awareness. We just finished a month-long cybersecurity awareness campaign, which included everything from being aware of what you're buying and what kinds of apps you're loading onto your phone all the way through to a fake news panel, so that people could start to appreciate a bit more how to be discriminating about the sources of information they're ingesting, whether in the democratic institution space and elections, or in their normal day-to-day business. There was one held for adults and also one for children. There's a big corporate social outreach program that is really looking at how to raise the technical quotient and the cybersecurity quotient amongst Canadians.

We do monitor all Government of Canada websites with our own sensing system, so we're able to respond very quickly when there are incidents and events. We are also taking some of the tools that we're developing in-house, based on the expertise that we have, and putting them out there for the public. We recently released something called "Assemblyline", which has been picked up thousands of times around the world. It's open-source software now. Banks in Europe are using it as one of their main lines of defence.

We are really working on trying to make Canada a more cybersecure, robust and resilient environment. There is a bill that is in the Senate now for second reading, Bill C-59, which would add some new authorities to CSE's mandate to allow us to take action if we see activity.

•(1255)

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Great. Thank you.

How much time do I have left, please?

**The Chair:** You have a minute.

**LGen Paul Wynnyk:** Could I just add a bit to that question from the military capability side?

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Of course.

**LGen Paul Wynnyk:** Shelly has spoken about the civilian capability, but it's quite an exciting time in the Canadian Armed Forces right now. We've actually set up a cyber operator occupation, which is huge; and we're in the process of filling that right now with individuals who will work very closely with CSE. That fusion and co-operation is developing. As I said, it's a new occupation, and we're attracting a lot of talent right now.

Thank you.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay, thank you. That essentially burns up the rest of our time.

We're going to have a minute or two here to vote on the estimates.

Does anybody want...?

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Do you want me to move the motion, the estimates?

**The Chair:** No.

I just heard some rumblings over there that somebody wanted a recorded vote. If that's the case, now's the time.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Yes, I would like a recorded vote.

**The Chair:** We'll have a recorded vote.

COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY ESTABLISHMENT  
Vote 1a—Program expenditures.....\$1,923,668

(Vote 1a agreed to: yeas 6; nays 3)

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE  
Vote 1a—Operating expenditures.....\$56,276,610  
Vote 5a—Capital expenditures.....\$313,034,460  
Vote 10a—Grants and contributions.....\$24,183,114  
Vote 15a—Debt write-off.....\$1  
Vote 20a—Debt forgiveness.....\$1

(Votes 1a, 5a, 10a, 15a and 20a agreed to: yeas 6; nays 3)

**The Chair:** Shall I report vote 1a under Communications Security Establishment and votes 1a, 5a, 10a, 15a and 20a under Department of National Defence to the House?

(Motion agreed to: yeas 6; nays 3)

**The Chair:** Thank you, all, for your time today.

Thank you, all, for your service to Canada.

The meeting is adjourned.

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