



PUBLIC AFFAIRS GUIDANCE (PAG): 2024 NATIONAL VETERANS' WEEK SPEAKERS PROGRAM

Authority

1. This Public Affairs Guidance (PAG) is issued under the authority of the Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Affairs.

Situation

2. During Veterans' Week (VW), from November 5 to 11, Canadians take a moment to remember our veterans and to honour those who made the ultimate sacrifice.
3. In coordination with the lead agency for Veterans' Week, Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), the Department of National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces' (DND/CAF) support VW in various ways, such as the National Veterans' Week Speakers Program (NVWSP), which honours veterans for their service and sacrifice, and also recognizes current CAF members for their contributions.
4. Remembrance Day messaging will recognize the outstanding contributions of CAF members and veterans in defending peace, security, and Canadian values during domestic and international operations, both past and present.
5. A proactive, collaborative, and sustained communications approach is recommended throughout Veterans' Week, with a considerable increase in tempo on November 11 to mark Remembrance Day. The goal for the DND/CAF teams is to encourage regular active participation and coordination as much as possible.

Purpose

6. This PAG applies to all DND/CAF personnel, particularly those involved in providing support to the coordination of requests for CAF speakers by the public in either a direct or supporting role. It is intended to increase understanding of the NVWSP among public affairs practitioners in Level 1 organizations (L1s) and the Environmental Commands (ECS) and to outline expectations for their participation in the program.
7. The NVWSP provides a coordinated approach while promoting a similar message as the lead department - VAC – for maximum CAF visibility at learning institutions and community organizations across Canada.

Background

8. The NVWSP aims to recognize Canadian veterans, as well as to acknowledge the contributions of CAF members in defending peace, security, and Canadian values during domestic and international operations, while continuing to strengthen DND/CAF's relationship with Canadians.

9. In 2023, the NVWSP received 1,960 requests for presentations (in-person or virtual), of which 1,664 were filled (84%). The program also received 491 requests for the CAF speaker videos. The overall audience reach is estimated at over 1.2 million Canadians.
10. Reference E, CANFORGEN, and Reference F, the CDS Tasking Order, are the main supporting documents to this PAG.

Guidance

11. The key to the success of this program is the full participation of currently serving CAF members from the Regular and Reserve Forces. The goals of this program are compatible with Reference I, as some of the young Canadians reached through this activity may become the leaders of the future.
12. All Level 1 organizations will:
 - a. Promote the program to their CAF members; and
 - b. Support CAF members in participating in VW speaking opportunities.
13. If not actively engaged in readiness activities, Regular and Reserve Forces members are encouraged to participate in the program, as positive interaction with the Canadian public is essential in demonstrating the CAF as an employer of choice.
14. CAF members of all ranks and levels are encouraged to register as a NVWSP speaker, once they have approval from their supervisor, through an online registration form available from the CAF resource page (<https://apps.forces.gc.ca/en/vet/speaker/index.asp>).

Responsibilities / Authorities

15. In line with the CDS Tasking Order and CANFORGEN, the CAF will support the 2024 NVWSP in the following ways:
 - a. CAF members will be encouraged to register as a speaker to help fill the requests received through the NVWSP website for in-person and/or live virtual presentations.
 - b. CAF members will be encouraged to participate in the CAF speaker video series. Chosen candidates will work with local image technicians to record the NVWSP video scripts. These recordings will then be sent to ADM(PA) for final production and shared with organizations that make a request through the NVWSP website.
16. RCN/CA/RCAF/VCD (CJCR), CJOC (JTF-N) and MPC (CFB Borden) will:
 - a. Identify a National Office of Primary Interest (OPI) working group member who is expected to:
 - i. Assist DIAE in identifying CAF speakers at all ranks to participate in the CAF speaker videos and for presentation requests with high visibility.
 - ii. Provide guidance to the national coordinator from their respective commands and provide support for their regional points of contact (POC); and
 - iii. Consolidate all the tracking templates prepared by their respective POC, with all speaking engagements undertaken by their L1/Command, and provide to DNDRemembrance.SouvenirMDN@forces.gc.ca no later than 5 December 2024.
17. RCN/CA/RCAF will:
 - a. Identify a primary POC from operational teams, to represent each base, wing, and unit across the country including reserve units. CA organizations will identify at least two POCs for each Division, along with a POC at the Brigade level due to their size and scope.

- b. These POCs will:
 - i. Respond to all requests received directly from organizations, and as required, inform them of options available to them from the 2023 program;
 - ii. Inform the NVWSP national coordinator and their National Office OPI immediately of evolving situations that require escalation within their chain of command, such as difficulty in filling requests;
 - iii. Assist speakers at all ranks in preparing for their presentations by providing them with presentation guidelines and products developed by DIAE;
 - iv. Encourage more experienced senior CAF members to mentor junior members in the role of CAF speaker for the NVWSP;
 - v. Record each request and maintain records of activities using the tracking template supplied by DIAE; and
 - vi. Provide the completed tracking template to their respective command OPI by 28 November 2024.

18. All CAF NVWSP speakers will:

- a. Obtain supervisors' approval for all VW speaking engagements prior to accepting them; and
- b. Inform the national coordinator and their respective POC, via e-mail, of any speaking engagements – virtual and in-person – they have accepted, including written permission from their chain of command to participate.

19. All image technicians will:

- a. Aid CAF speakers in recording their presentations for the CAF speaker video series, if required; and
- b. Aid CAF speakers who recorded footage for the CAF speaker videos series in uploading their recordings, if required.

20. All Public Affairs officers will:

- a. Aid CAF speakers in presenting and recording their presentations, if required;
- b. Aid POCs at their base/wing/unit identify speakers, if required; and
- c. Promote the NVWSP and VAC activities on their social media channels, if deemed appropriate, in line with the NVWSP 2024 social media calendar.

Points of Contact

21. Questions, comments or concerns may be addressed to Mélodie Gratton, at 1-833-223-8322 or DNDRemembrance.SouvenirMDN@forces.gc.ca.

References:

- A. DAOD 2008-0, Public Affairs
- B. Policy on Communications and Federal Identity of the Government of Canada
- C. Directive on the Management of Communications of the Government of Canada
- D. DND and CAF Public Affairs Strategy 2018-2020, March 2018
- E. CANFORGEN for National Veterans' Week Speakers Program, 5 to 11 November 2024
- F. CDS Tasking Order for National Veterans' Week Speakers Program, 5 to 11 November 2024
- G. National Veterans' Week Speakers Program Engagement Plan 2024
- H. CDS Planning Directive for CAF Reconstitution