



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

---

# Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs

EVIDENCE

**NUMBER 035**

Monday, February 6, 2023

---

Chair: Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg





## Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs

Monday, February 6, 2023

• (1545)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair (Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.)):** I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting No. 35 of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format, pursuant to the House order of June 23, 2022. Members may participate in person or via the Zoom application.

To ensure an orderly meeting, I have a few instructions to give.

Before you speak, please wait for me to recognize you by name. I also ask committee members to name the person they are addressing when they ask questions. I would remind you that all comments should be addressed through the chair.

In accordance with our routine motion, I wish to inform the committee that the witnesses completed the required connection testing prior to the meeting.

With that, we can welcome our witnesses, starting with thanking them for participating.

First, we have retired Maj. André Thivierge, co-founder and co-chair of the Ottawa Veterans Task Force.

Next, from the GardaWorld Security Corporation, we have Jean-Luc Meunier, president and chief operating officer, security services, Canada, with Colleen Arnold, vice-president, corporate affairs, and Simon Bernier, national director, innovation and technologies.

Our final witness, from the National Association of Career Colleges, is Michael Sangster, chief executive officer.

I will give each group the opportunity to give a five-minute opening presentation. I would ask that they look at me from time to time so I can signal them when their speaking time is up.

Mr. Thivierge, the floor is yours for the next five minutes.

**Mr. André Thivierge (Co-Founder and Co-Chair, Major (Retired), City of Ottawa Veterans Task Force):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Honourable members, I want to thank you for allowing me to tell you about my experience in relation to the support offered to veterans.

• (1555)

[*English*]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** I have a point of order, Chair.

I'm so sorry to interrupt, but we're hearing from the interpreters that the sound isn't right.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** You can continue, Mr. Thivierge. We will make sure that the interpretation is working properly.

**Mr. André Thivierge:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Every year, thousands of military personnel make the transition from military to civilian life.

Some of them will embark on a second career.

**The Chair:** Mr. Thivierge, forgive me for interrupting you, but we are in the process of fixing some little connection problems.

We will come back to you after hearing the witnesses who are in the room. That will give the technicians time to fix the interpretation problems.

I'm sorry for this hold-up. However, you will start over with five minutes for your presentation.

**Mr. André Thivierge:** That's fine, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you for your understanding, Mr. Thivierge.

So I would invite Mr. Meunier, the president and chief operating officer of GardaWorld Security Corporation, to take the floor for the next five minutes.

We are listening, Mr. Meunier.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier (President and Chief Operating Officer, Security Services, Canada, GardaWorld Security Corporation):** Mr. Chair, members of the committee, thank you for inviting GardaWorld to today's meeting. This is an important meeting. It is a conversation about the National Strategy for Veterans Employment. We are very proud to be here today.

Before I tell you about our initiatives in this regard, I would like to tell you a bit about us. Our story began in 1995, when Canadian entrepreneur Stephan Crétier saw an opportunity in the market for security services and founded our company, GardaWorld. Today, from our headquarters in Montréal, we have grown into a global leader with an extensive portfolio of security and risk management services. We operate in several countries and employ 35,000 people in Canada.

The Government of Canada has entrusted us with delivering critical contracts, from airport security screening with the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority to the safety of residents of immigration holding centres on behalf of the Canada Border Services Agency.

[English]

At GardaWorld, we are deeply committed to veterans employment. It's based on the fact that in our experience, veterans are exceptional employees. We have veterans at all levels of the organization, including our chief operating officer.

In 2019, GardaWorld received the veterans employment transition award at the annual celebration of service on Parliament Hill. This award was presented in recognition of the company's efforts in hiring veterans and reservists and their spouses.

All security companies want to hire more veterans. After all, there is a natural alignment between having served and working in security.

Here are some of the initiatives we have taken to support veterans' employment.

We have developed a veterans advisory board. It is led by my colleague Simon Bernier, who served in the forces for 10 years. The board ensures that our veterans' unique needs are met, whether it's through simplified access to top-notch mental health support or the flexibility to continue their service in the reserves.

We also have preferred hiring policies for veterans. We have added specific training for our recruiters on military CV terminology, and we work with trusted partners such as True Patriot Love and With Glowing Hearts.

Veterans employment is a complex subject, with many facets and challenges. As you have already heard, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. We would like to share with you a few suggestions that we think could support veterans employment after service.

First, increase alignment with the Canadian Forces to plan for post-service opportunities.

Second, implement military-friendly accreditation for businesses like ours. This would provide veterans the confidence of knowing that these businesses can meet their needs, thereby shifting the bur-

den of after-service employment to businesses rather than to veterans.

Finally, we suggest the modernization of the right of first refusal for guard services, known as the RFR.

Due to its complexity, I will spend more time on this matter, considering the important impact and positive results this reform can accomplish, including the potential savings to the government. These considerable savings could be reallocated to support all Canadian veterans in their transition to civilian life.

As you may know, the RFR gives the Corps of Commissionaires—I will call them “the corps”—from whom the committee heard last week, a virtual monopoly on the protection of federal buildings.

Of the more than 600,000 veterans in Canada today, the corps employs 4,400 of them, which represents only 1% of the veteran population. As the committee heard from the Corps of Commissionaires itself, despite expanding the definition of “veterans” and reducing the threshold of hours required to be worked by veterans from 70% in 2014 to 60% in 2016, the corps remained unable to meet its mandate, with only 38% of the hours currently worked by veterans being on federal contracts. Despite this, the RFR monopoly with the Corps of Commissionaires remains in place.

[Translation]

Our industry firmly believes that it is time to modernize the right of first refusal and give veterans the freedom to choose for themselves where they will work, the company they want to work for, and the work they want to do. This would mean that all security companies, without exception, would then have equal access to these talents, and veterans would be presented with all the opportunities the industry has to offer.

There are mechanisms in place that would allow the Government to modernize the right of first refusal, replacing it with a system that works for veterans and for taxpayers. Doing so would provide more choice and opportunities for everyone, while increasing diversity in security services, and would allow the Government of Canada to realize substantial savings.

With that, we look forward shortly to answering your questions.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Meunier.

[English]

Now I'd like to invite, from the National Association of Career Colleges, Mr. Michael Sangster, the chief executive officer, for five minutes or less, please.

**Mr. Michael Sangster (Chief Executive Officer, National Association of Career Colleges):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good afternoon to all committee members and fellow witnesses.

I'm pleased to be here today to participate in your study on veterans' employment following their service and to share some of the ways that regulated career colleges are already answering the call and helping veterans find meaningful work in their post-service careers.

Before we begin, I'd like to take a moment to say thank you to all those currently serving in the Canadian Armed Forces for the sacrifices you make, for the challenges you overcome and for putting your country first. Thank you to our veterans for standing your watch and answering the call.

Every day, employers, business associations and trade groups are calling me and my association, looking for well-trained, skilled workers who can show leadership, integrity, teamwork, problem-solving and accountability. That sounds to me like the men and women who serve in Canada's military.

More can and should be done to help service members understand the broad range of opportunities available to them before they are discharged, and more can be done for their families. We stand ready to support that effort.

As major trainers of mature workers, each year NACC's 450 regulated career colleges train more than 150,000 learners who go on to ease the critical labour gaps across the country after graduation. Our direct training-to-employment pipeline provides learners and their families with opportunities for advancement while responding to our country's diverse labour force and economic needs. Regulated career colleges work closely with employers to ensure that we are training for the skills currently required, which is important to consider for mature students who want to contribute immediately.

From coast to coast, regulated career colleges are currently working with active service members, veterans and their families, and I'd like to take a moment to inform you of a few of those examples.

Willis College, right here in Ottawa, is working closely with Veterans Affairs and DND to train active and transitioning service members for a number of exciting careers, including as cyber-defence and security analysts, cyber operators and business administrators.

Last year, Willis College also announced the creation of a new \$2-million Learning Together veteran and family scholarship to provide full tuition scholarships to family members of veterans also taking one of their programs. I know Mr. Samson attended that announcement, and I want to thank you for your participation and support, sir.

CBBC Career College in Nova Scotia has also established a military and veterans partnership team to create a veteran-friendly centre and learning environment that provides the flexibility for military veteran students to flourish.

We recognize at NACC that there are many transition services currently available for Canadian Armed Forces members. We see an opportunity for the National Association of Career Colleges and our provincial affiliates to be more integrated in the program. More can be done together to educate veterans on the benefits of our training options.

Regulated career colleges offer thousands of flexible training programs that allow our learners to step out of the military service directly into the classroom and go on to the job site. Back-to-school day at a career college is every day of the week. Courses start every week of the year. Students graduate every week of the year. If you were discharged on a Friday, you can start training for a new career on a Monday morning.

In a similar vein, since regulated career colleges are in communities across the country, not just in large urban areas, you don't have to be in Toronto, Ottawa, or Calgary. You can be in Trinity, Melville, or Rimouski.

We get people trained faster. We train them closer to their homes and families. We train them where the demand for workers exists and in the communities you represent.

I would strongly recommend that the government convene an ongoing veterans skills and training table that includes a wide range of partners, including regulated career colleges and employers, to keep everyone working and focused on this issue. Establishing a regular and ongoing working table is one way to ensure continued collaboration and keep us all focused on what matters most, which is getting more veterans into more jobs through the best training possible.

To be bold, we recommend that the government and NACC build a program for spouses and children of active military and veterans. When soldiers serve, their families serve as well. The nomadic life of a military family makes maintaining a career for family members difficult.

This committee can recommend in its report bringing employers, governments and regulated career colleges together to support military families in getting trained for roles and skills needed by employers. As a leader in industry-driven skills training, we welcome the opportunity to work with all levels of government to continue providing job training programs tailored to the unique experiences and needs of veterans.

Thank you, and I welcome the opportunity to discuss these solutions with you in more detail.

• (1600)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Sangster.

[*Translation*]

We will now come back to retired Major André Thivierge, whom I would like to thank for his service, by the way.

Mr. Thivierge, we are going to try once more. It seems that the problem is on our end rather than yours.

You have five minutes to give your opening statement.

I will restart the clock.

**Mr. André Thivierge:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank the committee for allowing me to make my presentation in such an important forum.

As we know, when military personnel are in transition, thousands of people...

**A voice:** *No.*

**Mr. André Thivierge:** Is there a problem, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** It seems there is. I am going to check.

Ms. Blaney, the floor is yours. It will then be Ms. Wagantall's turn.

[*English*]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** I'm so sorry to interrupt this witness, because I'm very excited to hear what he has to say, but what the interpreters are saying is that the sound is still not clear enough for them to do the interpreting.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Thivierge:** Shall I continue, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** No, Mr. Thivierge, because some members are not getting the interpretation.

Ms. Blaney, the floor is yours.

[*English*]

**Mr. André Thivierge:** I can do my best to do it in English if the interpreters are not able to correct the problem.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** I'm going to suspend the meeting for a few seconds, because it's important that we be able to hear all the witnesses.

So we will take a short break for the time it takes to fix this interpretation problem.

Stay with us, Mr. Thivierge.

• (1600) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

• (1605)

**The Chair:** We will resume the meeting.

Ms. Wagantall wanted to say something.

[*English*]

She has raised a point of order.

Would you like to intervene now, please?

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** I would like to see this witness present in French, which I don't understand. I wish I did. Those of us who speak English only are probably few. I have read everything he has submitted and I would like to have him be part of the testimony today so that I can ask him questions.

Otherwise, let's all chip in and get him an Uber. Apparently he is in Ottawa.

**The Chair:** I understand that, Mrs. Wagantall. The problem is with our interpreters.

**Mr. Terry Dowdall (Simcoe—Grey, CPC):** Mr. Chair, I think we have wasted more than five minutes talking about this. I think we're done in English and in French.

**The Chair:** I know that we have the speech of Mr. Thivierge, but we won't be able to ask him questions. Whether it's in French or in English, there's no translation. I have to be strict on translation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Thivierge, you do live in this area. We can offer to invite you to appear before the committee again, as part of this study, to make your presentation properly. Otherwise, the members already have your speech, so they could incorporate it into the report. However, I think it is important to hear you talk about your personal experience.

What are your thoughts?

**Mr. André Thivierge:** If it is for the good of the committee, I agree, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for your understanding. You can stay online and listen to the rest of this meeting, but the clerk will contact you to invite you to appear again as part of this study. I suggest that you turn your mic off and listen to the discussions we will be having during this meeting, if you wish.

Committee members and witnesses, we are going to continue.

Given that we were to continue our business during the second part of the meeting, we are going to cut into that second part in order to examine certain issues in depth with the witnesses who are present here. With that, we will begin the first round of questions.

[*English*]

I invite Mr. Terry Dowdall to start the questioning of the witnesses. You have six minutes or less.

**Mr. Terry Dowdall:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First of all, I want to thank all of our panellists for being here today, and to those who have served, thank you. [*Technical difficulty—Editor*]

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Mr. Dowdall.

I am being told that the sound is not getting to the interpreters' booth.

I am again going to suspend the meeting for a minute to do a sound test with our interpreters. You know we have changed rooms. That may be the source of the problem, members of the committee.

I would ask our witnesses to excuse me.

[English]

I will suspend the meeting.

• (1605)

(Pause)

• (1610)

[Translation]

**The Chair:** We are resuming the meeting and are now beginning the second round of questions.

I am going to invite Terry Dowdall to speak for the next six minutes.

[English]

Mr. Dowdall, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Terry Dowdall:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I plan on ceding some of my time to my neighbour here, because we have quite a few questions and it's a short meeting.

First of all, thanks to everyone for being on our panel today. I think we're doing a great study. Hearing from the individuals who are helping us achieve some of those goals, hopefully, is fantastic.

Thanks to those on our panel who have served.

My first question will go to Mr. Meunier.

As you know, we heard testimony on the Corps of Commissionaires last week. I don't want to pick on any organizations, because I think they do great work as well.

You highlighted the RFR and the advantage, and I agree that it hurts companies like yours. I think everyone should, hopefully, be on the same playing field when we're hiring veterans coming out of the field. I heard that from Mr. Sangster from the National Association of Career Colleges as well.

In your opinion, what would a better process be to ensure people hire veterans and keep up numbers? Are we perhaps better off incentivizing hires than having a contract that states, "You need a certain number of veterans in your organization"?

**Ms. Colleen Arnold (Vice-President, Corporate Affairs, Garda World Security Corporation):** Thanks very much for your question.

I think there are multiple processes in place already, today. Without getting into too much detail, one in particular is called the "regional standing offer". Essentially, what this does is pre-qualify service providers. Pre-qualifying sets standards that different providers need to meet. In doing so, you are vetting them to ensure veterans are hired and keep the employment they already have and retain their salary and benefits, their full compensation packages.

As I said, it's a veterans-preferential hiring policy. Putting that out to multiple companies makes it become a competitive process and allows the government to save upwards of \$45 million. We know, from the minutes of standing committee meetings past, that the Corps of Commissionaires currently charge about 15% more than market rates. Forty-five million dollars is an awful lot of money that could go towards other programs that support our veterans.

• (1615)

**Mr. Terry Dowdall:** Thank you.

Another thing we heard is that a lot of veterans are homeless. I've heard numbers of up to 6,000. I know that in my area, a lot of employers are coming up with ways to address that because veterans can't afford to live in our communities and still work.

Is there an interest in that, perhaps? As a large corporation, could you be a partner in providing some kind of housing tied to employment?

**Ms. Colleen Arnold:** We partner with a lot of organizations in our communities. For instance, in Toronto, we're very close to the Crime Stoppers organization. We work on warm-up programs to help veterans.

We see a lot of it in our business. They find shelter in various areas where our clients perhaps don't want them. We're able to work with the homeless and our clients and different community organizations to move them to areas where they can have shelter and be safe overnight.

**Mr. Terry Dowdall:** Thank you.

I will now cede my time to you, Cathay.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to my colleague.

I appreciate you all being here. I will do my best to transition to some questions that are different from than those I had today.

I appreciate your concerns. You indicated that three things are important, one of them being the modernization of the right of first refusal. I need some clarity in those arguments. From what I understand, the Corps of Commissionaires is a non-profit or charitable organization, so their overhead is significantly less. There isn't that profit-driven side of things playing into the role of their organization.

The only point I have a question on... I certainly don't have a question about being a business. As a matter of fact, I believe businesses are definitely far more efficient than government, a lot of the time, and I'm sitting in government—well, close.

My question is, what is your rationale for feeling that the right of first refusal needs to be shared more broadly?

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** The first thing is that it's a fact that the Corps of Commissionaires are the only ones who get access to hire veterans. The industry itself is bigger than the commissionaires. In my own ranks, I already have a lot of veterans, and they are not funnelled to us. We need to source them and find ways to get them to us. If we open the RFR up to everybody, it will give veterans better access to jobs that could benefit from their skill set.

There are many jobs we can offer that others cannot, and because the industry is so broad across the country, together I think we can afford—

Go ahead.

**Ms. Colleen Arnold:** You mentioned the non-profit side of the Corps of Commissionaires, and I mentioned their rate being 15% higher than the market rate. We know that this money is not going into the pockets of the veterans, and we can't say for certain—we have tried to investigate—where that money, that \$45 million, is going. We do know that they compete against us in private industry and are generally able to beat us in a very low-margin business; they're able to win.

We also know, interestingly, that they're making purchases—acquisitions of companies—across the country. For a non-profit to be doing that is a little bit unclear, so we have to assume that the 15% is—

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** My time is up? Okay, thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Thank you, Ms. Arnold.

Let's go to Mr. Churence Rogers for six minutes or less.

Please go ahead, Mr. Rogers.

• (1620)

**Mr. Churence Rogers (Bonavista—Burin—Trinity, Lib.):** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses for being here today. Welcome. Certainly your testimony is important to what we're doing here on this particular study.

I think the ultimate goal for all of us is to create a better system across the country to allow veterans to find employment and hopefully something to guide them to careers for their entire lifetimes.

Mr. Sangster, I want to ask you a question about the colleges.

I know you made some comments in your opening statement, but I'd like you to tell this committee some of the best things you do that create employment opportunities for veterans and how it's such a success story. You've shared some things with me in a private meeting, so I want you to share those with the committee.

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** Thank you, sir. I appreciate the opportunity to answer the question.

I believe it's our fast, innovative, agile style that we work with, being an entrepreneurial organization. We have about 450 members across Canada, and they're used to being very closely associated to the local employers and the local labour force needs, so we can train people quickly for what's needed in the economy nearby.

To answer your question, I'm going to answer you with an example of something that went on. While it's not veteran-related, in Ontario, we were able to train over 17,000 personal support workers during COVID. They came into our colleges in Ontario—and I have that case study I can use today—enrolled, studied, did practical placements, graduated and went into long-term care and personal care homes during COVID. Those are the kinds of examples we have all across the country.

We have veterans and active duty members at Willis College, where they're training to be cybersecurity experts inside DND. It's the fast, nimble approach that I believe our members can bring that is so valuable for learners.

I have to say that I think they're very adept and able to teach and educate people who come out of the military who have a bunch of those skills that employers are already looking for, turn them around quickly—three, six, nine months—and get them to work.

**Mr. Churence Rogers:** What are some of the challenges that vets face? We've heard from some of them that they had a great deal of difficulty getting into certain programs and institutions. What are some of the challenges that some of them face when they come directly out of the military and try to take programs with your colleges, for example, across the country?

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** I think we can do better at educating them to the opportunities that exist with the training funds that come out of the federal government programs. I think we can work more closely with government to help educate them as well. Those are some of the difficulties.

I don't think veterans are as aware as they could be about the opportunities that exist to come in, get trained and get to work quickly, and that's why, in our comments today, we offered a couple of solutions, one of them being a permanent training table that would allow skills and workforce development issues to be brought to the table on a quarterly basis with government, industry, employers and veterans groups to make sure we're bringing those skills forward.

**Mr. Churence Rogers:** From your experience, I think what you're saying is that we've seen a movement from colleges to provide support to military and veteran students on their campuses.

You also referenced the family members of veterans as well. Do you want to elaborate on that a bit?



**Mr. Michael Sangster:** Yes. We'd welcome the opportunity to develop on a national basis a program like the one that Willis College has done here in Ottawa to talk about how we could help train the families who serve alongside the members. We would welcome that opportunity to work with government and be a part of that. We would bring together employers that approach us and speak to us and see if we can't find a way to help train the families too.

I know from my past experience with some companies that they used to look at that: How do we get someone who can move anywhere and still be employed? We could quickly be a part of that solution.

**Mr. Churence Rogers:** You mentioned the vets' skills and training. You see that as an important part of moving forward.

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** Yes. We see that as something that could be very valuable with employers, with all levels of post-secondary education—not just with regulated career colleges, but with all levels.

If I could go back quickly on the family answer, we see some mental health benefits there as well for the families. When you're less worried about the income of different members moving around, the whole family as a unit will feel better.

**Mr. Churence Rogers:** This question is for Garda.

I talked to the Corps of Commissionaires right after our last meeting. I spoke to them privately here in the room. I wanted to know a little more about the RFRs, and they were pretty adamant that we retain that because it benefits their organization.

Have you had dialogue or discussions with the Corps of Commissionaires group in terms of whether or not the RFRs should be retained going forward, and what kinds of discussions were they?

• (1625)

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** I tried, but we didn't get a lot of traction, actually. It was like a separate world between us. They feel that maybe we cannot understand their needs, but we do.

For me, it's removing the risks for the veterans to get more hirings. At the end of the day, we are competing in the same market. It's a question of trying to be sure that we address the market in the right way, and today the industry doesn't feel that it's fair for everybody.

**Ms. Colleen Arnold:** If I may add to that, we have what we call a "coalition", so when Jean-Luc speaks about the industry, there are over 21 security service provider companies in Canada that are working together to discuss this and to get the message out there that a policy that was built in 1945 needs modernization. It was a great policy in 1945 when young men and women were coming back from the war and needed employment and needed employment quickly and didn't necessarily have the skills, but it needs modernization.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Rogers.

[Translation]

We will now go to the second vice-chair of the committee.

Mr. Desilets, the floor is yours for the next six minutes.

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to the witnesses for being with us.

These comments have been very interesting, constructive and useful to us. I would just like to recall that the objective of our committee and this study is to put forward recommendations. If you could direct your remarks to that, it would be helpful.

Mr. Meunier, in your presentation, you said that the right of first refusal was a regulatory mechanism that requires federal agencies to give priority to the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires before turning to other suppliers for the security guards it needs.

This is what I understood.

I hope you will forgive my ignorance or my naiveté in this regard, but I would like to know whether the regulatory mechanism is found in a federal law.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** Yes, it is a policy of the Department of Veterans Affairs that governs it today. The Department of Public Works and Government Services helps to negotiate the rates.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Does that mean, in your view, that it applies at the provincial level?

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** Some provinces use it. They have copied the federal legislation to make the same kind of agreements with the provinces, particularly in the Prairies and the Maritimes.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** You also said earlier that all firms in the security industry were actively trying to recruit personnel. Again, I am having a bit of trouble understanding that.

Where is the problem? There are workers. However, there is also a need to find and hire those workers.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** First, workers are harder to find today than they used to be.

Second, veterans are referred to the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires rather than to the industry. So we have to work a lot harder to recruit veterans. The interest of all of the veterans who come to us is different from the ones who choose the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires. You can ask Mr. Bernier, who will be able to testify himself as a former member of the military.

I don't want to start an argument against the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires. I want the discussion to help us recruit more veterans and do away with the notion that there is only one place where veterans can work, because that is not the case. We have so many opportunities to offer them, the industry and ourselves, including the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires.

The regulatory mechanism governing the right of first refusal could be modernized, in the interests of veterans, the Canadian government, and ourselves. From what we have understood at the Senate committees, we think it costs the Canadian government more to retain this mechanism as it stands. That is the sole perspective from which I am coming at the question.

In addition, there is a need for resources everywhere. If this mechanism could be modernized in everyone's interests and we could do business with Mr. Sangster, we would benefit from all the programs that can help to recruit veterans. We just need help to modernize this aging and out of date mechanism.

Mr. Bernier, I don't know whether you want to add something.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** There we are.

Mr. Bernier, you could perhaps add to your colleague's remarks, now that he has opened the door for you.

**Mr. Simon Bernier (National Director, Innovation and Technologies, Garda World Security Corporation):** We can say that the new generation of veterans no longer resembles the generation from 1945, the year when the right of first refusal mechanism was adopted. Personally, I am like a majority of members of the military, who do not complete their full service, and leave the forces after a decade or so.

Having myself obtained a master's degree after my service, I can tell you that private enterprise offered a much wider range of opportunities, for example in technology or innovation, than the government, which was directing us more to the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires, was doing.

I think there has to be an accreditation system for the industry, something like the ISO standard in the private sector. We could join it ourselves so that veterans didn't have to do it when they make their transition after their service. Private businesses could play that role, as we have done on our own initiative. That system would be incorporated into the Government of Canada programs.

• (1630)

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Mr. Sangster, you said earlier that veterans were not the only group you wanted to reach and recruit. You are also looking at their family members, who could be recruited and work. I think that is a very interesting idea.

I would like to give you my last minute so you can give us some more information on that subject.

How do you see that working?

Is it a practice going on today?

Has it been successful?

[English]

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** I am aware of a few companies that have looked at this. I don't know of anyone who has done it.

We took your challenge of finding recommendations to bring to you today that could be valuable. We believe that putting together a group of employers and trade associations, which are approaching us on a daily basis looking for workers.... I believe they are looking for veterans. I think they are looking for the skills that come out of

the military, from my own experience in dealing with the military over my career.

I would argue that bold programs that get more of those veterans into our colleges and get their families alongside at the same time would be very valuable for our country.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Thank you.

I am finished, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

You did still have a minute left, but that's excellent, Mr. Desilets.

We will now conclude this first round of questions with the New Democratic Party.

[English]

I'd like to invite Ms. Rachel Blaney for six minutes or less, please.

Go ahead.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Thank you. It certainly won't be less. You know me, Chair.

First of all, I just want to say that I don't want to talk about the right of first refusal. In fact, if we start talking about it, I will immediately end the conversation, because in this study, what I'm interested in is how we best support veterans. If you're different from another organizations, that's cool; I don't care. I just want to hear what your success is. I want to get that out right away, because I just don't think this is the right place. I certainly acknowledge you're doing your work, and that's your business, but I just don't think this is the place for that discussion.

This is my first question, and I'm going to ask both of you. I'm going to start with GardaWorld Security Corporation.

I'm just curious. In the structure that you have, how are veterans in leadership and guiding you in the methods you are using to support veterans?

You can go first, and then I'll go over to the National Association of Career Colleges.

**Mr. Simon Bernier:** Thank you for the question, Madam Blaney.

Essentially, we had a chance to build a veterans advisory board internally. We have active reservists as well, both on the officer side and on the rank side, across the country. Not only do we have a voice through that board; we are actually listened to.

One clear example for that, which was not the case before, is that we've allowed for service members and veterans to wear their ribbons honouring the medals that they have earned throughout their service. This is a brand new initiative we have pushed forward.

Making them feel a fit with the culture in the organization is something that we strive for. That cultural fit is way broader than ribbons. We definitely push for having civilian members of the organization understand. As we say in Latin, *audi alteram partem*—listen to the other party—so that we can join at a certain point in the middle.

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** Thank you for the question.

NACC has 450 member colleges that make all their own employment decisions on who their leadership would be. Our organization is fairly small, with just eight employees. I don't currently have anybody on our team who has served in the military, I believe, but I welcome the idea. I think it is a very good idea to bring somebody into our organization directly. I do know that there are some within our colleges, but I couldn't give you a good idea of how many.

I like the idea. I'd like to look at it some more and get back to you.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Yes, if there's a way that you could check that out with your colleges, I think that would be really helpful for this program, because I think leadership really... I appreciate that. You talked about the wearing of ribbons. That's nice, but I understand that you talked about an advisory board. Hopefully, there is some staunch leadership in that role, because it's important.

I've read through a lot of research around the outcomes of employment for veterans. It's very clear that there are three particular groups that are struggling with employment after service. Those three groups are young veterans who have not had a lot of years of service; women veterans, although we still don't really know why, which is very concerning to me; and medically released veterans.

Knowing that those are the most vulnerable groups and that they don't have the best outcomes—that is what the research says—could you speak specifically about the strategies you're putting into place or considering that create opportunities for those three groups to participate in the supports that you have and the training that you have, and tell us what the outcomes are? How do you measure those outcomes, especially in those particular groups? Do you even measure those outcomes?

• (1635)

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** Military people are different, in that they don't behave the same way as the people we usually deal with. Usually our recruitment group was broadly all the same, so we decided, based on our experience and the committee that Simon is leading, to carve out some of the recruiters to be more versed in the military needs that these people might have. This helped us get a lot of success out of that. Hiring our veterans is different from hiring civilians.

In terms of females, we don't have stats on this aspect. I would like to help you out there, but I cannot. We didn't see the difference in our recruiting so far.

For people with problems, usually we have programs in the system to support these people. Usually when we hire them, in theory they don't have problems, but sometimes their problems occur after the fact. Then we have programs to take care of them afterward, when we notice these types of issues with these people.

**Ms. Colleen Arnold:** Just quickly, the entry-level security guard type of work is ideal for young people coming out of the service. It gives them the comfort of a uniform, structure and standing orders. We will go after them to come over to us, and then we can work with them to build a full career.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Do you have any statistical information on younger veterans?

**Ms. Colleen Arnold:** I'm sorry; we don't, but we can look for that.

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** I don't have statistics specific to veterans, but I do have some interesting studies I can share with you from Ontario that are focused around the type of learners we have and the success rates they tend to have.

We have found that in regulated career colleges, we have a higher graduation rate success and a higher employment rate, but we also have a higher over-30 average student age. About 60% of our students are women, 50% of our students in Ontario have children and 12% are single parents. When we look at that, we look at the small classroom sizes we developed and the specialized learning programs we developed. While it's not veterans, I think those groups that you're talking about are captured in there.

I'd like to spend some time with you looking at that in a little more depth and seeing if we can't find a way to capture more of that information for you.

**The Chair:** Thank you so much.

We will now move to our second round of questions.

I'd like to invite the first VP of the committee, Mr. Blake Richards, to take the floor for five minutes, please.

**Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC):** Thank you.

I have questions for both groups with us today.

I'll start with you, Mr. Sangster. I was intrigued by some one-on-one discussion you and I had, as well as what you said here in committee today about programs for spouses and family members.

That's something that often gets forgotten when working to help our veterans. It isn't just confined to employment or career transition; it's really across the board. It's often forgotten that the service these men and women give to this country has an impact on their families and their spouses as well.

One of those areas is in this area, because many veterans are often required to move across the country a number of times during their service to our country. This can create difficulties in terms of being prepared for that transition to civilian life afterward. It also applies to the spouse and the family. It's great to hear you talking about that.

I know you have a unique perspective. You had some time in your career in government. You had some time in your career in the private sector in leadership roles, and of course in this leadership role with the National Association of Career Colleges. You have the ability to put something in place and work through that organization to see something come to fruition.

You mentioned the idea that there should be a program for spouses and family members to help get them trained and give them the skills that are needed by employers. Can you elaborate a bit more? Do you have more thoughts on what that program should look like?

• (1640)

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** We're proposing today the start of a conversation. I have not yet put together, with pen to paper, what we'd exactly like to see, because we don't believe we're the only partner at the table.

We believe the Chamber of Commerce, the Business Council of Canada, trade unions, employers in this country.... When I say employers, I think of large telcos, large banks, Canadian Tire and Tim Hortons. I think of large employers that are spread across this country whose employees could easily move from location to location.

When we talk about the mental health of a serving member of the military, I believe that if we're taking care of the family.... I do believe, as you said, that when members serve in our military, their families serve right alongside them. They carry that stress and anxiety. If we could do one small thing that helps them feel better about the world, and where it's going.... Even as members move into their own retirement from the military, knowing that their spouses and children are in a good place is going to help them feel good about retraining.

We see other post-secondary institutions being a part of this conversation. We've not defined the whole program, but I do believe our country would benefit from doing this.

To Mr. Desilets' comments, I believe that's what you asked us to do. It's to come with some ideas and come with what we can propose and bring ideas from different people to the table.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** That's very much appreciated.

I have a question for Mr. Meunier or Ms. Arnold. It's for whoever wants to answer from Garda. Hopefully, we'll get a chance to come back to this conversation, but I want to go there first. It is in regard to the right of first refusal.

As other members of the committee have said, we had the Corps of Commissionaires come here last week to tell us they felt that the 60% target was an unrealistic target in this day and age. You're telling us that you think that opening it up for more competition so that you have the opportunity to provide those services would maybe lead to more veterans being employed.

Much like others, I don't have a dog in this fight. I just want to see more veterans employed. I would love to get into that a bit.

You mentioned 21 companies, including yours, that are available in the security industry. You do have some federal contracts. You mentioned CATSA, and there are some with immigration as well.

Because you can only speak for your own company, can you tell us the number of employees you have? How many of those are veterans? In particular, with your federal contracts, what is the percentage of hours currently worked by veterans in federal contracts? What are your barriers in order to hire more?

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** Colleen will probably add to what I will say.

We have many divisions and many types of contracts. We don't measure the veteran ratio by contract but by division, like the cash service division that we have. These people carry arms, as you know, so 25% of the ranks are people from the forces. This is a good place for them. They are used to that. They are well-disciplined and know exactly what to do. The training is minimal, because they are suited for that type of role.

Unfortunately, on the contract side, I don't have the stats.

Regarding the detention centre, many of them are.... Sorry; there's no more time, apparently.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** Can we just let him finish?

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** I can come back to you with more stats afterward.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** He's willing to give you 15 seconds to give the stats now, if you'd like. That's what I think I heard.

**The Chair:** You have 15 seconds to close.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** You mentioned the detention centre specifically.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** They are attracted by this, but, as I said, I don't have the stats by contract. I have them more by division, like the 25% for cash services, as an example.

**Ms. Colleen Arnold:** Something important to note is that those contracts with the detention centres and airport security are not governed by an RFR. They go out by RFPs, so they don't have the same contract requirements.

**The Chair:** Thank you so much.

Now I'd like to invite Mr. Wilson Miao.

I don't know if it's going to work, but Wilson Miao, you have five minutes or less. Please go ahead.

**Mr. Wilson Miao (Richmond Centre, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Through the chair, I'd like to ask the following question of Garda.

You mentioned in your remarks that you employ more than 35,000 Canadians across the country. Am I correct?

• (1645)

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** You're correct.

**Mr. Wilson Miao:** What is the ratio of veterans?

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** It's a mix, depending on the division they are working for. In Canada, it's on voluntary basis, so we cannot force them to declare whether they are veterans or not.

Again, the one we have good stats for is the cash management division; there, 25% of the ranks are veterans. I don't have the stats for the rest, but we can work this out and provide them to you. I don't know what [*Inaudible—Editor*].

**Mr. Wilson Miao:** Can you explain to us how your organization recruits veterans? Is there a specific process you use to facilitate the hiring process?

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Mr. Miao. Give me just a second, please. We have to make sure the sound is good.

Mr. Miao, you can split your time with one of your colleagues, because we have to make sure the sound is 100% perfect for our interpreters.

**Mr. Wilson Miao:** Mr. Chair, can I try again, or is my voice not so good?

I'll share my time with my colleague. How is that?

**The Chair:** Thank you so much, Mr. Miao, for your understanding.

MP Darrell Samson will use the four minutes that you have left.

**Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Not only will I use his four minutes, but I'll use his question.

What are some of the recruitment strategies or best practices in both your organizations?

I'll start with you, Monsieur Jean-Luc.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** Simon will be better to answer this.

**Mr. Simon Bernier:** We wanted to create a different path for veterans to be hired by us, so we have a specific landing page for them, which is [gardaworld.com/military](http://gardaworld.com/military). They get into an environment where we try to speak their language as much as we can, so they're submitting their resumés or CVs through to specific recruiters whom we've actually trained in understanding the title and the career path that they had in the past.

This definitely eases the process for them, so that we can accustom them to a job that fits their skill sets even more than other companies I trust.

**Ms. Colleen Arnold:** I'll just add to that.

We have specific recruitment days that focus on veterans and their families. Interestingly enough, we heard about the spouses and how difficult moving is, given the different schedules, etc.

We do have a very flexible workforce that is separate from the permanent, regular workweek type of group. In Quebec, we call them *les réservistes*. We have a lot of veterans and reservists with the military, and their families, who can put their name in this pool. We'll call them, and if they're available, they'll work; if they're not available, we'll call them the next time.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Thank you.

Mr. Sangster, maybe you can talk a little bit about your recruitment as an association or individual, and some of the best practices.

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** Yes, I'm pleased to do that.

There's one thing that I'd like to talk about, and I should have mentioned this when Mr. Richards asked me. One of the best practices when we talk about this family program is at Willis College here in Ottawa, which unleashed a \$2-million scholarship fund, on their own, for families.

I believe you were there, sir, when it was announced. To go along with the veterans who are in the government's veterans education program, they have added spaces for free education for spouses and children alongside them at the very same time, so when you talk about putting pen to paper, we have a little bit from the actions of one of our colleges.

When it comes to the recruitment of best practices, one of the things that this hearing, this process, has led me to do is to take a good look at this. We're looking at some of the things that we could do better. I'm talking to our colleges and I'm looking forward to some conversations with the Department of Veterans Affairs and possibly this table we're recommending, which would put people at the table to talk about these best practices and bring them into action.

I don't believe that our association has done a good job of educating our members on some of these programs that are available, and I think we can work alongside Veterans Affairs to do more career fairs, more job fairs and more learning fairs to get to veterans. I'm hearing talk about a landing page for veterans on the stuff we do, and that's a great idea. We've been doing it in our social media, but we should have a page through our site that students can come to and learn about these programs. It might be a spouse who finds it and not the active member, and then we can get them into the training program.

I think there are some lessons learned here for us as well.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Fine, thank you.

• (1650)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Samson and Mr. Sangster.

Mr. Desilets, the floor is yours for two and a half minutes.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, even though you are definitely not generous.

Mr. Meunier, I'm a bit curious: in Quebec, how many educational institutions are affected? I'm talking about the ones to which you supply customers, and the ones that supply you with customers.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** I'm not sure I understood your question properly.

Can you ask it again?

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** GardaWorld works in educational institutions in Quebec. Is that right?

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** Yes, but we often give the training ourselves.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Ah, right.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** There is a campus accredited by the education departments in several provinces, including Quebec, where the biggest campus is located. We train a majority of our guards in Montreal, in the centre of excellence we recently created.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** I understand.

Is the training given in French or English?

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** It is given in both languages.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Right.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** In Quebec, the training is given primarily in French.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** In Montreal, about how many people does it involve?

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** We recruit 12,000 people a year. I would say that 40% of them come from Quebec.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Of those people, how many are veterans?

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** To be honest, I have to say that I don't have any statistics on that, unfortunately.

As I said, it is always voluntary for them to declare their...

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** I understand.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** I don't have any exact statistics on that.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** That's fine.

I would like to get your opinion on something we have talked about at recent meetings of the committee.

Veterans obviously have special needs. How can an employer be made to understand this?

How do you work with these employers, if you do work directly with them?

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** I am going to ask Mr. Bernier to answer your question first. I will then add to his answer.

**Mr. Simon Bernier:** In fact, that is why we have often suggested putting an accreditation system in place that would include structured best practices that all employers could follow.

I have learned a lot from Mr. Sangster's testimony and the testimony given by the University of Ottawa representative who appeared before the committee on Thursday last week. This community exchanges best practices and ways of doing things, and this creates a lot of value.

It's important that we formalize these best practices, in order to establish a certification and voluntary accreditation process that organizations and companies could join. For veterans who are transitioning to civilian life, that is a seal of confidence.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Thank you, and congratulations on your work.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Desilets.

[English]

I'd now like to invite Ms. Rachel Blaney to use her two and a half minutes, please.

Go ahead, please.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Thank you so much, Mr. Chair.

I first have a request for GardaWorld Security Corporation.

I'm wondering if you could share with the committee the starting wage and wage range for veterans in the different positions that are provided. I assume you don't have that on your person right now. That would be really helpful.

I have a second question for both of you. I'll start with GardaWorld.

I'm a little concerned, because I heard in your testimony that you don't track veterans unless they self-disclose. That's interesting. I ran a non-profit, and we had to identify everyone. There you go. That's very interesting.

How do you measure outcomes in terms of veterans getting the training, the employment and then the retention of employment?

I have the same question for you as well, Mr. Sangster, around the training, retention and employment.

That information would be really helpful to the committee.

**Ms. Colleen Arnold:** Actually, interestingly enough, Simon, in his new portfolio, is deploying a technology that will allow us to do better tracking. Unfortunately, technology was part of the reason we don't have it. It is a self-declaration, but I think... Information from our cash services division is easier to get because they carry an arm. We can easily understand whether or not they've had a permit to carry a firearm before when they declare that they're a veteran.

On our side of the business we don't have that, but with our new technology, we'll be able to do a better job at it.

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** For me to answer that question it's tricky, because every province is different, and I get lots of apples and oranges. Everybody studies it differently and gathers it differently, or doesn't gather it, or gathers it in ways that are ineffective. Ontario has just changed the way they're doing it, which is going to be much more effective for us.

What I can tell you is that in terms of our learners, we tend to have a higher graduation rate. We tend to have a higher employment rate and a higher rate of working in the fields that we train them for. I think that's a natural thing, with the size and length of our programs and the hands-on learning that we do.

That being said, we're in the process of looking to do a national study to come up with some of those numbers. COVID-19 also stopped some of that work that allowed us to capture some of that information.

Further to my earlier comments, I welcome the opportunity to talk about that with you and to look at some ways we could capture some of the data you're looking for, because we're going to be doing it.

• (1655)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We have two last interventions.

I'll start with Mrs. Cathay Wagantall for five minutes, please.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Thank you, Chair.

I really appreciate the conversations taking place today. They're very helpful.

I just want to say that my NDP colleague steals my questions all the time. We think similarly, shall we say.

I really do have a concern about the fact that what I'm hearing today—and there's no judgment here at all—is that we don't know how many veterans are being employed, where they are and what they're learning. We have a national strategy here for veterans' employment after service. It seems that we're trying to catch up with the title, quite honestly.

I don't know if you are aware, but as of September 1, 2021, there were 171 VAC employees who identified as Canadian Armed Forces, as being part of the armed forces. That is out of 3,455 full-time equivalents. That's only 4.9% or 5% of their group of employees.

According to the Public Service Commission, which is responsible for administering hiring priorities for the public service, 330 appointments out of the 64,796 hires made in 2021 for the entire public service were veterans. That's 0.5%.

When we talk about making sure our veterans have good jobs coming out of the service, it appears to me that we really don't even know what we're working with here, so I appreciate your saying that you're prepared to do the work to find out so that we can meet the intent of this new national strategy.

My question would be on how committed you are to actually doing this work. I have to say that I'm not impressed with VAC. They don't know the answers to these questions. We're just starting to look at finding out where our veterans are in regard to being employed. It seems counterintuitive to me, but regardless....

I also have a question about wages. Simon, can you tell me what the starting wage is for a particular area of service?

Sorry; it's for whoever....

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** I'll start, since we're easier.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Thank you.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** Canada is a wide country, with 10 territories and provinces. Every province is managing the wages. Security is a provincial jurisdiction. At the end of the day, we need to go by the regulation of the province.

We are unionized in every province of this country. I would say that in Alberta, to summarize it, it's not that simple. The wages, by default, are managed by the CBA, the collective bargaining agreement, that we have with our guards. Everybody is treated the same way. It's a fair playing field for everybody, because we are unionized. Not everybody is like us, but we are unionized in most of our jurisdictions.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Okay, so starting wages—

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** They're the same for everybody.

**Ms. Colleen Arnold:** It depends on the province.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** Yes.

**Ms. Colleen Arnold:** It is very different by province and the cost of living there—

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** In Ontario, as an example, if we lose a contract, all the jobs are protected. We cannot fire anybody. If we take over a contract from somebody, we need to maintain everybody in place with the salary they have. There are regulations already in place to protect a lot of our workers today.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Okay. Very good.

I have a minute to go here.

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** Could I add one comment?

• (1700)

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Yes. Go ahead, please, Mr. Sangster.

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** While we don't have the path yet, we are very committed to trying to find some of that data. I think it is important as we look at our veterans who have served and their families. I'll tell you what we are committed to: Each and every one of our colleges across Canada is committed to training people for the jobs that are actually needed today.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** In terms of the breadth of your training available, was the training for care workers during COVID something that you had done before? Was that a brand new program? How did you get the accreditation in place that fast? I've been involved in some of that, and it's strenuous.

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** Our personal support worker program, as it's called in Ontario—it seems to be taught under different names in almost every province in the country—has been around for quite a long time. It has been accredited by the provincial regulators that we operate under in every province.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Can I ask you one more very brief question? You mentioned working with other colleges. Are these colleges within your umbrella, or are we talking about community colleges in other areas or other programs through other institutions?

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** Many of our career colleges, our regulated career colleges, work closely with the community colleges and the universities nearby. We like that partnership. We believe we have a role to play and they have a role to play.

To give you an example of some of those programs, we're getting asked right now for 75,000 truck drivers, which some of our colleges also train. That's one of the needs out there. That's a very well-paid career in this country. It's upwards of \$100,000 for some of those people. Coming out of the military, it's a great role for someone.

I'll give you a very tangible example. We have the member for Newfoundland and Labrador here today. We have a great partnership there. The career colleges, the community colleges and the universities all work together very well. We'd like to encourage more of that. That's why we're proposing today to talk about our commitment to this table, this permanent structure, where we can talk about taking care of veterans.

**The Chair:** Thank you so much.

Now I'd like to invite Mrs. Rechie Valdez to take the floor for five minutes or less, please.

**Mrs. Rechie Valdez (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for joining us today, especially those who have served.

Through you, Mr. Chair, my question is for Garda.

You cited 15% in your opening. We were provided with a document from the Corps of Commissioners that says 15% is a myth. I wanted to know if you could provide clarity on the 15% number and where it came from.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** It came from the minutes of the senatorial committee that was hosted in I think 2014 or 2016. We took that from the Senate committee that was hosted a few years ago.

There's no public information on this unless there's a committee like this one that creates references for us to be able to do the math.

**Mrs. Rechie Valdez:** Thank you.

Through you, Mr. Chair, I'll direct my questions to Mr. Sangster.

I appreciate the work of career colleges across Canada. I was actually curious to know, as I was listening to your testimony, whether you could share with us what the veteran experience is like when they study on campus.

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** One thing I'd like to share is around the small, intimate size of the classroom. You tend to have a smaller classroom size and a faster program. As I mentioned earlier, back-to-school day for us, as I like to say, is Monday. It's Thursday. It's not necessarily the first Tuesday after Labour Day. That feeling of getting at it and getting going applies to just about anything we do in work—when you get the project started, you get moving. When you get started on a Thursday in February, we find a higher success rate with some of those students, because they feel charged up.

I think the small and intimate size of classrooms in our career colleges, with people who are of a similar age and similar background to you, is very, very helpful.

**Mrs. Rechie Valdez:** Can you provide input on how we can increase or encourage more veterans to start up in colleges? What can we do to encourage them to pursue that?

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** As I said earlier, I turn it around on ourselves as well. I think we can do more to encourage the education of veterans and active military on the options that are available to them using our channels, our social media, our marketing, our career fairs and our job fairs. I put the challenge on our own members that we can do a better job of communicating some of those things.

I think we can work more closely with government. For us, one of the impacts from COVID has been that maybe some of those conversations stalled. Some of those things that happened at conferences and meetings just came to a halt. We're not having those get-togethers anymore where you move things forward.

I'm putting it upon myself to get in touch with Veterans Affairs. This study led to me thinking about some things differently. I'll be in touch with the department to see what we can do together. The program is generous, and the veterans we talk to are supportive of it.

**Mrs. Rechie Valdez:** We have many Legions in our riding, so you're always welcome to pair up with some of them to get the word out.



You've shared several examples of all the work you're doing, which is wonderful. From all that learning, is there something you want to ensure that we incorporate in our national strategy?

• (1705)

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** We can never stop communicating. It's what we've learned in our association. We can never stop telling people what we do to convince people of the value of the regulated career college sector in Canada. It's to never stop communicating and to find those partnerships and places, as we've recommended, where we can come together to work together.

**Mrs. Rechie Valdez:** Thank you.

I'll come back to Garda, since I have a bit more time.

Are there any other recommendations you would like to ensure we include in our strategy that you haven't mentioned already?

**Ms. Colleen Arnold:** Interestingly enough, all three of us, and others within our organization, have been following these sessions. Just in speaking with Mr. Sangster, we see many opportunities where we can partner. There is networking that we can do. I heard Ms. Blaney speak about how veterans want to feel that they are contributing to society. How about if we hire them and put them in a part-time job while they are finishing their studies, so they feel that they are contributing to society?

I believe we talked about an alignment with Veterans Affairs and with other partners that have sat through these sessions. We should really work together to find great options and alternatives for our veterans.

**Mr. Jean-Luc Meunier:** Security companies are invested in this country. When I think of us, we have 40 branches across the country, about the same footprint as Mr. Sangster here. There's probably an easy way to connect together to help veterans find education or work or other options.

**Mr. Michael Sangster:** Can I add one more comment I should have mentioned? It's just an opportunity that we can all take.

Consider this an invitation to tour our college. Come see what we're doing on the ground. See if you think it's a good fit to understand veterans going through that process and where they would come out the far side. We would welcome that. You can come tour one of our facilities across Canada.

**Mrs. Rechie Valdez:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

[*Translation*]

This is where we end the questions.

During the testimony, we heard that Mr. Bernier is also a veteran.

On behalf of the members of the committee, I want to thank you for your service. I also want to tell you that we offer special services for veterans when we invite them, to be able to assist them at the committee. Please do not hesitate to call on our committee. The clerk will help you with this.

With that, I would like to thank the witnesses who have appeared today: first, from GardaWorld Security Corporation, Jean-Luc Meunier, president and chief operating officer, security services,

Canada; Colleen Arnold, vice-president, corporate affairs; and Simon Bernier, national director, innovation and technologies.

[*English*]

From the National Association of Career Colleges, we had Mr. Michael Sangster, chief executive officer.

[*Translation*]

Thanks again for your contribution.

Committee members, we are going to suspend for a few seconds to have time to thank our witnesses, and we will then move on to the second part of our meeting.

I am suspending the meeting.

• (1705)

(Pause)

• (1710)

**The Chair:** We are resuming the meeting.

The agenda shows that the second part of the meeting is set aside for committee business. Committee members have a choice: we can continue to meet publicly or we can meet in camera. If the members want to continue the meeting in camera, I will have to suspend the meeting for two or three minutes. As I said, in the second part of the meeting, we will essentially be discussing upcoming committee business.

First, I would like to make a few announcements.

On Thursday, we will hear from four witnesses; two people will be testifying during the first hour of the meeting, and two others will be testifying during the second hour.

The next week, we will be hearing from more witnesses; their names are on the witness list. As well, I would note that the list will be updated so we are able to hear testimony from a sufficient number of witnesses during our study.

[*English*]

First I have Mr. Richards, who would like to intervene.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** Thanks, Mr. Chair.

The main point of my intervention is to say that we have literally less than 15 minutes. I would ordinarily say that committee business, unless there's a reason for it not to be in camera.... There are various reasons for it not to be in camera. We quite often do that in camera, but I was going to suggest, given the limited time that we have, that we not suspend to go in camera.

Let's use part of the time that we have, especially since I don't think there's a whole lot of discussion that's going to be needed here. It sounds to me like you have this week and next planned with this study, and then there's one week before we have a break. I would like to see us try to get a report done on the study we were doing before Christmas on the rehab contract. Maybe we can get into that and end at that point.

I haven't had a lot of time to think about what should come next yet, but maybe at that point, once we've finished that review and that report, we would have an opportunity to have some further discussion, with a little more time, about what would come next. We can all come with suggestions and make a plan for it, because we have two weeks of constituency week. That could give our clerk some time to plan witnesses, or whatever the case might be.

My suggestion is that we roll through this week and next and go to work on the report that we should begin work on. We could then, during that week when we have two meetings, have some discussion about what comes next.

• (1715)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I have Mr. Samson. After him, I have Ms. Blaney.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Yes, Chair. If you had let me speak first, I would have said the same thing. I'm good with staying public.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Ms. Blaney.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Now I want to be difficult and say no, but I'm not going to do it. I'm fine with it being public.

It sounds like we need to probably plan, as per what Blake said, another public subcommittee meeting in the next while to have discussions about studies going forward.

I will remind everybody on the committee that I'm pushing really hard to have a study on women veterans. Every report we read talks about the fact that we don't know enough about women veterans. I think we need to spend some time on that, and hopefully engage the government to look into it a bit more with some fundamental recommendations.

That's all I have for my intervention.

Thank you so much, Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

As I said, we have that time to discuss. We have this week, which is okay for the session. Next week, we have....

[*Translation*]

The clerk will have to call the people who are to testify at the two meetings next week. The following two weeks are break weeks.

I think that if we discuss the upcoming studies in the time we have left, we will be able to prepare a witness list to submit to the clerk and plan the next meetings, as Ms. Blaney said.

When we come back, that is, after the break weeks, we may have a report. Can our analyst tell us whether we will be receiving the

report, and the translated version, when we come back from the break weeks?

**Mr. Jean-Rodrigue Paré (Committee Researcher):** It will all depend on when I receive the text of the contract. We are waiting for the government to provide us with the contract and a few other documents that are on the list of the consultations that took place.

The report is ready for the most part. I am waiting for those things to confirm the various items.

**The Chair:** Right.

Perhaps the clerk has been in touch with the department concerning the requests we have made.

Are we still waiting?

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Aurée Dallaire):** Yes, that's right.

On the contract, it did say "interim" in the letter and that we were going to receive it in mid-February.

On the motion adopted last Thursday, it has been sent to the department and we are awaiting an answer.

**The Chair:** Right, thank you.

[*English*]

I'd like to say to our colleague, Wilson Miao, that I'm sorry that you can't participate, but we are working on the sound with the technicians. I am so sorry about that.

Go ahead, Mr. Richards.

• (1720)

**Mr. Blake Richards:** I have a couple of questions.

You mentioned a couple of other things that you were waiting on with regard to the rehab contract. Can you elaborate on what those were and when we...?

**Mr. Jean-Rodrigue Paré:** I have a small list of documents that have been asked for from the government, the main one being the contract itself, because I want to compare it to the call for tenders.

The other thing is there was a request for a list of the consultations that had taken place. It was stated in committee, but there was supposed to be a document to support that.

Those are the documents.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** All of the documents you are waiting for are from Veterans Affairs?

**Mr. Jean-Rodrigue Paré:** Yes.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** You mentioned that they had sent that letter saying mid-February. Have we done any follow-up on the other stuff? Do we have any sense of when that will be available?

To me, if that's the only thing we're waiting on, it seems a shame that Veterans Affairs itself is essentially holding up our ability to produce a report at that point. That would seem like a shame.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** I have a point of order.

I just don't like the phrasing. Veterans Affairs is not holding us up; the translation of a contract of 700 pages is holding us up. It has nothing to do with Veterans Affairs. It's been sent and it's being translated.

Thank you.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** I'm not sure that was really a point of order, Chair, but regardless of that, the holdup—

**Mrs Cathy Wagantall:** On a point of order—

**Mr. Blake Richards:** The holdup in getting our report done is at Veterans Affairs, and that's a shame.

Could we not at least work on the parts of the report we could work on? I just think it would be nice to be able to get that out the door.

**The Chair:** We will go to Mrs. Wagantall and then Ms. Blaney.

Go ahead, Mrs. Wagantall.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** I just am a little confused. When we do a report, it has to be in both official languages. Why is this report not already in both official languages?

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** It's because it's not translated. It's being translated.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** When was it created? When it's created, is it—

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** I don't have the details. All I know is that it's a 700-page document that's being translated, and it's not completed. The translation is going to take some time.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** It wasn't being translated until we asked for it? I just need clarification.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean-Rodrigue Paré:** [Inaudible] of certain items that have to be reviewed. I will leave the details of all that for you to handle.

[English]

**The Chair:** We're going to do a follow-up on that with the department, because we are waiting for that in order to have our report. That's what we're going to do.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** I still have the floor, I thought. We got into some side conversations there, but I thought I still had the floor, because I hadn't ceded it.

My point was simply that I feel it would be nice to be able to get to work on that report.

Aside from waiting on the contracts, what's the status of that? I'm assuming you've been working on elements or portions of it. Are there parts that we could review, not next week but the following week?

Hold on; is next week our only week before the break? We have witnesses lined up right through to the break, so there is time then, but we should be able to look at something right after the break. Is that what your sense is?

If—

**Mr. Jean-Rodrigue Paré:** Right now the report is basically almost done. I was missing these parts.

I could send it to translation probably at the end of this week, just to organize the thing, and it may be early next week. They would tell us how long it would take to have the report back, but I think it would be feasible to have it after the break.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** Great. Then we can just follow up and find out where they are with the documents.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Ms. Wagantall, just before we go to you, I have Ms. Blaney.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Thank you, Chair.

This is an interesting discussion. I just find it odd as well. I support what Cathay said about a contract that's not translated into both languages. I think the only thing we need to talk about is that it should be done quickly, and the analyst is a very brave and fearless person, because he has to read that 700-page contract. Thank you for doing your work; it is much appreciated.

I just want to put on the floor again that I think we have the next two meetings, and that gets us through to a break week, and then we come back for one week. I would recommend that during that time we have a subcommittee meeting to go over what our strategies and plans are moving forward. I'm really excited to see who the Liberal will be on the committee, so I'm really excited to get it to happen. I think that's where we should go.

As for the report, hopefully we'll be able to hear by next week that it's moving along quite well. That will allow us to decide what we're going to do next. I would assume that we're going to have to have closure of one of our meetings with committee business again next week.

Thank you for that, and thank you to the analysts for reading that document.

• (1725)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I will remind all of us that we are still waiting for motions on the dates that we will discuss....

Mrs. Wagantall, the floor is yours.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Thank you.

I have a question about the witness, the one who was not able to make it today from the City of Ottawa's veterans task force. Will he be one of those witnesses in the next...?

**The Clerk:** While we were in the meeting, I was in contact with Mr. Thivierge. I offered this Thursday, but he's not available, so I suggested Monday and next Thursday. I'm waiting on a reply.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Could we ask him to be in person, since he's here in Ottawa?

**The Clerk:** It was in my request.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:** Okay, great. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Go ahead, Mr. Richards.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** First I have a suggestion, and then, just so I'm clear, do you want a motion from the committee on what we do next? I think we can have consensus, can't we?

**The Chair:** In general...

**Mr. Blake Richards:** I like basically what Rachel had to say, but I'd rather not see us cut into witnesses' time in the two meetings next week. I find that when we have two panels and we only have an hour, there isn't a lot of time. I hate when we cut into that time. Sometimes it has to happen and there's no option, but I think that in this case, it's not really the case.

We have the two-week break. Then we come back, and we're only here for a week, and then we have another constituency week.

Perhaps on Monday, when we come back from the two-week constituency break, what we could do is just schedule the subcommittee meeting then, and we make a plan. Hopefully, then, at the Thursday meeting, we can look at the report, because that will give you a few more days, and then we have a plan for when we come back from the next constituency break. Does that make sense?

**The Chair:** It makes sense.

I have Mr. Casey, Mr. Desilets and Mr. Samson.

**Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.):** At the end of next week, will we be finished with all of the witness panels on the employment study?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Sean Casey:** I wonder if one of those meetings in the first week back could be dedicated to drafting instructions on the employment study.

**The Chair:** Go ahead—

Just a second; she's going to reply.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** I have a suggestion with regard to the same...

**The Chair:** Yes, but just before, let the clerk—

**The Clerk:** I just want to fill in the witness list for the study.

The committee said six meetings, but we have more witnesses. I can send the list to the members of the committee of what we have planned for next Monday and Thursday, and after that, we still have witnesses that were suggested and other witnesses who couldn't attend. Those have been sent to you by correspondence.

Maybe I can send that to the committee, but we have more witnesses than the six meetings we have. We could continue, for example, because we do have people on the list. I can share that with the committee.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** With regard to Sean's comment, maybe what we could do, if we were to look at that Monday, is look at one hour to do committee business for planning and then one hour to do the other. We could do them both in the same meeting, right?

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Desilets.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** I'm going to explain why the idea of extending this study concerns me.

We had scheduled six meetings, and we started the third one today. So we have three left. We wanted this study. There will be a report to be produced and instructions to be given. I'm having trouble seeing when it is going to be finished. Are we talking about May or June?

I say this because we were very invested in this study, including Mr. Casey, among others, and I am in complete agreement. However, we also heard the Assistant Deputy Minister, ten days ago, when I asked him when the national strategy would be tabled, tell us clearly that it would be in the near future. In other words, it will be in a few months. So you understand my concern. Are we working for no reason? Is the report going to come before the tabling of the national strategy, or will it come after it?

So I have a question to ask the clerk.

Can we make a clear decision on the timeline? I understand it isn't easy for you, because witnesses appear and disappear, but can we identify a point in time? In the worst case scenario, we will inform the department so it can delay tabling its strategy and look at the work we have done.

I don't know whether that is clear.

• (1730)

**The Chair:** Yes.

This is what I can add at this stage, Mr. Desilets. The motion that was adopted provided for six meetings. If the members decide to take advantage of them, it would take the consent of the committee, in fact. That is why, as several people have suggested, arrangements will have to be made for a meeting of the committee to plan the work based on the best information available to us.

Before turning the floor over to Ms. Blaney, Mr. Samson wants to say something.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Mr. Chair, that doesn't answer my question.

I don't see the point in time when our study is over. Whether there are six or seven meetings, will that take us to the third week of March? With instructions to be given and the report to review, it could take us to June. That is what concerns me.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Mr. Chair, we are going to do the necessary checking and come back to the next meeting with the answer to this question about the timeline.

I agree with Mr. Desilets. We prefer to submit our report before the final decisions are made. That is our objective.

**The Chair:** Right.

Mr. Samson, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** I yield my time to Ms. Blaney.

**The Chair:** That is very kind of you.

The floor is yours, Ms. Blaney.

[*English*]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Your wisdom is increasing every day.

I really appreciate what Luc brought up, but I think those discussions really belong with the subcommittee, where we can talk about what's next.

I think we should finish the two, have the subcommittee meeting, and then hopefully be able to present to the committee as a whole a plan that will get us through until the end of June.

**The Chair:** Okay. Perfect.

With the clerk, my understanding is we're going to invite more witnesses for the study for next week on Monday and Thursday. After the break week, we will plan a subcommittee to maybe discuss the report, give instructions to the analysts, and deal with other topics.

Is that okay?

Go ahead, Madame Valdez.

**Mrs. Rechie Valdez:** I just wanted to answer Ms. Blaney's question. I will be joining the subcommittee.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Excellent.

**The Chair:** Yes. Exactly.

[*Translation*]

Is that fine with everyone?

Right. It was a good meeting. Thank you.

I see the analyst wants to say something.

**Mr. Jean-Rodrigue Paré:** Taking into account the content, the number of witnesses who testified, and the production of a report

on the current study, the one on the National Strategy for Veterans Employment After Service, in the best case scenario, that would take us to mid-April. I don't see how it could be feasible before mid-April. That is not counting the possibility of a budget being tabled, which would derail everything. So we might rather expect it will take us to May.

**The Chair:** That is the voice of experience.

Mr. Desilets, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** I'm going to be annoying again, Mr. Chair.

There were sound problems today and at the last meeting, and I'm having a bit of trouble understanding why. Tests were done before the meeting. That said, I'm not blaming anyone.

Since sound tests are done at the start of the meeting, as a rule, why are there problems? Personally, I think we looked foolish in front of the witnesses earlier.

**The Chair:** Yes, very much so.

Fortunately, the second hour was just devoted to committee business, so we were able to cut into that.

The clerk and the technicians are taking this problem very seriously. They are going to make sure that everyone who appears virtually meets the requirements, so the sound quality will be adequate for the interpreters. We are going to talk about this again this week, but we hope that everything will work on Thursday.

Does the committee agree to end the sitting?

**Some hon. members:** Yes.

• (1735)

**The Chair:** I would like to thank the entire technical team and the interpreters.

---





Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

---

### SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

---

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

---

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

---

### PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

---

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

---

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :  
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>