

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Survey reveals need for second careers after life in the Canadian Forces

Canadians wrongly believe that most veterans retire with pensions

Winnipeg, November 5, 2009 – Canadians overestimate how long the average veteran serves in the Canadian Forces (CF) and how many of them retire with pensions, according to a Nanos Research survey released today by Commissionaires in time for Remembrance Day. In reality, only about 30 percent of veterans have earned pensions when they retire from the Canadian Forces. A strong majority of those surveyed believe that at least half of veterans retire with pensions, and more than 28 percent of Canadians believe that *all* veterans do.

The Commissionaires survey also revealed other misconceptions about veterans. Most Canadians believe that the average member of the Canadian Forces serves longer than 12 years. Fully 35 percent of survey respondents believe that the average veteran retires after 20 years of service. Only 14 percent of respondents knew that the average length of service for members of the Canadian Forces is in fact 11.5 years. This means that most veterans must pursue new employment opportunities after they retire from military service to make ends meet.

“Clearly, most Canadians think that members of the Canadian Forces stay for the better part of their working lives. But we see the real story every day. Most vets leave long before they’re even eligible for a pension, so they have to pursue second and even third careers,” observed Paul Guindon, Chairman of Commissionaires. “That’s why Commissionaires was founded in 1925 with the social mandate to provide meaningful employment for vets. Since then, we’ve hired tens of thousands of former Canadian Forces personnel.”

The survey results for the Prairie provinces have been broken out from the national numbers and analyzed. Prairie respondents led the country in knowing that less than a third of veterans retire with pensions when they leave the Canadian Forces. Among respondents in the Prairie provinces, 22.3 percent answered correctly while the national average was only 16.6 percent.

“What the survey results say to me is that all Canadians need to learn and think a bit more about what the lives of our men and women in the Canadian Forces are like after they’ve left the service,” observed Tom Reimer, CEO Commissionaires Manitoba. “Canadians clearly believe we as Canadians have an obligation to help find vets jobs that use their advanced skills and training. That’s just what we do at Commissionaires.”

For the second year in a row, eighty-nine percent of respondents believe that Canadians have an obligation to ensure that veterans find meaningful employment after they have left the Canadian Forces.

“You must understand that for many vets, retiring from the Canadian Forces is a big step and a big change,” commented Wayne Boesch of Commissionaires Manitoba. “The culture at Commissionaires and the chance to use my community safety and security experience made the transition easy.”

To view and download Commissionaires B-roll footage, go to:

<http://www.thornleyfallis.com/commissionaires/>

About the survey

The survey was conducted in September 2009 by Nanos Research. It was a random telephone survey of 1,002 Canadians proportionally distributed across the country. The margin of accuracy for a sample of 1,002 is ± 3.1 percent 19 times out of 20.

About Commissionaires

Commissionaires was founded to provide meaningful employment for former Canadian Forces and RCMP personnel. This not for profit organization has long been recognized as Canada's premier security provider, protecting people and property for public and private sector clients from coast to coast. While employing leading-edge technology in delivering security services, Commissionaires has remained true to its roots by providing employment to those making the transition to civilian life after active service in the military and police forces. The organization also hires many reliable and responsible individuals without military or police experience. Commissionaires' services and security solutions include: security guarding, enforcement, identification services, training and security consulting. The integrity, strong work ethic, proven skills and discipline of Commissionaires give clients confidence and security everyday, everywhere.

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