1. **NUMBER – TITLE OF TASK AUTHORIZATION**

TA 18 - Literature Review and Analysis on the Mental Health and Well-being of Military Veterans during Canadian Military to Civilian Transition (MCT)

2. **VALIDATION OF SCOPE OF CONTRACT**

2.1 The following task(s), as written in the SOW of the main contract (W7714-145967/001/SV) apply to this Task Authorization (TA): Literature Reviews - Conduct state-of-the-art reviews of the scientific, policy and governmental documents (literatures).

3. **ACRONYMS**

CAF Canadian Armed Forces
CIMVHR Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research
DND Department of National Defence
MCT Military to Civilian Transition
R2CL Road to Civilian life
SA Scientific Authority
TA Task Authorization
SOW Statement of Work
VAC Veterans Affairs Canada

4. **REQUIREMENT**

4.1 In support of this goal, Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) requires a literature review and analysis summarizing published expert opinion and scientific evidence on the mental health\(^1\) and well-being\(^2\) of military Veterans\(^3\) in the peri-release\(^4\) period of MCT. While VAC’s focus is on the peri-release period of Military to Civilian Transition (MCT), documentation related to transition outside this period that is considered relevant (i.e., which may have an impact on peri-release MCT) should not be excluded. The Department has specific requirements for the literature review and analysis that are provided in this SOW.

5. **BACKGROUND**

5.1 VAC has launched a five-year program of research to close the knowledge gaps in understanding and supporting Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members/Veterans undergoing MCT. The program, called Road to Civilian Life (R2CL), will focus on the mental health and well-being of transitioning CAF members during the peri-release (see definition in table above) MCT period. MCT is a highly individualized, multidimensional experience. There is anecdotal evidence and emerging consensus among researchers internationally that the peri-release period is particularly stressful and can have later life well-being consequences.

5.2 There is a considerable body of MCT research literature. Exploratory narrative literature reviews have been published by VAC (Sweet and Thompson 2009) and the Department of National Defence (DND) (Watkins 2011) in recent years. The U.S. Institute of Medicine conducted a comprehensive literature review on readjustment needs of U.S. military members and their families following deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan (IOM 2013).

5.3 There is need for an updated literature review and analysis focused on the peri-release MCT period. The VAC review in 2009 did not synthesize the literature and demonstrated that the MCT literature has grown from a trickle after the Second World War to an accelerating rate in recent years. The DND review in 2011 is four years old now and was not specifically focused on the peri-release period. The US IOM review in 2013 was focused on the U.S. military experience, however there are considerable differences culturally between the two nations which could be significant, and the review was not focused specifically on MCT. There is now a very large MCT research literature worldwide in government reports, reports of expert panels, and scientific journals and books.

6. **OBJECTIVE**

6.1 The overall goal of R2CL is to enhance the mental health and well-being of CAF Veterans during MCT to facilitate an optimal transition to civilian life. The purpose of this Literature Review and Analysis is summarizing published expert opinion and scientific evidence on the mental health and well-being of military Veterans in the peri-release period of MCT.

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\(^1\) See “Language of Mental Health” section on page 26 of Reference Document (Annex A).

\(^2\) Refers to a person’s satisfaction with life; feeling fulfilled; ability to care for themselves and dependents; resilience in the face of life’s challenges; security in the determinants of health; and ability to function and participate in their work, family and community lives.

\(^3\) A former CAF member with at least one day of service. This definition is consistent with legislation authorizing VAC to provide benefits and services to former members.

\(^4\) The period around release from service, from a few months prior to about two years after.
7. SCOPE

7.1 The Sub Contractor will conduct all planning, coordination and execution necessary to carry out the components of the environmental scan.

8. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS & REFERENCES

8.1 To provide additional background information, the paper “Backgrounder for the Road to Civilian Life (R2CL) Program of Research” is attached as Appendix A.

9. TASKS TO BE PERFORMED

9.1 Consult and collaborate with the Scientific Authority (SA) to clarify the research question(s) and to understand the current Canadian military/Veteran context and to share interim findings.

9.2 Conduct a literature review and analysis summarizing published expert opinion and scientific evidence to:

- Identify types of mental health trajectories lived by CAF members/Veterans in the peri-release MCT period.
- Identify determinants of the mental health and well-being of CAF members/Veterans during the peri-release MCT period that would include the following domains:
  - Psychological adaptation
  - Mental health and physical health
  - Ability/disability with respect to participation in life roles at work, school and/or in the community
  - Employment
  - Income and financial well-being
  - Family
  - Social factors
  - Administrative dimension
  - Institutional dimension
  - Others that arise
- Summarize evidence for interventions intended to mitigate the effects of stressors encountered during peri-release MCT and optimize the mental health and well-being of CAF Veterans.
- Identify methodologies used to conduct research on the mental health and well-being of CAF members/Veterans in the peri-release MCT period.
- Identify knowledge gaps in the mental health and well-being of CAF Veterans during the peri-release MCT period.
- Identify the impact of MCT experiences on later life and well-being.
- Summarize conceptual frameworks for mental health and well-being in MCT.

9.3 Adopt a formal methodology framework for conducting and reporting the review and analysis.

9.4 Develop search strategies to identify papers and reports pertaining to peri-release MCT conceptual frameworks, the mental health and well-being experience of CAF Veterans undergoing MCT, determinants of mental health and well-being in MCT, the needs of military members and Veterans undergoing MCT, the types of supports they access during MCT, and effectiveness of programs and services designed to optimize their transition outcomes.

9.5 Systematically assess the evidence and use narrative methodology to synthesize the evidence, organize the literature into themes and answer the research questions.

9.6 Describe and use a method to assess and communicate strength of evidence and certainty of conclusions.

9.7 Participate in teleconferences with the VAC SA to provide progress updates upon awarding of the TA and at two additional points to be determined at the first teleconference.

9.8 Prepare a written report for the SA documenting the approach to the literature review and analysis, including the question, the methodology and the findings.

10. DELIVERABLES (DESCRIPTION AND SCHEDULES)

10.1 The Sub Contractor must complete and submit the following deliverables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable Number</th>
<th>Task reference</th>
<th>Description (Quantity and Format) and Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>9.1-9.7</td>
<td>By December 4, 2015, share interim findings with the SA. Further details will be discussed at the initial teleconference noted in subsection 9.7.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 10.1               | 9.1-9.8        | Draft Report including the following sections at a minimum must be submitted to the SA for proof-reading by 13 January 2016
  - Executive Summary
  - Introduction
  - Research Question(s) |
Methodology
Findings
Mental health and well-being trajectories during peri-release MCT
Determinants of mental health and well-being during peri-release MCT
Interventions
Impact of MCT on later life and well-being
Analysis
Strength of Evidence
Gaps in Existing Evidence Base
Recommendations for Future Research
References

Inclusion criteria:

- Qualitative and quantitative studies
- Single studies and reviews of multiple studies
- Peer-reviewed journal papers and books
- Research reports and expert opinion consensus statements authored by government researchers and non-governmental organizations
- First priority: studies of Canadian military members and Veterans.
- Second priority: Studies in other nations
- English language
- Publications since 2000

A Final Report addressing issues and feedback from the SA on the Draft Report must be completed and submitted no later than 2 February 2016

11. MANDATORY SELECTION CRITERIA

11.1 When considering the proposals from candidates, the review process will consider the following evaluation criteria:

- One or more senior investigators with an MD or a PhD in a relevant discipline;
- Overall research experience and capabilities of the applicant and team members;
- Educational and work experience conducting research with military and/or Veteran populations;
- Familiarity with military and/or Veteran issues;
- Expertise and experience in the area of mental health and well-being research; and
- Potential conflict(s) of interest for applicant and/or team members.

12. LANGUAGE OF WORK

12.1 Documentation and deliverables must be submitted in the English language.

13. LOCATION OF WORK

13.1 The work must be performed on the Sub Contractor’s site.

14. TRAVEL

14.1 The Sub Contractor will not be required to travel.

15. MEETINGS

15.1 The Sub Contractor will be required to meet with the SA by teleconference upon awarding of the TA and at intervals specified in Section 9 to provide progress updates.

16. GOVERNMENT SUPPLIED MATERIAL (GSM)

16.1 None

17. GOVERNMENT FURNISHED EQUIPMENT (GFE)

17.1 None

18. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS OR CONSTRAINTS

18.1 None

19. SECURITY

19.1 The Sub Contractor will not require access to PROTECTED and/or CLASSIFIED information or asset, nor to restricted access areas
ANNEX A

- STATEMENT OF WORK -
Task Authorization (TA) - 18

For Subcontract with CIMVHR

X Not applicable ☐ RELIABILITY STATUS ☐ PROTECTED A ☐ PROTECTED B

20. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP) OWNERSHIP

20.1 The Sub Contractor will own any Foreground IP created by virtue of the main contract (W7714-145967/001/SV).

21. CONTROLLED GOODS

X Not applicable
☐ Applicable

22. BUDGET

The Sub Contractor will be paid by CIMVHR as per the terms of Contract # W7714-145967 between Defence Research and Development Canada and CIMVHR. The amount of funding available is allocated by fiscal year (April 1-March 31st) and is approximately $34,000.00. Details TBD upon award.

A draft budget will be submitted with the proposal along with a budget justification and a detailed budget will be developed post award in consultation with CIMVHR. Interested parties should request budget documents and information on creating their budget from Jocelyne Halladay.