



Tristan Stewart-Robertson &lt;istomorrow@gmail.com&gt;

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## Your media query re Transition Support

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**MAUREEN.LAMOTHE@forces.gc.ca** <MAUREEN.LAMOTHE@forces.gc.ca>  
To: istomorrow@gmail.com

24 January 2014 21:10

Hi Tristan,

Please find below my signature block the information you requested on transition support to members of the Canadian Armed Forces. Let me know if you need anything else! If you could send a link once your piece is published, that would be greatly appreciated. Thanks for your patience on this.

Cheers,

Maureen Lamothe  
Communications Advisor | Conseillère en communications  
CMP and Legal Services | CPM et Services juridiques  
[MAUREEN.LAMOTHE@forces.gc.ca](mailto:MAUREEN.LAMOTHE@forces.gc.ca)  
Téléphone | Telephone 613-943-6145

The care and support of ill and injured Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members and their families is a top priority for the CAF and the Department of National Defence.

The CAF's comprehensive approach to supporting our members takes into account all phases of treatment and rehabilitation – from the onset of illness or injury to the return to work or transition to civilian life.

The goal of CAF support and care is to return personnel to duty as soon as medically possible. Following rehabilitation, and only if members cannot deploy and meet the exigencies of operations, they may eventually be released from the CAF. Upon release, care and support continue through Veterans Affairs Canada.

CAF leadership is dedicated to ensuring each and every ill and injured member receives high quality care and support. Whether our personnel are on the road to recovery, rehabilitation, returning to work in the CAF, or transitioning to civilian life, support and guidance are available to them.

For more information on the CAF's comprehensive approach go to: [Caring for our Own](http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/about-reports-pubs-health/caring-for-our-own.page) [<http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/about-reports-pubs-health/caring-for-our-own.page>].

### Universality of Service

In the civilian workplace, employees perform only those duties specified in their job description. In contrast, military service requires that at all times all personnel must be capable of performing a broad range of military tasks, such as common defence and security duties, in addition to the specific duties associated with their military occupations.

This Canadian Armed Forces' Universality of Service principle is also known as the "soldier first" principle, identifying the men and women of the CAF as members of the profession of arms before they are identified by their specific function, such as pharmacist, logistics officer or pilot. Every member, regardless of military occupation, must meet the Universality of Service standards in order to remain in the CAF.

Universality of Service is not a new principle. It has formally existed since at least 1985. It is imposed by section 33(1) of the *National Defence Act*, which states that all Regular Force members are "at all times liable to perform any lawful duty." This legislative imperative means that a member who cannot "at all times ... perform any lawful duty" may not serve in the Regular Force except during a limited period of recovery from injury or illness as a period of transition back into military service, for those whose impairment is only temporary, or out of the military and into civilian life, for those permanently unable to meet the liability imposed by the Act..

### Medical release

At the same time, the CAF are required to take the measures necessary to maintain the capacity to field a prepared and operationally effective military force capable of performing designated tasks.

Ill and injured personnel are given the time and care they need to recover and rehabilitate before any administrative action is taken with regard to their career. Depending on the type of injuries or illness this time period can range anywhere from a couple of months to a few years on average. Once the member's medical condition is stable, a medical assessment is conducted which may include Medical Employment Limitations. These limitations lead to an individual assessment to determine whether or not the individual concerned can still comply with the fundamental requirements of military service as described by Universality of Service. Essentially, an individual will belong to one of the following categories:

- a. Meets Universality of Service: those who are assigned minor Medical Employment Limitations and meet Universality of Service standards will return to full service in their previous, or in some cases another, military occupation.
- b. Not in compliance with Universality of Service - Employable: those who are assigned permanent Medical Employment Limitations that do not comply with the Universality of Service principles, but who are employable in some capacity and wish to remain in the CAF, may be retained for up to three years. This transitional period of service will only be engaged if a personnel shortage exists in the member's military occupation, or there is a requirement for the member's particular skill set. Otherwise, the member will be transitioned to civilian life and will get the opportunity to initiate a vocational rehabilitation program. If desired, the member can also receive support to transition to other career options, including consideration for possible employment within the Cadet Organizations and Administrative and Training Service and the Canadian Rangers.

In preparation for release, CAF members are entitled to the Second Career Assistance Network and transition seminars for medical releases providing information on career transition services, benefits and services provided by several programs available through various CAF agencies prior to release, the Service Income Security Insurance Plan – Long Term Disability, and Veterans Affairs Canada, which could span from six months to three years to ensure a smooth transition into the civilian life.

- c. Not in compliance with Universality of Service - Severely ill or injured: those who are assigned Medical Employment Limitations that do not comply with Universality of Service principles, and who are severely ill or injured with complex career transition needs, may be retained in the CAF for a period of transition up to three years from the time their agreed transition plan is finalized and a release instruction issued. They will receive support to transition to other career options, including consideration for employment within the Cadet Organizations and Administrative and Training Service and the Canadian Rangers if desired.

These individuals work one-on-one with a multidisciplinary transition team to develop a tailored and flexible plan that features comprehensive health care, social and transition support. In preparation for release, they are entitled to a range of transition services and benefits provided by several programs available through various CAF agencies prior to release, the Service Income Security Insurance Plan – Long Term Disability, and Veterans Affairs Canada.

## Support programs

The CAF and Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) partner at many levels to support ill and injured military personnel and their families. When a member faces medical release, the CAF and VAC work closely together with members and their families to establish a comprehensive, individualized case plan to meet their needs.

VAC has the legislated mandate to provide care and support for military personnel following their release from the CAF. Together, both organizations, along with other service partners, offer many benefits and services to assist with a successful transition to civilian life, such as comprehensive rehabilitation, vocational services,

health care, financial benefits and mental health support.

For more information on support programs, please visit the following resources:

Canadian Armed Forces Transition Program: <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/news/article.page?doc=canadian-armed-forces-transition-assistance-program/hkz4ci8i>

CAF Member Assistance Program: <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/caf-community-support-services-map/member-assistance-program.page>

Integrated Personnel Support Centres: <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/services/information-for/caf/ipsc>

Personalized Case Management: <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/services/transition/case-management>

Disability Benefits: <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/services/after-injury/disability-benefits>

Rehabilitation Services: <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/services/transition/rehabilitation>

Operational Stress Injury Social Support Program: <http://www.osiss.ca/en/media.html>

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**From:** Tristan Stewart-Robertson [mailto:[istomorrow@gmail.com](mailto:istomorrow@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Wednesday, 22, January, 2014 12:57 PM

**To:** Lamothe M@ADM(PA) CMP & Legal@Ottawa-Hull

**Subject:** Re: Your media query re Transition Support

I think Friday will have to be my deadline on this or I'll never finish the piece (not your fault, other interviews, so I'll make that my cut off for everything).

Cheers

Tristan

On 22 January 2014 17:54, <[MAUREEN.LAMOTHE@forces.gc.ca](mailto:MAUREEN.LAMOTHE@forces.gc.ca)> wrote:

Hi Tristan,

I'm still working on your response and making sure it's as fulsome as possible. Unfortunately, I'm having trouble finalizing some of the information. When is your absolute deadline? This may help me push things a bit on my end!

Thanks,

Maureen Lamothe

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\*\*[www.tomorrow.is](http://www.tomorrow.is)

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