



EDMONTON UNITED SERVICES INSTITUTE
PRESIDENT'S ENEWS
JANUARY 2024

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President's Comments

Happy New Year to you all and may the new year bring you good health and fortune.

2023 has been a relatively successful year for EUSI. We have seen an increased membership and improved communications through the EUSI website. Our visibility in the community at large has also been increased through our activities, which helps to bring to view defence and security concerns.

For the coming year, I hope to continue to recruit new members and have a closer relationship with other United Services Institutes in Calgary and Vancouver. As a member of EUSI, please do what you can to recruit at least one new member for this year.



Kung Hai Fat Choy is the Chinese equivalent of Happy New Year but means wishing you the fortune of unexpected wealth. The Chinese New Year falls on February 10, 2024, the year of the Dragon. The Orthodox New Year falls on January 13, 2024. **щасливого Нового року, Happy New year in Ukrainian.**

Congratulations

We congratulate to Captain Andrew Gordey CD, who was promoted to Captain from Master Warrant Officer through a military promotional system called Commissioned From the Ranks (CFR). This means Andy is now part of the King's Canadian Commissioned Officer and will receive a Commission Scroll, signed by the Governor General of Canada on behalf of His Majesty, King Charles. I heard that you have to walk on water to be CFR. The usual military custom is Andy buys the next round.

Other member News

Our long time past secretary, Capt John Pinsent, has recently moved from his home to a seniors retirement community in the Windemere area. John is still sharp as a nail but getting weaker physically. This move will ensure he continue to live a life of leisure. Her still owes me a Rum and Coke. I will cash in on that next time I go visit him.

Donation to the Veterans Foodbank

The EUSI is founding member of the Edmonton Salutes Committee and remains actively involved in ESC activities.

From: **CanadaHelps** <notifications@canadahelps.org>

Date: Thu, Dec 14, 2023 at 1:39 PM

Subject: Thank you for your donation to the Veterans Association Food Bank

To: The Edmonton Salutes Committee <edmontonsalutes@edmonton.ca>



With gratitude and appreciation for your generous donation for VAFB-Edmonton Area this holiday season, we send a huge thank you. With special thanks for helping us support and enrich the lives of Veterans and their families this season and throughout the year.

Happy Holidays to you and those you love.

Veterans Association Food Bank

Your donation was processed by CanadaHelps. As a registered charity, CanadaHelps offers a secure, low-cost donation and fundraising platform for small and medium-sized charities in Canada. To learn more about CanadaHelps, visit www.canadahelps.org.

MWO (retired) Leo Boyd is a director of the Veteran Food Bank.



ATTACK

A dawn the ridge emerges massed and dun
In the wild purple of the glow'ring sun,
Smouldering through spouts of drifting smoke that
shroud
The menacing scarred slope; and, one by one,
Tanks creep and topple forward to the wire.
The barrage roars and lifts. Then, clumsily bowed
With bombs and guns and shovels and battle-gear,

Men jostle and climb to meet the bristling fire.
Lines of grey, muttering faces, masked with fear,
They leave their trenches, going over the top,
While time ticks blank and busy on their wrists,
And hope, with furtive eyes and grappling fists,
Flounders in mud. O Jesus, make it stop!

Edmonton Cenotaph



HUMOUR

Submitted by our learned LCol GG McLean, former Air born, former Van Doos, and former CO of LER. .

Our world today explained.

The Italian – throws the cup, breaks it, and walks away in a fit of rage.

The German – carefully washes the cup, sterilizes it, and makes a new cup of coffee.

The Frenchman – takes out the fly and drinks the coffee.

The Chinese – eats the fly and throws away the coffee.

The Russian – Drinks the coffee with the fly, since it was extra at no charge.

The Israeli – sells the coffee to the Frenchman, sells the fly to the Chinese, sells the cup to the Italian, drinks a cup of tea, and uses the extra money to invent a device that prevents flies from falling into coffee.

The Palestinian – blames the Israelis for the fly falling into his coffee, protests the act of aggression to the UN, takes a loan from the European Union to buy a new cup of coffee, uses the money to purchase explosives and then blows up the coffee house where the Italian, the Frenchman, the Chinese, the German and the Russian are all trying to explain to the Israeli that he should give away his cup of coffee to the Palestinian so there will be peace.



Get trained!





War in Ukraine

The following article reprinted from Forbes News, David Axe, Journalist, war correspondent.

It's not for no reason the Russian assault on Avdiivka, a key Ukrainian stronghold in eastern Ukraine's Donbas region, seems to be stalling out.

There are indications the Ukrainians have deployed their new drone and counter-drone strategy: targeting the radio-jammers the Russians use to ground Ukrainian drones while setting up their *own* jammers to ground *Russian* drones.

"The Ukrainian advantage in electronic warfare seems to be holding in this sector," analyst Donald Hill wrote in fellow analyst Tom Cooper's newsletter. "The number of Ukrainian drone attacks have increased. A lot. The number of Russian drone attacks have decreased by the same amount."

That's encouraging for advocates of a free Ukraine as the winter deepens and Russia launches its traditional cold-weather attacks in several sectors of the 600-mile front line.

Avdiivka is the locus of these winter assaults. After failing to capture the city's ruins with vehicular attacks and then also failing with infantry attacks that cost them 17,000 casualties, the Russians pivoted to an aerial assault—sending explosive first-person-view drones, some outfitted for night flights, to harry Ukrainian supply lines in the hope of strangling the garrison and forcing it to withdraw.

That the Ukrainians are grounding the drones before they can attack, and also preventing the *Russians* from grounding *Ukrainian* drones, means the Ukrainians' supply lines might stay open—and the Russians' supply lines might fray.

"There is no telling how long Ukraine will have this advantage, but it's currently saving Ukrainian lives," Hill wrote.

As small, explosives-laden drones steadily have become some of the most dangerous weapons in Russia's 22-month wider war on Ukraine, electronic defenses against these drones—as well as against unarmed unmanned aerial vehicles both sides use for reconnaissance—have become indispensable.

The force with the radio-jammer advantage is in a position to control the air over the battlefield. More and more, the Ukrainian military holds this advantage. Note the recent videos depicting Ukrainian attacks on Russian jammers near Avdiivka, and the *other* videos depicting Russian drones tumbling from the sky over Avdiivka.

Ukrainian forces' apparent jamming edge is no accident. Kyiv lately has chosen to prioritize electronic warfare, a traditional strength of Moscow's forces. When Gen. Valerii Zaluzhnyi, commander-in-chief of Ukraine's armed forces, recently listed his troops' most urgent needs, electronic-warfare systems tied with command, counter-mine, counter-artillery and air-defense systems.

"Every piece of equipment must be protected by electronic warfare," Mykhailo Fedorov, Ukraine's minister of digital transformation, said in October. "Every trench, every location of our soldiers must be protected by electronic warfare to analyze the frequencies at which enemy drones fly. This is a huge systematic work and a new doctrine of modern technological warfare."

The first hint that Ukraine's jam-first approach to operations might work came in late summer, as Kyiv's forces prepared the left bank of the Dnipro River in Russian-occupied southern Kherson Oblast for an impending river-crossing operation by the Ukrainian marine corps.

Before the marines boarded their boats for their successful attack on the left-bank settlement of Krynky, Ukrainian electronic-warfare troops, artillery gunners and drone-operators struck Russian jammers and grounded Russian drones. The result: for several months now, the Ukrainians have controlled the air over Krynky, helping them to hold onto their narrow bridgehead in the settlement.

The implications of Krynky and Avdiivka are profound. The Ukrainians have figured out a new way of winning.

Whether they can sustain it, and scale it, depends in large part on foreign aid. Many of Ukraine's radio-jammers have come from the United States, most recently in September as part of a \$600-million aid package.

American aid is about to end, however. U.S. president Joe Biden has proposed \$61 billion in new funding for Ukraine. But pro-Russia Republicans in the U.S. Congress voted down the funding after demanding, as a precondition, that Biden effectively end refugees' right to asylum in the United States.

Follow David Axe on [Twitter](#). Check out his [website](#) or some of his other work [here](#). Send him a secure [tip](#).



[David Axe](#)



Overhaul of Program to Help Military Personnel Move into Civilian Jobs | Military.com

The Canadian Forces Liaison Council (CFLC) was established decades ago with help by then John Eaton of the Eatons Department Store. Since then, this organization has been successfully in advocating employers ensuring Reservists retain their employment and benefits while deployed for military duties.

However, there has no equivalent organization advocating serving soldiers entering retirement or plan to retire from the Canadian Forces. The following is a well researched article by Pavan Acharya of the subject.

-- Pavan Acharya is an undergraduate student at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism covering national security in Washington. Pavan has interned at Midstory, a Midwestern-based media hub, and was a managing editor at The Daily Northwestern.

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/12/13/advocates-call-overhaul-of-program-help-military-personnel-move-civilian-jobs.html/amp>

For decades, service members have trudged into offices for presentations on potential careers after they separate from the military as part of the Transition Assistance Program, or [TAP](#). It's a rite of passage that was meant to help combat what have been stubbornly high unemployment rates for veterans.

But many veterans and their advocates are frustrated with the program, viewing it as insufficient to help transitioning troops and inadequately supported by commanders who often see it as a box-checking exercise and fail to allocate enough time for departing service members to learn much. Among their top complaints: TAP provides too much information in too little time and often pushes troops to pursue outside resources.

"It's the job of the military to help you support the military. It's not to get you out and put you into a civilian career and help you figure out who you want to be when you take that uniform off," said Mike Greenwood, an [Army](#) veteran who now runs veterans services at the COMMIT Foundation. "Their commitment to you ends when you walk out the door."

Greenwood sat through TAP classes himself in late 2006 and early 2007 but felt that instructors were pushing him toward trade jobs when he wanted to be a banker.

Given the stark differences between military and civilian life and workforces, TAP is supposed to provide necessary resources for service members -- many of whom signed up in their teens and may have never needed to look for a full-time job or career -- as they navigate leaving the military.

Recent studies have indicated that a higher percentage of the 250,000 active service members who transition out of the military each year are now struggling than in previous decades.

A 2022 [study](#) from the National Library of Medicine found that more than 60% of veterans in the post-9/11 era have reported difficulty in moving on to civilian life, whereas veterans of earlier eras were at roughly 25%.

Most troops do not start TAP at least a year prior to their departure, even though it is required by law as a means of making sure enough time is dedicated to planning for transition.

A 2023 [report](#) by the Government Accountability Office found that, among those who left the military from early April 2021 through late March 2023, more than 70% did not start TAP on time, and more than one-third began TAP less than six months before leaving -- offering little time to take advantage of the program.

Army veteran Princess Gibbs, who served from 2003 up until June this year, began TAP in late summer 2022. She had to start TAP about a month later than she originally planned due to existing responsibilities within her unit.

When Gibbs was finally able to start the program, she found the information provided to be both "beneficial" and overwhelming.

"By the time your unit gives you that space and opportunity, it's just so much all at one time," Gibbs said. "For some people, it just becomes a check on the box."

Today, Gibbs owns and operates "Better You, Better Us," an online life-coaching business she founded in 2020. She wanted to start the company a few years prior to departing the military due to "transitional problems" she had heard about.

TAP, which was started in 1991, offers mandatory courses for transitioning service members that include "standardized learning objectives," according to the Defense Department website. However, for each person leaving the military, the program typically does not follow a specific schedule.

TAP has expanded since its inception, with the program providing pre-separation counseling for service members starting in 2011. The veteran unemployment rate today is 2.7%, a nearly 5 percentage point decrease since the 2011 TAP overhaul, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, though the overall national unemployment rate has also dipped substantially in that period as well.

But Greenwood said information offered during TAP courses and counseling can still be overwhelming for service members.

"Starting TAP in the last year is really just taking a Thanksgiving dinner plate, throwing everything on the plate and not even knowing if you like everything," he said.

According to a statement from the Defense Human Resources Activity to Military.com, the Defense Department is working to improve the timeliness of initial transition counseling. The DoD is one of several government organizations -- including the Departments of Labor, Homeland Security, Education and Veterans Affairs, among other agencies -- that work to provide TAP.

The statement said that the Defense Department and other agencies involved with TAP have "developed Corrective Action Plans" to increase transitioning counsel guidance. Additionally, the TAP Interagency Executive Council has started multiple reviews to identify best practices and areas in need of support for the program.

Similar to Greenwood, Army veteran Jacob Pachter -- who served from 2017 through 2022 -- also wanted to enter a non-vocational field following his service: consulting. But Pachter said he found TAP courses to be "largely unhelpful" and pursued resources outside of the program instead.

Through the Army's Career Skills Program -- an offshoot of the Defense Department's SkillBridge program -- Pachter was hired as an intern at the consulting firm Deloitte, where he works full time today.

Pachter called CSP the "single best program" for his military transition but added he was able to find it only through personal research.

"I don't think the average soldier would probably be aware of a lot of these programs or know how to interact with them," he said.

Better advertising and expanding programs like DoD SkillBridge could help transitioning service members gain experience in fields they are interested in pursuing post-military careers in, Pachter added.

However, the GAO's report noted that service members who start TAP later are typically unable to take advantage of the DoD SkillBridge Program, whose opportunities take place during the final six months of a service member's time in the military.

Employment rates also vary for recently transitioned service members, depending on when they completed their transition programs.

A Department of Labor study citing data from 2014 to 2021 determined that service members who completed TAP or its predecessor program at least six months before leaving the military were more likely to be employed after departing than those who completed it closer to their departure date.

New legislation sponsored by Republicans and Democrats in the House and Senate is trying to address some of the problems cited by veterans -- but with a stalled Congress and ongoing funding battle between both parties, it seems unlikely it will be passed any time soon.

The TAP Promotion Act, which has different versions in the House and Senate, would allow accredited representatives from veterans service organizations, or VSOs, to participate in TAP classes and help

transitioning service members file Benefits Delivery at Discharge claims, which includes disability compensation benefits.

While both versions of the legislation are almost identical in content, the House bill prioritizes the ability of chartered VSOs to interact with service members, whereas the Senate version gives equal priority to all accredited VSOs, including those at the state and county levels.

"The whole idea is to make the transition from active-duty status to veteran status as smooth and seamless as possible and as advantageous for the soon-to-be veteran," Sen. Angus King (I-Maine) said in an interview with Military.com about the TAP Promotion Act. King is one of four senators -- including Republicans and Democrats -- who introduced the bill in September.

Sponsors of the Senate version of the TAP Promotion Act aim to have the bill go through the committee process early next year prior to a vote on the floor, a veterans policy staffer familiar with the legislation said.

King added, however, that while he hopes the legislation can pass on its own, it may need to be attached to a "larger vehicle" like the National Defense Authorization Act for 2025.

Greenwood believes that TAP should further collaborate with vetted nonprofit VSOs like the COMMIT Foundation where he works to fill gaps it is unable to meet for service members between 12 to 24 months before their departures. But he also said the legislation could represent a potential "great change."

"The goal is to take care of [service members]. The goal is not just to be there," he said of VSOs. "The act of saying, 'Hey, we're allowing people in.' That's huge."



CANADIAN GEAR

LONG RANGE SNIPER WEAPON (LRSW)



The Long-Range Sniper Weapon provides snipers with a rifle that can deliver highly accurate fire against hard targets at ranges of up to 1800 meters. It is rugged and performs well under extreme climactic conditions. The rifle is a heavy-barrel, bolt action detachable box magazine-fed weapon with a five-shot capacity. The weapon was introduced in the fall of 2000.



2024 EUSI ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

The 2024 ERUSI Annual Symposium will be held on Saturday, March 9th, 2024, at the Edmonton Inn and Convention Centre at Edmonton Kingsway. Symposium will commence with breakfast at 0830 hours with welcoming comments and the program commences at 0900 hrs. There will be the annual Mess Dinner to commence at 1800 for reception and 1830 for dinner. We have assembled very impressive speakers to speak on the Ukrainian/Russian War two years later and impact for the world and Canada in the future. Economy, trade, oil embargo, blockade for grain export, and drone wars are all topics to be discussed. The Commander 3rd Division is the keynote speaker for the dinner.

An invitation and RSVP will be enclosed for the Feb Newsletter. Please mark the date on your calendar.



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership for EUSI is from January 01 to December 31. No prorates and is still \$25.00 per year. We are now able to provide tax certificate if anyone wants to give a donation. Please send renewal and cheque, payable to EUSI, to President, EUSI, 11035 – 163 Ave., NW, Edmonton, Alberta. T5X2A2 Please provide updates on contact information, including address, telephone number, and Email address. This is to assist our membership secretary to maintain updated list at all times.

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