MEDIA RELEASE
Commissionaires marks a century of service to Canada

OTTAWA, Monday, July 21, 2025 – On Friday, July 25, Commissionaires Canada will celebrate its 100th anniversary. The organization was founded in 1925 to create meaningful employment for veterans of the First World War. It has now grown into one of the country's most trusted security providers and, with approximately 3,500 veterans, it is Canada's largest employer of veterans.

In 1859, Captain Sir Edward Walter established the original British Corps of Commissionaires in London, England to provide employment for wounded soldiers. The first eight members were veterans of the Crimean War, all amputees due to their battlefield service.

In 1915, H.R.H. Prince Arthur, the Duke of Connaught, then-Governor General of Canada, approached the Military Hospitals Commission to propose a Canadian version of the UK Corps. A decade later, that vision came to fruition. On July 25, 1925, the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires was founded by Letters Patent in Montréal. Soon after, in 1927, the first three branches were established in Montréal, Toronto, and Vancouver.

Commissionaires expanded its mandate in 1947 to include former members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, reinforcing its commitment to supporting those who had dedicated their lives to national security. In 1950, following Newfoundland's entry into Canadian Confederation, the Corps established a presence in the new province. With this last Division to join, it solidified Commissionaires' operations nationwide.

In the decades that followed, the Corps' workforce evolved. Female veterans and first responders were welcomed as commissionaires. In the 1990s, the Corps also began employing non-veterans to meet the rising demand for security services. Today, amid rapid growth and change, Commissionaires remains a not-for-profit with a social mandate, "to provide meaningful employment that meets the needs of veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, their families and others who wish to contribute to the security and well-being of Canadians."

"The Centennial is a celebration of our history and recognition of a powerful founding purpose," said Gord Winkel, Commissionaires National Board Chair. *"Commissionaires was founded to serve those who served, and that commitment remains at the heart of everything we do. We are proud to carry that legacy forward as we support the changing needs of veterans and Canadian communities*."

As technology advances, Commissionaires continues to evolve, enhancing the skillsets of its employees and providing new services. People may know the company for its traditional services such as guarding, but it now offers integrated services such as cybersecurity, surveillance, alarm response, fingerprinting, and background screening.

To mark this historic occasion, special events span the 2025 year bringing together employees, clients, partners, and community members. In March, a commemorative dinner was held at the Montréal Eaton Centre's restored 9th floor space in which the design is set to the 1930s, a perfect nod to the Corps' beginnings. The T. Eaton Company Ltd was Commissionaires' first major private client. In June, a special evening was hosted at Ottawa's Fairmont Château Laurier during the company's Annual Meeting of Divisions. Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada, was in attendance and delivered inspiring remarks.

Other activities include flag-raising ceremonies at city halls, participation in various community parades (including recently at the Calgary Stampede), and the illumination of the CN Tower (Toronto) and the Provencher Bridge (Winnipeg) in Commissionaires orange and blue on July 25.

All Canadians are invited to join the celebration by visiting a Commissionaires Centennial website (commissionaires100.ca) for the latest updates.

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ABOUT COMMISSIONAIRES

Commissionaires is Canada's premier security provider and largest employer of veterans. Founded on the core military values of dedication, responsibility, and a sense of mission, Commissionaires employs over 20,000 people from coast to coast to coast. It offers a wide range of integrated security services including professional guarding, monitoring and surveillance, threat risk assessment, non-core policing, cybersecurity, by-law enforcement, fingerprinting, background screening, investigations, and security training. Commissionaires is a completely self-funded, not-for-profit organization that serves a diverse range of public and private sector organizations.

Quick Facts

- Commissionaires was founded in Montréal on July 25, 1925. The earliest branches date back to 1927 and were based in Montréal (No. 1 Company), Toronto (No. 2 Company), and Vancouver (No. 3 Company). Early commissionaires safeguarded federal installations.
- In 1937, Lord Tweedsmuir (John Buchan) became the first Viceregal Patron of the Corps. Since then, each successive Governor General of Canada has carried on this tradition.
- In 2006, Commissionaires launched what became Canada's largest digital fingerprinting infrastructure.
- In 2024, Commissionaires was designated an event of national historic significance under Parks Canada's National Program of Historical Commemoration.

- The organization is a not-for-profit, reinvesting profits into veteran support and operational excellence. Last year, Commissionaires gave back over $850,000, most of which was donated to veteran-related causes.
- Commissionaires was selected by Forbes as one of Canada's Top 300 employers, the only security company on the 2025 list.
- In June 2025, the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa unveiled a renewed "Commissionaires Way" display. The exhibit highlights Commissionaires' history including stories of decorated war heroes alongside impressive contemporary commissionaires.
- Nationwide, the organization employs over 20,000 people from all walks of life, across 15 Divisions out of 50+ offices, and from many more client sites.

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