

# Veterans Review and Appeal Board Quarterly Financial Report

For the quarter ended December 31, 2023

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## I. Statement outlining results, risks and significant changes in operations, personnel and program for the quarter ended December 31, 2023

### 1. Introduction

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This quarterly report has been prepared by management as required by section 65.1 of the [Financial Administration Act](#) and in the form and manner prescribed by the Treasury Board. This quarterly report should be read in conjunction with the [Main Estimates](#).

The Veterans Review and Appeal Board (VRAB) is the arm's-length administrative tribunal that provides an independent avenue of redress for disability benefits decision made by Veterans Affairs Canada. The Board supports Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces and RCMP members, and their families in obtaining the benefits they are entitled to for service-related disabilities. The Board gives Veterans their only opportunity to appear before decision-makers to tell their story. The Board's program is not only essential to fairness in the disability benefits adjudication system, it is important to the well-being of Veterans and their families. Board Members and staff keep this front of mind as we work together to deliver the appeal program and look for ways to better serve Veterans and their families.

The Board offers two levels of redress for disability benefits decisions: a Review hearing; and, if the Veteran remains dissatisfied, a subsequent Appeal hearing. It also provides the final level of appeal for War Veterans Allowance decisions. The Board is a micro-organization with a small, dedicated staff. The Board has up to 25 full-time Members who hear cases brought forward for redress at the Board, and decide whether the evidence meets the requirements of the legislation to award new or increased levels of disability benefits. In deciding cases, they conduct a thoughtful analysis of all available information (i.e. oral testimony, medical reports, opinion evidence from experts, written statements, etc.) and discuss the merits of the case, bearing in mind the requirement to resolve any doubt in the weighing of evidence in favour of the Veteran.

A summary description of the Veterans Review and Appeal Board program activities can be found in Part II of the [Main Estimates](#).

# Basis of Presentation

This quarterly report has been prepared by management using an expenditure basis of accounting. The accompanying Statement of Authorities includes the Board’s spending authorities granted by Parliament and those used by the Board, consistent with the Main Estimates for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. This quarterly report has been prepared using a special purpose financial reporting framework designed to meet financial information needs with respect to the use of spending authorities.

The authority of Parliament is required before monies can be spent by the Government. Approvals are given in the form of annually approved limits through appropriation acts or through legislation in the form of statutory spending authority for specific purposes.

When Parliament is dissolved for the purposes of a general election, section 30 of the Financial Administration Act authorizes the Governor General, under certain conditions, to issue a special warrant authorizing the Government to withdraw funds from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. A special warrant is deemed to be an appropriation for the fiscal year in which it is issued.

The Board uses the full accrual method of accounting to prepare and present its annual financial statements that are part of the departmental results reporting process. However, the spending authorities voted by Parliament remain on an expenditure basis. The quarterly report has not been subject to an external audit or review.

## 2. Highlights of Fiscal Quarter and Fiscal Year to Date (YTD) Results

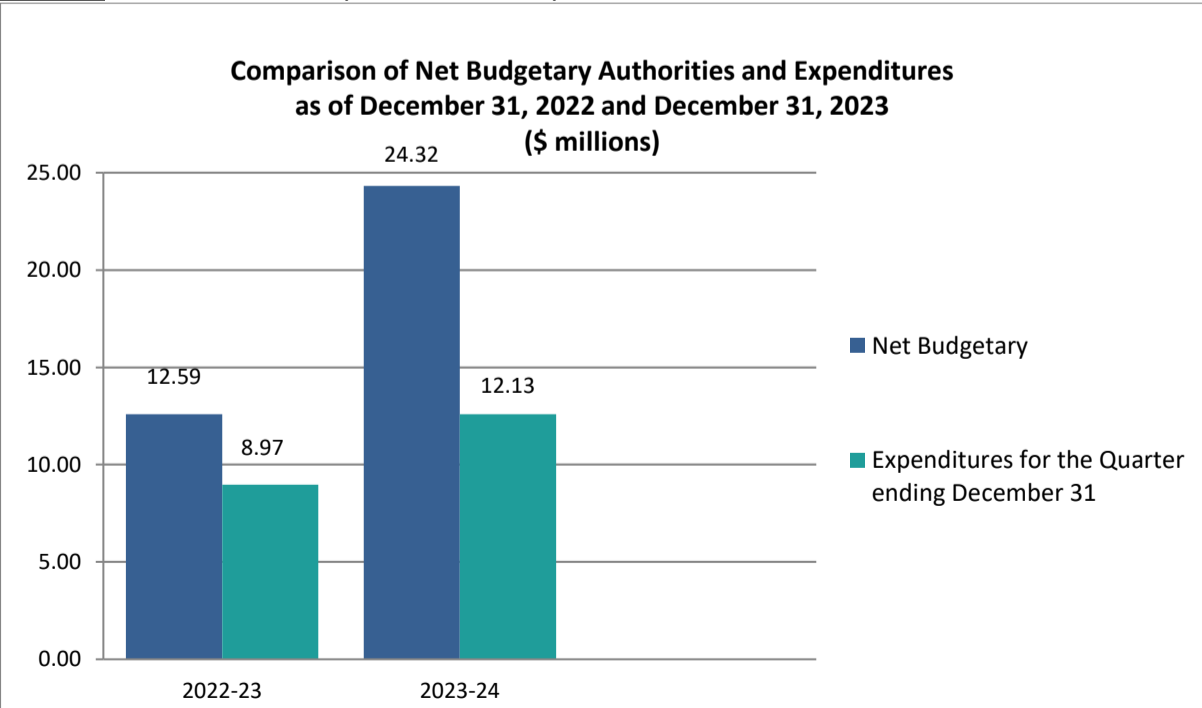
### Statement of Authorities

As of December 31, 2023, the Board’s total authorities available (i.e. budget) at quarter-end increased by \$11.73M (93.2% increase) when compared to amounts available the same quarter of the previous year, from \$12.59M in 2022-23 to \$24.32M in 2023-24. Much of the increase in total authorities can be attributed to funding received through Budget 2022 and Budget 2023 to help address the increased workload being brought forward to the Board and improve service to Veterans and their families.

Actual Year-to-date expenditures for the Board showed an increase of \$3.16M (35.2% increase) from \$8.97M in 2022-23 to \$12.13M in 2023-24. The first 3 quarters of 2023-24 saw an increase in spending on personnel as the Board increased their production capacity, in line with the Budget 2022 and Budget 2023 initiative to reduce the growing backlog at the Board and issue decisions to Veterans sooner.

Expenditures for the quarter ending Dec 31 showed an increase of \$1.71M (51.6% increase), from \$3.32M in 2022-23 to \$5.03M in 2023-24. This is mainly due to an increase in personnel, equipment and associated training costs, as well as increased travel resulting from the full return to in-person hearings across the country in 2023-24.

Figure 1 - Third Quarter Expenditures Compared to Annual Authorities



## **Statement of Departmental Budgetary Expenditures by Standard Object**

In general, VRAB's expenditures are distributed equally throughout the year. Expenditures at the end of the third quarter of \$12.13M (equivalent to 50% of authorities available for use) are generally consistent with this trend but are slightly behind anticipated projections. The primary contributing factor to this is a delay in filling Budget 2023 funded Board Member positions. The recruitment and appointment process timeline has extended beyond original estimates, impacting the planned allocation of funds earmarked for these positions. Steps are currently being taken to advance the Board Member recruitment and onboarding process, and it is anticipated that these expenditures will increase into the next fiscal year.

### **3. Risks and Uncertainties**

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The Veterans Review and Appeal Board is funded through annual appropriations. As a result, its operations are impacted by any changes in funding approved through Parliament.

**Context:** The Board provides a national appeal program. It holds hearings and issues decisions for Veterans and their families. As a service-oriented agency, the majority of VRAB's operating expenditures are salary based and demand-driven. Managing the demand for hearings is driven by a variety of factors over which the VRAB has limited control.

The Board holds regular meetings to take into account operational priorities, human and financial resources, and performance measures. VRAB recruits new employees, as required, to replace departing staff to ensure adequate operational support to the appeal process. Authorities and expenditures are monitored regularly with senior management.

### **4. Significant changes in relation to operations, personnel and programs**

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As noted, the Board has had an increase in personnel. This increased capacity will continue to assist the Board in its top priority of reducing hearing and decision wait times for Veterans. Through funding committed in Budget 2022 and Budget 2023, the Board has and continues to reduce wait times for Veterans and their families through increased capacity, integration and innovation.

Approved by:

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Christopher J. McNeil, Chair  
Veterans Review and Appeal Board  
Charlottetown, PE

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Sara Lantz, Chief Financial Officer  
Veterans Affairs Canada  
Charlottetown, PE

## II. Financial Statements

### Veterans Review and Appeal

### Board

### STATEMENT OF AUTHORITIES *(unaudited)*

### Quarterly Financial Report for the Quarter Ended December 31, 2022

### Fiscal year 2022-23

<i>(in thousands of dollars)</i>	Planned expenditures for the year ending March 31, 2023 *	Expended during the quarter ended December 31, 2022	Year to date used at quarter-end
Vote 10 - Veterans Review and Appeal Board Operating expenditures	11,241	2,981	7,957
Statutory authorities - Contributions to Employee Benefit Plans - Program	1,350	338	1,013
<b>Total Budgetary authorities</b>	<b>12,591</b>	<b>3,319</b>	<b>8,970</b>
<b>Non-budgetary authorities</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Authorities</b>	<b>12,591</b>	<b>3,319</b>	<b>8,970</b>

\* Includes only Authorities available for use and granted by Parliament at quarter-end.

### Quarterly Financial Report for the Quarter Ended December 31, 2023

### Fiscal year 2023-24

<i>(in thousands of dollars)</i>	Planned expenditures for the year ending March 31, 2024 *	Expended during the quarter ended December 31, 2023	Year to date used at quarter-end
Vote 10 - Veterans Review and Appeal Board Operating expenditures	21,183	4,550	10,680
Statutory authorities - Contributions to Employee Benefit Plans - Program	3,137	483	1,450
<b>Total Budgetary authorities</b>	<b>24,320</b>	<b>5,033</b>	<b>12,130</b>
<b>Non-budgetary authorities</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Authorities</b>	<b>24,320</b>	<b>5,033</b>	<b>12,130</b>

\* Includes only Authorities available for use and granted by Parliament at quarter-end.

**Veterans Review and Appeal Board**  
**Departmental budgetary expenditures by Standard Object (unaudited)**

**Quarterly Financial Report for the Quarter Ended December 31, 2022**

**Fiscal Year 2022-23**

Expenditures (in thousands of dollars)	Total available for use for the year ended March 31, 2023*	Used during the quarter ended December 31, 2022	Year to date used at quarter-end
01 Personnel	11,454	3,173	8,441
02 Transportation and communications	125	72	210
03 Information	14	0	7
04 Professional and special services	338	37	127
05 Rentals	108	-43	47
06 Repair and maintenance	0	0	0
07 Utilities, materials and supplies	117	77	103
08 Acquisition of land, buildings and works	0	0	0
09 Acquisition of machinery and equipment	427	2	2
10 Transfer payments	0	0	0
11 Public debt charges	0	0	0
12 Other subsidies and payments	8	1	33
<b>Total gross budgetary expenditures</b>	<b>12,591</b>	<b>3,319</b>	<b>8,970</b>
<b>Less Revenues netted against expenditures</b>			
<b>Total Revenues netted against expenditures:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total net budgetary expenditures</b>	<b>12,591</b>	<b>3,319</b>	<b>8,970</b>

\* Includes only Authorities available for use and granted by Parliament at quarter-end.

Quarterly Financial Report for the Quarter Ended December 31, 2023

Fiscal Year 2023-24

Expenditures (in thousands of dollars)	Total available for use for the year ended March 31, 2024 *	Used during the quarter ended December 31, 2023	Year to date used at quarter-end
01 Personnel	21,774	4,548	11,186
02 Transportation and communications	280	159	312
03 Information	17	0	8
04 Professional and special services	915	217	355
05 Rentals	56	42	81
06 Repair and maintenance	1	0	0
07 Utilities, materials and supplies	1,030	27	82
08 Acquisition of land, buildings and works	0	0	0
09 Acquisition of machinery and equipment	247	47	101
10 Transfer payments	0	0	0
11 Public debt charges	0	0	0
12 Other subsidies and payments	0	-7	5
<b>Total gross budgetary expenditures</b>	<b>24,320</b>	<b>5,033</b>	<b>12,130</b>
<b>Less Revenues netted against expenditures</b>			
<b>Total Revenues netted against expenditures:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total net budgetary expenditures</b>	<b>24,320</b>	<b>5,033</b>	<b>12,130</b>

\* Includes only Authorities available for use and granted by Parliament at quarter-end.