

**Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Veterans' Association**



**L'Association des anciens de la
Gendarmerie royale du Canada**

February 19, 2018

Mr. Danny Martin
Deputy Director Administration
Royal Canadian Legion
Dominion Command
86 Aird Place
Ottawa, Ontario
K2L 0A1

Dear, Mr. Martin;

I am writing to you today to seek the assistance of the Royal Canadian Legion in establishing a uniform nation-wide posture on the issuance of Veteran licence plates to members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, including;

- (i) those who have been honourably discharged, or
- (ii) those who are currently serving

regardless of whether that service has been in Canada, or on a United Nations (UN) or North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) mission abroad.

RCMP Veterans and serving Regular Members alike are grateful to the membership of the Royal Canadian Legion for your unanimous support on June 16, 2014 for a resolution at your 45th Dominion Convention in Edmonton, Alberta, wherein you approved a revision to your by-laws to update the definition of veteran to include Regular Members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

In announcing this at the time, then Legion Dominion President Gordon Moore said, *"Recent peace support operations, the war in Afghanistan and the incidents in Mayerthorpe, AB and Moncton, NB clearly show the hazards and risks members of the RCMP face at home and abroad, along with the challenges Peace Officers encounter in Special Duty Areas."*

As you know, the RCMP is formally recognized as a regiment. Battle honours awarded are memorialized upon our Guidon, including the Northwest Rebellion (1885), service in South Africa (1900/02), France and Flanders (1918), Siberia (1918/19), and service in Europe during World War II (1939/45). NWMP, RNWMP and RCMP officers lie amongst the thousands of fallen Canadian soldiers, sailors and airmen who are buried in foreign soil.

Since 1989, RCMP personnel have participated in dozens of international missions in support of peace operations, working to provide capacity building to police services in the developing world, and in supporting Canadian military operations during the war in Afghanistan. Two RCMP officers were killed while on mission in Haiti in 2010 when the country was victim to a devastating earthquake. The names of 238 members who died in the line of duty in Canada and abroad from 1876 to the present day are inscribed upon our Honour Roll. Tragically but inevitably, that list will continue to grow.

As retired and serving members of the RCMP, we are proud of our service to Canada, and proud to be recognized as Veterans. In showing that pride, and expressing our allegiance and mutual respect for fellow Veterans, many of our members have applied for and received Veteran licence plates in the provinces where they reside.

Our status as Veterans has been confirmed by the Minister of Veterans Affairs. In June 2017 at the Annual General Meeting of the RCMP Veterans' Association in Charlottetown, Deputy Minister of Veterans Affairs Walter Natynczyk re-emphasized that members of the RCMP are veterans in every sense of the word, deserving of the care, compassion and respect of Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC). VAC, of course, administers programs for RCMP members and veterans relating to disability, mental health, and long-term care.

Regretfully, eligibility criteria for issuance of Veteran licence plates are not common across the country. At present, Ontario and New Brunswick issue Veteran licence plates to all Regular Members of the RCMP who have been honourably discharged, or to those still serving.

However, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories and Yukon will only issue Veteran licence plates to RCMP members who have served abroad in a UN or NATO operation. They will not issue Veteran plates to members who have served exclusively in Canada, or who have served abroad in capacities outside the UN / NATO ambit. Nunavut has not yet established a Veteran licence plate.

The posture of those provinces who restrict issuance to only those members who have served overseas is most disappointing. Our recognition as Veterans by the Government of Canada and by the Royal Canadian Legion is not conditional upon having served outside Canada. Members of the RCMP serve in every province and every territory of Canada and the value of our service in each of these venues is of equal importance. If we're recognized as a Veteran in New Brunswick or Ontario, meriting eligibility for a Veteran licence plate in those provinces, it is certainly our view that our service should be equally recognized in all jurisdictions in Canada, just as it is for serving or retired members of the Canadian Armed Forces.

We hope you agree and that you will support the RCMP Veterans' Association in encouraging all provinces to apply reciprocity and equal treatment in the policies they establish and exercise for eligibility for Veteran licence plates, and that accordingly, all RCMP members in

good standing – serving or retired – be considered eligible to be issued Veterans licence plates regardless of where they spent their service.

Veteran licence plates are tangible symbols to all who observe them that there are Canadians in their communities who have devoted their lives to the service of Canada and the protection of its citizens. These licence plates encourage respect for tradition, celebrate Canadian history, and arguably play some role in inspiring others to their own acts of service; be that in uniform or simply by 'paying it forward' as good citizens.

As always, the RCMP Veterans' Association is grateful for the support and partnership of the Royal Canadian Legion. Thank you for your considerations on our behalf and be assured that where we can support you in your own important work, we're just a phone call away.

Thank you to all the men and women of the Legion for all you do on behalf of Veterans and Canadians as a whole. It is deeply appreciated.

Best regards,



Al Rivard

President