

**Panelists**



**Ask Me Anything**  
**Honouring Veterans**

Military service to civilian life: the experience of transition

**Time:** 1:00 pm EST **Date:** November 16, 2022 **Hosts:** Tanya Wiltshire and Carolyn Schier

## **Ask Me Anything: Honouring Veterans**

### **Military service to civilian life: the experience of transition**

**Featuring:** Tammy Tremblay, Maurice AuCoin, Mark Paine, and Sandra Arseneault

**Opening remarks by:** Wanda Lewis

**Closing remarks by:** Amy Meunier

**Co-hosted by:** Tanya Wiltshire and Carolyn Schier

**Date and time:** Wednesday, November 16 at 1:00 to 2:30 PM EST

**Audience:** Open to all Government of Canada employees

**Register:** [Online registration form](#)

**Link to join:** [Join the webinar](#)

Ask Me Anything is now on GC Wiki Collab <https://wiki.gccollab.ca/AMA>.

### **Event Description**

Veterans' Week is an annual commemorative event occurring from November 5<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>. The month of November is an occasion for Canadians to honour the service, courage, and sacrifices of veterans and the generations of Canadians who have dedicated their lives to our country.

This month's Ask Me Anything session will explore life after military service and how the skills and expertise gained during service can be applied to civil public service, what

opportunities are offered to veterans, and what it means to be a family member of someone in the military.

Join us this month on the Ask Me Anything stage as we honour the service, courage, and sacrifices of our veterans.

## **About the Ask Me Anything Series**

This session is part of a series of Ask Me Anything sessions that give us a platform to share stories, listen, ask respectful questions and continue on our journey to have more inclusive organizations.

As individuals, you can't necessarily change where you live. You certainly can't change your past, but you can adjust who influences you—through the authors you read, the music you listen to, movies you watch and interactions with your community. The *Ask Me Anything* series provides you with an opportunity to increase your perspective—to learn from the lived experiences of individuals who are bravely sharing their stories to help educate and move the public service towards a culture where equity is embedded.

The series also provides an opportunity for you to know that you aren't alone. These experiences, especially the negative ones, are systemic and happen all too frequently throughout the public service. The objective by shining this light is to continually increase the network of public servants ready to take action and move forward towards a culture of inclusivity and belonging.

## **Opening Remarks by Wanda Lewis**



### **Wanda Lewis, Team Leader, Benefits Delivery Services Branch – Atlantic Region, Service Canada**

Wanda has spent almost 15 years in the public service. Her work with Veterans Affairs and National Defence has included providing peer support to families of Veterans with Operational Stress Injuries, outreach to create community awareness, and networking with colleagues and partners in the development of programs for Veterans and their families. Wanda received the Deputy Ministers Veterans Affairs Excellence award for her contribution to the Mental Health Capacity project in 2012. As a spouse of a Veteran with an Operational Stress Injury, Wanda has always had a passion for helping others in similar situations and influencing

effective change. Presently she is a Team Leader with Service Canada – Employment Insurance. Wanda is inspired to broaden her knowledge about diversity and inclusion and to find ways to drive change while working towards a more inclusive and diverse organization. Having recently completed a 3 month micro mission with ADM (Mat), Department of National Defence, as a Diversity and Inclusion Analyst, she is excited to contribute to a workplace that encourages the full participation of all employees by treating them with respect, dignity and fairness.

As the spouse of an injured Veteran, life hasn't always been easy but Wanda lives each day to the fullest with her husband in Bauline, Newfoundland. She enjoys spending her spare time outdoors and with her family, especially her 2 grandsons.

## **Meet Our Amazing Panelists**



### **Lieutenant-Colonel (ret) Tammy Tremblay, Human Rights Lawyer and Policy Maker, Refugee Appeal Division, Immigration & Refugee Board of Canada**

LCol (ret) Tammy Tremblay is a human rights lawyer and policy maker currently serving as a Member of the Refugee Appeal Division of the Immigration & Refugee Board of Canada.

LCol (ret) Tremblay specializes in the intersectionality of law and social issues such as gender-based violence and refugee law, and national security and the protection of individual rights. As a policy maker she has focussed on the protection of women and children. Her most recent achievements include leading the creation of Canada's Gender-based Violence Knowledge Center and the co-development of the First Nations and Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families Act.

She spent 17 years in the Canadian Forces as a military lawyer, specializing in international humanitarian and human rights law. She deployed twice to Afghanistan, serving at both ends of the spectrum of conflict: the first time supporting rebuilding efforts, including the setting up of rule of law projects; and, the second time providing legal support to the Special Forces. She was honoured with a commendation from the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission for negotiating an arrangement between Canada and Afghanistan for the monitoring of transferred detainees. She was further honoured with a commendation from the Afghan Ministry of the Interior for her contributions to Justice sector reform in Afghanistan.

LCol (ret) Tremblay represented Canada at the United Nations as a military expert and was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal by the Governor General in recognition of her outstanding contribution and guidance to the Office of the Special Coordinator on Improving United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

LCol (ret) Tremblay holds a Masters of Laws (LLM) from the Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland. She is an active community volunteer in groups supporting women, refugees, and the homeless.



**Maurice AuCoin, Regional Director, Operations,  
Canadian Coast Guard (CCG), Central Region**

Maurice AuCoin enrolled in the Canadian Forces in January 1987. After completion of basic officer and MARS training, he joined HMCS ATHABASKAN in January 1989, a tour highlighted by deployment with the Canadian Naval Task Group on OPERATION FRICTION in the Arabian Gulf. Upon completion of his qualification course, he then joined HMCS HALIFAX during an intensive period of initial HALIFAX Class Weapons trials as the Above Water Weapons Director. After a two year tour as Flag Lieutenant to the Commander of Maritime Command and completion of the yearlong Operations Room Officer Course, he went on to serve in HMC Ships TERRA NOVA and

IROQUOIS as Weapons Officer and Combat Officer respectively.

In 1998, as a newly promoted Lieutenant Commander, he was posted to Chief of Maritime Staff (CMS) in the Directorate of Maritime Strategy, where he contributed to the development of the Canadian Navy strategic vision document “Leadmark”.

He then joined the Vice Chief of Defence Staff Group (VCDS) Group in 2002, where he worked several strategic level positions in the Directorate of Defence Analysis focussed on joint capability development. Upon completion of Canadian Forces Staff College in 2005, he returned to the VCDS Group and in early 2006 was promoted to the rank of Commander and appointed the first Director Military Capability Management within the Chief of Force Development Division.

In 2007, he was posted to the Canadian Joint Delegation to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Brussels Belgium as the Senior Defence Counsellor to both the Canadian Ambassador to NATO and the Canadian Military Representative.

Mr. AuCoin returned to Canada in August 2010 to assume the responsibilities as the Department of National Defence (DND) / Canadian Space Agency Liaison Officer and

Canadian Forces Detachment Commander at the Canadian Space Agency in St Hubert Quebec. In June 2013, he was promoted to the rank of Captain(N) and returned to National Defence Head Quarter (NDHQ) in Ottawa as the Director General Naval Strategic Management for the Royal Canadian Navy, where he was responsible for Corporate Business Planning, Enterprise Management, Governance, Public Affairs and Strategic Communications.

In 2015, Mr. AuCoin accepted his final posting as a naval officer serving at the diplomatic level in Canada House, London UK, as Canadian Naval Advisor to the United Kingdom and as the Defence Attaché to the Kingdom of Denmark.

Mr. AuCoin retired from military service in 2019 upon returning to Canada. After a brief engagement with Pratt and Whitney Canada as a contracted Government relations manager, he returned to the Royal Canadian Navy as the Senior Advisor Strategic Communications with a mandate focused primarily on delivery of the future fleet.

In June 2021, Mr. AuCoin accepted his current appointment with the CCG as the Director of Operations, Central Region. Working closely with Fleet and Programs, and supported by both his Regional Operations Center and Marine Security Operations Center, he is responsible for the delivery of operational services and the leadership on Canadian Coast Guard's contribution to Maritime Domain Awareness within the Central and Arctic regions.

Mr. AuCoin holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from St Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia and a Masters in Defence Studies from the Royal Military College in Kingston Ontario.



**Mark Paine, Veteran Artillery Officer,  
Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)**

Mark Paine recently retired from the Civil Service in December 2021, after 32 years of service, coupled with 13 years in the Reserves as an Artillery Officer. He has seen a lot of changes within Department of National Defence (DND) /CAF from when he first joined in March 1981.

He spent the majority of his career as a member of the Defence Team, working primarily in the VCDS staff, starting in the Chief of Programme with the Directorate Force Planning and Programme Control. He also worked in the Surgeon General staff in the Directorate of Preventive Medicine, as well as in Assistant Deputy Minister (Human Resources-Civilian) and his last position was within the Assistant Deputy Minister (Information Management) ADM(IM)

Group as the Director, Defence IM Planning. As a volunteer within DND, he was the co-chair of the Defence Visible Minority Advisory Group providing advice and recommendations to the Defence Diversity Council and senior leadership, towards a more inclusive Department and CAF.

Following his time with DND/CAF he moved to Treasury Board and onwards to Indigenous Services Canada leading the charge on planning to address the long standing issues with our past colonial legacy and impacts on First Nations, Indigenous and Inuit communities.

Mark is currently with Mriya Aid, an all-volunteer organisation, consisting of current serving and retired CAF members, providing non-lethal aid to Ukraine. He spent 6 months on the ground in Ukraine after the Russian invasion, returning to Canada in early September and intends on returning in late December. He is also a volunteer Medical First Responder with St John Ambulance and volunteers with the Smiths Falls Ukrainian Settlement Committee.



**Sandra Arseneault, Director General, Public Safety Canada**

Sandra Arseneault is currently a Director General within the Canadian public safety portfolio. Sandra has worked her entire career in public service at the municipal, provincial and federal levels in areas of healthcare, policing, and security and served in uniform both in the navy and the air force. Her portfolios included administration, change management, resource, supply chain and human resource management, as well as training and development. Sandra has presented in a wide variety of organizational and public forums and

was fortunate enough to teach Foreign National Officers from Eastern Europe as part of the “Partner’s for Peace” initiative of NATO and taught English-as-a-Second-Language to heads of industry.

Sandra holds academic and professional designations in Teaching and Training Adults, Human Resource Management, Organizational Development, Change Management, along with two Master’s degrees; a Masters of Art in Defence Management and Policy, and a Master Practitioner in Organizational Effectiveness. She has also completed doctoral studies in Organizational Leadership. In 2012 Sandra received the Queen Elizabeth II’s Diamond Jubilee Medal to honour Canadians who made a significant contribution to their fellow countrymen, their community, or to Canada.

Sandra is also the mother of five wonderful children, all of whom are at Carleton University at the same time.

**Closing Remarks by Amy Meunier**



**Amy Meunier, Assistant Deputy Minister, Commemoration and Public Affairs, Veterans Affairs Canada**

Amy Meunier is the Assistant Deputy Minister, Commemoration and Public Affairs, at Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC). Prior to her current role, she served as Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy and Commemoration. Amy has also served in several senior executive positions at VAC including Director General, Centralized Operations Division, Director General, Communications, and Senior Director, Benefit Operations.

Amy has served in a number of other diverse posts within the Department including Senior Director, Digital and Strategic Communications; Director, Access to Information and Privacy; Strategic Advisor to the Deputy Minister and a number of project-oriented roles related to transforming the Department and its programming.

Before joining the Public Service in 2006, Amy served as Legislative Assistant and Policy Advisor to both the Minister of Environment and the Minister of Veterans Affairs. Her focus is always on collaboration and innovation and she pursues every opportunity to find ways of achieving broader and more effective impact for clients.

Amy was born in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and attended university in Iowa, United States America. Following university, Amy moved to Ottawa where she lived until relocating to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, to work at VAC Head Office.

## Meet Our Co-Hosts



### **Tanya Wiltshire, Communications Division, Veterans Affairs Canada**

Tanya Wiltshire joined Veterans Affairs Canada in 2018 in the Communications Division and has spent the last four years gaining experience in the department working on various projects, such as being the Project Lead for the co-development of DND and VACs Military Sexual Trauma Peer Support Program. Tanya has worked for over 15 years in communications, served 20 years in the Royal Canadian Navy Reserves, and is a Public Affairs Officer at HMCS Queen Charlotte in PEI. She most recently joined VAC's Commemoration Division to work on the team bringing Invictus Games to Vancouver and Whistler, BC, in 2025.





**Carolyn Schier, Support Services Unit, Integrated Business Management Services, Canadian Coast Guard (CCG)**

Carolyn is a respected Manager with over 20 years of transformational leadership and management experience in the Public Service, Canadian Armed Forces and private sector. She is experienced in developing strategic, operational, training and event plans. Carolyn received her Masters of Arts in Leadership in 2018 from Royal Roads University and wrote her major project on Developing a Culture of Leadership in the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) under the supervision of David Heap. In addition, Carolyn graduated with her Bachelor of Commerce in Entrepreneurial Management in 2004, and graduated with her Instructor Diploma in 2003.

Carolyn returned to the CCG in April 2020 as Manager of the Support Services Unit in IBMS located at the Yates Street office. She enjoys liaising with Coast Guards' internal and external stakeholders throughout a variety of events and corporate engagement.

Prior to joining the CCG, Carolyn worked as an Officer in the Canadian Armed Forces from 2005 to 2015. She deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan in 2009/2010 as the Second in Command of the Health Services Unit, Role 1 and Medical Planner for the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Battlegroup.

During her ten years in the military, she held numerous positions in a Field Ambulance, Medical Clinics and Headquarters as a Staff Officer, Ambulance Platoon Commander, Support Services Manager, and International Training Officer. After Carolyn was released from the military she moved to Victoria and spent some time with her family prior to taking on the position of Clinic Manager at Western Cardiology in Victoria.

In 2017, Carolyn joined the Coast Guard as the Western Regional Onboarding Lead and joined the Department of National Defense as Mental Health Manager at the Canadian Health Services Centre (Pacific) in 2018. During her time at DND, Carolyn was an executive member of the Maritime Forces Pacific Units (MARPAAC) Health and Wellness team and held the position of Civilian Co-Chair of the Addictions Free Living group. In addition, she was an inaugural member of the MARPAAC Positive Space Working Group and co-facilitated the 2 day Positive Space Ambassador Course. Carolyn enjoys facilitating the Healthcare Road to Mental Readiness course.

Carolyn believes in the importance of diversity and inclusion and continues to be a

Positive Space Ambassador for Coast Guard and sits on the National Positive Space Committee of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). She was the first podcast speaker for DFO and CCG's Pass the Mic to Women which launched on International Woman's Day. Carolyn enjoys scuba diving with her family and looks forward to traveling and experiencing different cultural adventures with them.

## **Mission - Ask Me Anything Series**

We recognize that individuals are composed of a multitude of layers that make us who we are. We do not fit easily in one box or another and we can't be neatly counted. We represent the mosaic of Canada.

It is important that we find value in each other's experiences, differences and unique characteristics. When we build our cultural competencies, we are able to work better together in our teams and respond to each other with relevance, empathy and compassion. By celebrating and sharing our authentic selves, we gain greater appreciation of each other and the diversity that surrounds us.

We know through diversity, that workplaces and communities are stronger, more successful and resilient. And most important, it creates spaces of inclusion and fosters a workplace of belonging where people feel valued.

## **#AMACHallenge**

We encourage others to have courageous conversations with their peers. Use the monthly Ask Me Anything sessions as an opportunity to have brave conversations in your workplaces with your teams.

Here's what you need to do:

- Invite your leaders and colleagues in your organization to an Ask Me Anything watch party, tune in live and watch the session together. Make sure it's in their calendars.
- Before the watch party, book an "After the AMA – Team Session" with your immediate team for the day after the event for 30-60 minutes. Share the resource guide and have these questions for discussion.

### **After the AMA – Team Session Discussion Questions**

1. What was my main takeaway – expand and share an amazing quote, story or moment
2. What made me uncomfortable/ what was one of my blind spots?
3. What is an example of systemic discrimination that I am aware of in my life?
4. What am I not going to do anymore?
5. How can I use my voice/ influence? – both overtly/covertly

6. Where am I going to dig in and learn more?
7. How will I continue this conversation?

It is important that we find value in the experiences, the unique characteristics of each other. When we develop our cultural competence, we are able to work better together within our teams and respond to each other with relevant empathy and compassion. By celebrating and sharing our authentic selves, we gain a greater appreciation for each other and the diversity that surrounds us.

### **Thank you to our contributors**

Thank you to our contributors from across the Public Service of Canada – Canadian Coast Guard, National Defence, Canadian Armed Forces, Commemoration and Public Affairs, Public Safety Canada, Immigration & Refugee Board of Canada, and Service Canada.

MCs: Tanya Wiltshire and Carolyn Schier

Panelists: Wanda Lewis, Amy Meunier, Tammy Tremblay, Maurice AuCoin, Mark Paine, and Sandra Arseneault

AMA Team: Terri-Ann Hurst, Tara Lockhart, Natasha Lim, Shelby Racine, Michel Mainville, Melissa Michaud, Liliya Ishkaeva, Bernadeth Betchi, Lyrique Richards, Kelly Brewer-Balch, Terri Graham

