



FOR RELEASE  
February 3, 2015

## **Yukoners attend Afghanistan Memorial Vigil in Yellowknife**

WHITEHORSE—Deputy Premier Elaine Taylor, Speaker David Laxton and a delegation of Yukoners are in Yellowknife today to attend a commemoration ceremony for the Afghanistan Memorial Vigil at the N.W.T. Legislative Assembly.

The deputy premier and speaker will be joined by Commissioner Doug Phillips, Royal Canadian Legion Branch 254 president and Afghanistan war veteran Joe Mewett, and three Yukon RCMP members: M Division Commanding Officer, Chief Superintendent Peter Clark; M Division Warrant Officer, Staff Sergeant Major Doug Spencer; and Whitehorse Detachment Constable Brian Harding, who served a tour of duty in Kandahar Province in 2008/09 as a member of Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa Regiment.

"The Yukon government is proud to honour those who served in Afghanistan and in all of Canada's military missions, and we would like to thank the Commander of the Joint Task Force North for the invitation to attend today's ceremony on behalf of Yukoners," Taylor said. "Today's ceremony serves to commemorate the men and women of Canada's Armed Forces and is a powerful reminder of their sacrifices."

The Afghanistan Memorial Vigil consists of 192 plaques that commemorate the 204 people who lost their lives during the conflict in Afghanistan—161 Canadians and 43 Americans serving under Canadian command. This is the first time that the vigil has been on display in Canada's North.

"The Afghanistan Memorial Vigil honours the memory of our casualties in Afghanistan. Having the vigil here in the North is meaningful for northern families and military personnel who have been directly affected by our losses during the Afghan mission," said Brigadier-General Greg Loos, Commander, Joint Task Force (North). "For our ceremony to open the vigil, I am particularly grateful to our host of dignitaries who have travelled long distances from across all three territories to participate and pay their respects in person. The representation from the Yukon government in particular attests to their ongoing, strong support for the Canadian Armed Forces, its veterans, and our fallen. I would encourage any Yukoners who find themselves in Yellowknife this week to visit the Memorial Vigil to see the faces and names of our casualties and take the opportunity to speak with a soldier who served in Afghanistan."

The plaques were formerly part of the Kandahar Air Field cenotaph, a memorial built by soldiers in Afghanistan to commemorate their fallen comrades. The cenotaph is now in Canada, where it will be given a permanent home in the National Capital Region. The vigil has toured the country since May, offering Canadians a chance to honour and remember the fallen.

"As a veteran, it is a special honour for me to be representing Yukon and participating in today's ceremony," Laxton said. "The vigil is an opportunity to remember the soldiers and civilians who died while serving their countries. It is an extremely moving and poignant tribute to all who worked to bring a better future to the people of Afghanistan."

The week-long event in Yellowknife includes an opening ceremony and private viewing for Canadian Armed Forces members on February 3 and a public viewing from February 4 to 6.

**Learn more:**

Afghanistan Memorial Vigil

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*News Release #15-037*



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