

## OEF/OIF Initiatives

- In 2007 prioritized claim processing for OEF/OIF veterans, finalizing claims received in an average of 110 days.
- Hired 100 new outreach coordinators to provide services to returning OEF/OIF veterans.
- Created an Advisory Committee on OIF/OEF Veterans and Families to advise the Secretary.
- Coordinated 8,236 transfers of OEF/OIF service members and veterans from a military treatment facility to a VA medical facility.
- Received 39,000 referrals from the Post Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA) initiative.
- Participated in 805 PDHRA On-Site and 247 Call Center events since November 2005. A total of 32,321 referrals were made to VAMC and 15,842 to Vet Centers.
- Contacted 91% of severely-injured or ill OEF/OIF service members/veterans, by a VA case manager, within 7 days of notification of transfer to the VA health care system.

### OEF/OIF veterans' statistics:

- 48% are Active Duty, 52% are Reserve/National Guard
- 88% are men, 12% are women
- 65% Army; 12% Air Force; 12% Navy; 12% Marine
- 34% were deployed multiple times
- 52%, largest age group, is 20-29 years old
- 69% of those who filed disability claims received service-connected disability compensation award

### Veteran Population

There are about 23.8 million living veterans, 7.5% of whom are women. There are about 37 million dependents (spouses and dependent children) of living veterans and survivors of deceased veterans. Together they represent 20% of the US population.

Most veterans living today served during times of war. The Vietnam Era veteran, about 7.9 million, is the largest segment of the veteran population.

In 2007, the median age of all living veterans was 60 years old, 61 for men and 47 for women. Median ages by period of service: Gulf War, 37 years old; Vietnam War, 60; Korean War, 76; and WW II 84.

Sixty percent (60%) of the nation's veterans live in urban areas. States with the largest veteran population are CA, FL, TX, PA, NY and OH, respectively. These six states account for about 36% of the total veteran population.

## VA Leadership

**Secretary of Veterans Affairs** – James B. Peake, MD

**Deputy Secretary** – Gordon H. Mansfield

**Under Secretary for Benefits** – Daniel L. Cooper

**Under Secretary for Health** – Michael J. Kussman, MD

**Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs** – William F. Tuerk

**Assistant Secretary for Management** – Robert J. Henke

**Assistant Secretary for Information & Technology** – Robert T. Howard

**Assistant Secretary for Policy & Planning** – Patrick W. Dunne

**Assistant Secretary for Operations, Security & Preparedness** – Charles L. Hopkins III

**Assistant Secretary for Human Resources & Administration** – Michael W. Hager

**Assistant Secretary for Public & Intergovernmental Affairs** – Lisette M. Mondello

**Assistant Secretary for Congressional & Legislative Affairs** – Christine Hill (Acting)

## Helpful Information

Benefits	1-800-827-1000
Education & Training	1-888-442-4551
Life Insurance	1-800-669-8477
Special Issues	1-800-749-8387
Health Care	1-877-222-VETS (8387)
Headstones/Markers	1-800-697-6947
VA Inspector General	1-800-488-8244
Suicide Prevention Hot line	1-800-273-TALK (8255)
TDD	1-800-829-4833

<http://www.va.gov>

Produced by the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics (NCVAS).

## Department of Veterans Affairs



## Strategic Goals

**Goal 1** -- Restore the capability of veterans with disabilities to the greatest extent possible, and improve the quality of their lives and that of their families.

**Goal 2** -- Ensure a smooth transition for veterans from active military service to civilian life.

**Goal 3** -- Honor and serve veterans in life, and memorialize them in death for their sacrifices on behalf of the Nation.

**Goal 4** -- Contribute to the public health, emergency management, socioeconomic well-being, and history of the Nation.

**Enabling Goal** – Deliver world-class service to veterans and their families through effective communication and management of people, technology, business processes, and financial resources.

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## Benefits

More than half of Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) budget (nearly \$86 billion in obligations in 2007) is paid directly to veterans in the form of statutory benefits.

Over 3.7 million veterans and beneficiaries receive compensation or pension benefits from VA. In 2007, VA processed nearly 825,000 claims for disability benefits and added almost 250,000 new beneficiaries to the compensation and pension rolls.

Approximately 523,000 students received education benefits in 2007; 20 percent of them are first time recipients of VA education benefits.

VA guarantees an average of 11,109 loans a month for veterans realizing the American dream of home ownership. VA currently guarantees 2.2 million active home loans to veterans. Those loans total \$243 billion.

Over half of VA's home loan guarantees went to first-time home buyers. Approximately 90% of the loans use the "no down payment" feature that makes the VA loan guaranty so effective.

VA will pay 1.2 million veterans insurance policy holders \$369 million in dividends this year. VA will also pay \$2.5 billion in life insurance beneficiary claims to 105,000 survivors of veterans and service members.

Approximately 200 children and widows of Spanish-American War veterans still receive VA survivor benefits. There are three survivors of Civil War veterans still receiving VA benefits.

There are 4 million veterans or service members insured under VA-administered life insurance programs. The average basic insurance amount is \$240,000. All policies have a total face value of \$1 trillion, an amount higher than the gross domestic product of most countries.

Average annual amounts paid to veterans or survivors under various benefits programs: disability compensation, \$9,811; pension, \$8,509; Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, \$13,612; and death pension, \$3,829.

As of September 2007, 223,564 Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) veterans filed for disability claims, 89% received claims decisions and 11% are waiting for claims decisions.

## Health Care

VA's healthcare mission covers the continuum of care providing inpatient and outpatient care; and a wide range of services, such as pharmacy, prosthetics, and mental health; long-term care in both institutional and non-institutional settings; and other health care programs such as CHAMPVA and Readjustment Counseling. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) healthcare and research budget (\$37.3 billion in obligations) constituted 43% of the VA's total obligations in fiscal year 2007.

VHA delivers health care through 21 Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs) that manage 153 medical centers, 731 community-based outpatient clinics, 135 nursing homes, 209 readjustment counseling centers (Vet Centers) and 47 domiciliaries.

In 2007, VHA provided healthcare services to approximately 5.5 million unique patients, up from 3.8 million in 2000. VHA staff is treating more outpatients than ever before, increasing from 53.4 million outpatient visits in 2006 to 55.7 million in 2007. VHA has also enhanced overall mental health resources by over \$500 million in FY 2007 to meet the influx of veterans of all service eras with mental and emotional health care needs.

The most recent American Customer Satisfaction Index survey gave VA patient satisfaction scores of 84 and 82 out of 100 for inpatient and outpatient care, respectively. VA scores are 5 points and 4 points higher than the corresponding private sector scores.

VA led the way in care for traumatic brain injury (TBI) veterans by developing a mandatory TBI training course for select VA health care professionals. Additionally, VA instituted a program to screen all patients who served in the combat theaters of Afghanistan or Iraq for TBI.

VA hired suicide prevention counselors at each of its 153 medical centers to help support the national suicide prevention hot line. The hot line puts veterans in touch with trained, caring professionals who can help them cope with emotional crises. The hot line is available 365 days a year, 24 hours a day.

VA established 100 new patient advocate positions to help severely injured veterans and their families navigate VA's systems for health care and financial benefits, providing a smooth transition to VA health care facilities.

## Memorial Affairs

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) honors veterans with final resting places in national shrines and with lasting tributes that commemorate their service to our Nation.

NCA maintains more than 2.8 million gravesites at 125 cemeteries in 39 states and Puerto Rico, as well as in 33 soldier's lots and monument sites.

The nation's 125<sup>th</sup> national cemetery, South Florida VA National Cemetery, began operation in April 2007. VA is planning six additional cemeteries to serve the areas of Bakersfield, CA; Birmingham, AL; Columbia, SC; Jacksonville, FL; Sarasota, FL; and Southeastern PA.

Of the 125 national cemeteries in operation, 65 are open to all interments; 21 can accommodate cremated remains and family members of those already interred; and 39 are closed to new interments but accommodate family members in occupied gravesites.

Annual interments in VA national cemeteries have increased from 36,400 in 1973, when VA took responsibility for national cemeteries, to 101,200 in 2007, including dependents. More than 67,500 veterans were laid to rest in a VA national cemetery in 2007.

Since 1973, NCA has provided nearly 9.9 million headstones and markers. In 2007, NCA furnished more than 361,000 headstones and markers.

In 2007, NCA provided more than 423,000 Presidential Memorial Certificates to the loved ones of deceased veterans.

Since 1980, the State Cemetery Grants Program has obligated more than \$312 million to 36 states, plus Guam and Saipan, for the establishment, expansion or improvement of 69 state veterans cemeteries. In fiscal year 2007, VA supported state veterans cemeteries by providing more than 22,000 interments.

VA estimates that more than 686,000 veterans died in 2007. About 13 percent of veterans choose to be buried in VA national and state cemeteries.

In 2007, volunteers donated approximately 366,000 hours at national cemeteries and more than 8.1 million people visited them.