

Department of Veterans Affairs

Organizational Briefing Book

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Prepared By:

Office of Human Resources and Administration

Office of Administration

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Washington, DC 20420

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	<u>Page</u>
Overview of the Department of Veterans Affairs	1
The Veteran	2
Budget Summary	3
Organizations of the Department of Veterans Affairs	4
LINE ORGANIZATIONS	
Veterans Health Administration	7
Veterans Benefits Administration	9
National Cemetery Administration	14
STAFF ORGANIZATIONS	
Inspector General	15
General Counsel	16
Board of Veterans' Appeals	18
Board of Contract Appeals	19
Special Assistant to the Secretary for Veterans Service Organizations Liaison	20
Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization	21
Center for Minority Veterans	22
Center for Women Veterans	23
Center for Veterans Enterprise	24
Office of Regulation Policy and Management	25
Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication	26

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STAFF ORGANIZATIONS (Cont.)	<u>Page</u>
Assistant Secretary for Management	27
Office of Budget	27
Office of Finance	27
Office of Acquisition and Materiel Management	28
Office of Asset Enterprise Management	29
Office of Business Oversight	30
Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology	31
Office of Information and Technology	31
Office of Policy, Portfolio Oversight and Execution	32
Office of IT Enterprise Architecture Management	33
Office of Information and Technology Operations	34
Office of Cyber and Information Security	35
Austin Automation Center	36
Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning, and Preparedness	37
Office of Policy	37
Office of Planning and Evaluation	38
Office of Security and Law Enforcement	38
Office of Operations and Readiness	39
Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration	41
Office of Administration	41
Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations	42
Office of Diversity Management & Equal Employment Opportunity	42
Office of Resolution Management	42
Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs	44
Office of Public Affairs	44
Office of Intergovernmental Affairs	45
Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives	46
Office of National Programs and Special Events	47
Office of Information Technology	47
Office of White House Liaison	47
Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs	48
Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs	48
Office of Congressional Reports and Correspondence	48
Office of Congressional Liaison	48



OVERVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), established as an independent agency under the President by Executive Order 5398 on July 21, 1930, was elevated to Cabinet level on March 15, 1989 (Public Law No. 100-527).

The Department's mission is to serve America's veterans and their families with dignity and compassion and to be their principal advocate in ensuring that they receive medical care, benefits, social support, and lasting memorials promoting the health, welfare, and dignity of all veterans in recognition of their service to this Nation.

VA is the second largest Federal Department and has over 235,000 employees. Among the many professions represented in the vast VA workforce are physicians, nurses, counselors, statisticians, architects, computer specialists, and attorneys. As advocates for veterans and their families, the VA community is committed to providing the very best services with an attitude of caring and courtesy.

VA comprises a Central Office (VACO), which is located in Washington, DC, and field facilities throughout the Nation administered by its three major line organizations: Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), and National Cemetery Administration (NCA).

Services and benefits are provided through a nationwide network of 157 hospitals, 869 outpatient clinics, 134 nursing homes, 42 domiciliaries, 206 readjustment counseling centers, 57 veterans benefits regional offices, and 120 national cemeteries.

The Secretary identified five broad strategic goals for VA to focus on as the means to improve services to veterans and their families and to improve management in the Department. These goals are the components of the VA Strategic Plan:

- Restore the capability of veterans with disabilities to the greatest extent possible and improve the quality of their lives and that of their families.
- Ensure a smooth transition for veterans from active military service to civilian life.
- Honor and serve veterans in life and memorialize them in Death for their sacrifices on behalf of the Nation.
- Contribute to the public health, emergency management, socioeconomic well-being, and history of the Nation.
- Deliver world-class service to veterans and their families by applying sound principles that result in effective management of people, communications, technology, and governance.

THE VETERAN

NUMBERS: The estimated total veteran population was 24,793,000 as of September 30, 2004. This included 8,147,000 Vietnam era veterans, representing the single largest period-of-service component of the veteran population. Gulf War era veterans now comprise the second largest component, numbering 4,105,000. World War II veterans numbered 3,916,000, while Korean conflict veterans totaled 3,423,000. World War I veterans are too few in number to estimate reliably. Veterans serving only in peacetime numbered 6,316,000, about one-in-four veterans. *(NOTE: The sum of the numbers by period does not add to the total because the period categories shown here are not mutually exclusive: 862,100 veterans served in two war periods and 125,500 veterans served in three or more; these veterans are counted in all the periods in which they served.)*

AGE: As of September 30, 2004, the median age of all veterans was 58.9 years. Veterans under age 45 constituted 20 percent of the total, while those aged 45 to 64 represented 41 percent, and those 65 or older were 38 percent of the total. *(NOTE: The percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.)*

SEX: Female veterans numbered 1,692,000 million, representing 7 percent of the total veteran population. Roughly one-in-five resident U.S. males 18 years of age or older is a veteran.

FUTURE POPULATION: The veteran population (24.8 million in 2004) is projected to decline to 22.1 million by the year 2010, under currently expected armed forces strength. Veteran deaths are expected to rise from 685,300 in FY 2004 to a peak of 687,600 in FY 2006. The population of veterans aged 65 or older peaked at 10.0 million in 2000. It is projected to decline to 8.9 million in 2010 but rise again to about 9.3 million in 2013 as the Vietnam era cohort ages. The number of veterans aged 85 or older is projected to increase by 45 percent 2004 and 2010, from 886,000 to nearly 1.3 million.

EDUCATION AND INCOME: Data from the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey of March 2004 show that male veterans and nonveterans had nearly the same overall level of educational attainment (12.9 and 13.3 years, respectively, at age 18 to 39, and 13.8 and 14.5 respectively at age 40 to 59). With respect to income, male veterans in general had higher income than male nonveterans. For example, the median personal income of male veterans aged 18 to 39 in 2003 was \$35,000 compared to \$25,000 for male non-veterans of the same age. The median personal income of all male veterans aged 40 to 59 in 2003 was \$42,000 versus \$40,000 for non-veterans of that age.

(NOTE: Source for veteran population estimate and projection: VetPop2004 Version 1.0, VA Office of the Actuary, Washington, DC, December 2004.)

POINT OF CONTACT: Robert Klein, Office of Policy, Planning, and Preparednes, Office of the Actuary, (202) 273-5101

BUDGET SUMMARY

The Department's budget for FY 2005 was enacted on December 8, 2004. For the period October 1 through December 8, 2004, VA was funded under three continuing resolutions prior to the enactment of Public Law 108-447, the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution Act for 2005. VA's funding for FY 2005 is \$6.1 billion above the FY 2004 enacted level. This increase includes the impact of an across-the-board rescission applied to all discretionary programs funded under Public Law 108-447. The following is a breakdown of the enacted FY 2005 appropriations as compared to the FY 2004 enacted level:

(\$ in Thousands)

Program	2004 Enacted 1/	2005 Enacted 1/**
Medical *	\$28,438,915	\$30,052,195
Benefit	\$33,758,784	\$38,405,598
Cemetery	\$ 143,352	\$ 147,784
Construction	\$ 1,055,544	\$ 836,671
All Other	\$ 340,822	\$ 369,021
Total	\$63,737,417	\$69,811,269

1/ Includes transfers.

* Includes Medical Care Collections.

** Includes \$124 million in funding pursuant to Public Law 108-324, the Military Construction Appropriations and Emergency Hurricane Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2005.

As enacted in 2005, annual appropriations are funding the Veterans Health Administration through an account structure comprised of four accounts: Medical Services, Medical Administration, Medical Facilities, and Medical and Prosthetic Research. This restructuring will provide better oversight and result in a more accurate accounting of funds.

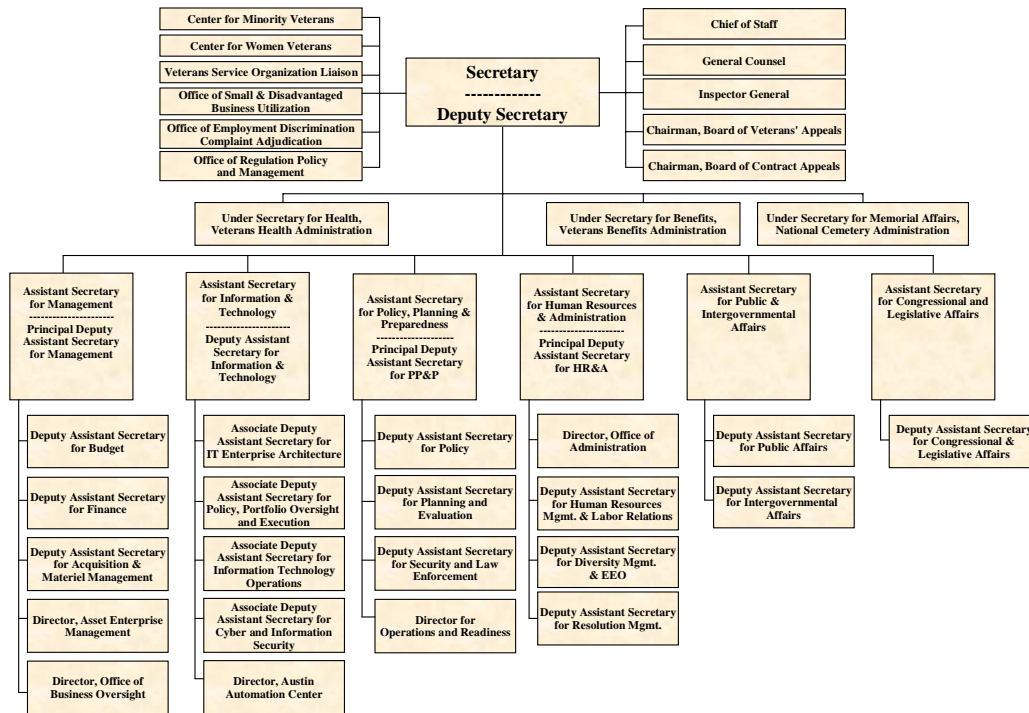
Monetary benefits, cemetery programs, and construction have separate appropriations. Remaining staff functions are funded out of the General Operating Expenses appropriation, with the exception of the Office of the Inspector General, which has its own appropriation.

Over half the VA budget, \$37.1 billion, goes out in the form of checks to veterans and their families (disability payments, income support, etc.).

The remaining \$32.7 billion is "discretionary"; VA is assumed to have control of this portion of the budget. However, most of the funds (\$30.2 billion out of \$32.7 billion) support the medical care system.

POINT OF CONTACT: Paola Zuco, Office of Management, Office of Budget, (202) 273-5526

ORGANIZATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



The **Secretary of Veterans Affairs** is a member of the President's cabinet, serving as the chief advisor to the President on veterans' affairs. As the head of the Federal government's second largest department, the Secretary is responsible for a \$69 billion budget used to provide a nationwide system of health care services, benefits programs, and national cemeteries for America's veterans. The Secretary sets policies governing the Department's operations, defines its basic organizational structure, and maintains favorable relations with organizations, groups, and individuals interested in veterans' affairs.

The **Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs** is second in command, serving as the Department's chief operating officer. The Deputy Secretary directs the policy and operations of the Department and provides broad direction to the Department's 235,000 employees through the administrations and staff offices, ensuring coordinated action and conformance with the Secretary's directives. The Deputy Secretary chairs the Department's governance process through the Strategic Management Council and leads the Business Oversight Board and Capital Investment Board.

Administrations and Key Offices: The Department includes 3 administrations that provide for the delivery of services and benefits, 6 Assistant Secretaries who advise and support the Secretary and the administrations, and 10 Departmental offices that provide specific assistance to the Secretary.

The three administrations are **Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration, and National Cemetery Administration**. The head of each administration reports to the Secretary through the Deputy Secretary.

These administrations give centralized program direction to field facilities that provide diverse program services to veterans and their families. Further, each administration has Central Office components that support the administration's operations. This organizational structure reflects a basic management approach of centralized policy direction, complemented by consistent decentralized execution.

Of the ten offices reporting directly to the Secretary or Deputy Secretary, eight are required by law to do so: **Office of Inspector General, Office of General Counsel, Board of Contract Appeals, Board of Veterans' Appeals, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, Center for Minority Veterans, Center for Women Veterans, and the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication.** The ninth, **Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) Liaison**, provides advice to the Office of the Secretary on matters affecting VSOs and is responsible for the Department's day-to-day liaison with those organizations. The tenth, **Office of Regulation Policy and Management**, provides centralized management and control for VA's rulemaking activities to improve the quality and timeliness of VA regulations.

Assistant Secretaries: The Assistant Secretaries serve as the principal staff advisors to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary and oversee or administer programs in their respective areas of responsibility.

The **Assistant Secretary for Management** serves as the Department's Chief Budget Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Senior Procurement Executive, Senior Real Property Officer, and Senior Energy Official. The Assistant Secretary is responsible for financial management, budget administration, and resources planning, and serves as the Department's principal advisor for budget, fiscal, and capital policy. As the Department's Senior Procurement Executive, the Assistant Secretary is responsible for VA's acquisition system and materiel management activities. The Assistant Secretary also supports the Strategic Management Council with regard to implementing the capital asset planning process.

The **Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology** serves as the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the Department. As the CIO, the Assistant Secretary is the principal advisor to the Secretary on matters relating to information and technology management in the Department as delineated in Public Law No. 104-106, the Clinger-Cohen Act; the Paperwork Reduction Act, Chapter 35 of Title 44 United States Code; and any other associated legislated or regulatory media.

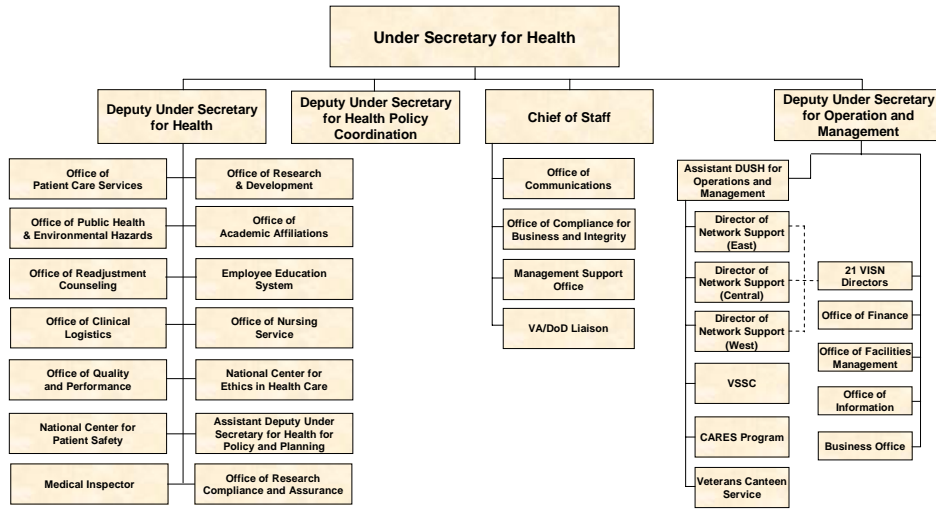
The **Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning and Preparedness** is responsible for the Secretary's policy analysis and planning processes and their integration into the Department's Strategic Management Process. The Assistant Secretary's functions entail responsibility for performing Department-level policy analyses and development, cost-benefit analyses, strategic planning, quality improvement, actuarial studies and assessments, veterans' demographics, and statistical analyses. The Assistant Secretary is responsible for the Nation's official estimates and projections of the veteran population and the only National Survey of Veterans; oversees the Department's Operations, Security, and Preparedness activities; and is the principal advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary on VA's capability and readiness to continue services to veterans and their families, respond to contingency support missions to the Department of Defense (DoD) and other Federal agencies engaged in emergency response activities and respond effectively during national emergencies.

The **Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration** is responsible for providing direction and oversight to a diverse group of programs and serves as the Department's principal advisor on related matters. These programs, all with VA-wide responsibilities, include human resources management, diversity management and equal employment opportunity, discrimination complaint resolution, labor-management relations, and general administrative support (primarily services to VACO). The Assistant Secretary serves as the Department's Designated Agency Safety and Health Official and is responsible for administering the Occupational Safety and Health and Workers' Compensation programs. The Assistant Secretary also serves as the Department's Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO), advising and assisting the Secretary in carrying out VA's responsibilities for selecting, developing, training, and managing a high quality workforce in accordance with merit systems principles.

The **Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs** is responsible for the coordination and dissemination of VA-related information to various audiences, specifically veterans and associated service organizations, and to the general public through the news media. The Assistant Secretary manages and directs the Department's intergovernmental, consumer affairs, and homeless programs. The office supports veterans-specific interest groups, special events, and program activities to meet the needs of several audiences – first and foremost veterans.

The **Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs** serves as the principal advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary concerning all legislative and congressional liaison matters and has overall responsibility for the plans, policies, goals, and direction of the Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs. The Assistant Secretary is the principal coordinator of VA's legislative program development, ensures Departmental compliances with congressionally mandated reports and serves as the point-of-contact with the Government Accountability Office (GAO).

VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION



VA provides medical care to eligible beneficiaries as authorized by Title 38, U.S.C. the branch of VA that administers and operates this medical care system is the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). VHA operates the Nation's largest integrated health care system providing care to 4,997,772 million unique patients with 54,012,534 million outpatient visits in 2004.

To carry out its mission to provide medical care, VHA operated (as of December 31, 2004) 157 hospitals, 869 outpatient clinics, 134 nursing homes, 42 residential rehabilitation treatment programs, and 206 readjustment counseling centers including facilities in every state, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the American Virgin Islands, Washington, DC and Guam. VHA also finances health care for some veterans in other government or private facilities (including physician offices, hospitals, and nursing homes) and, under limited circumstances, finances care for dependents and survivors of veterans as well.

In addition to providing health care, VHA also has missions to provide training for health care professionals; to conduct medical research; to serve as a contingency backup to DoD medical services; and, during national emergencies, to support the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS).

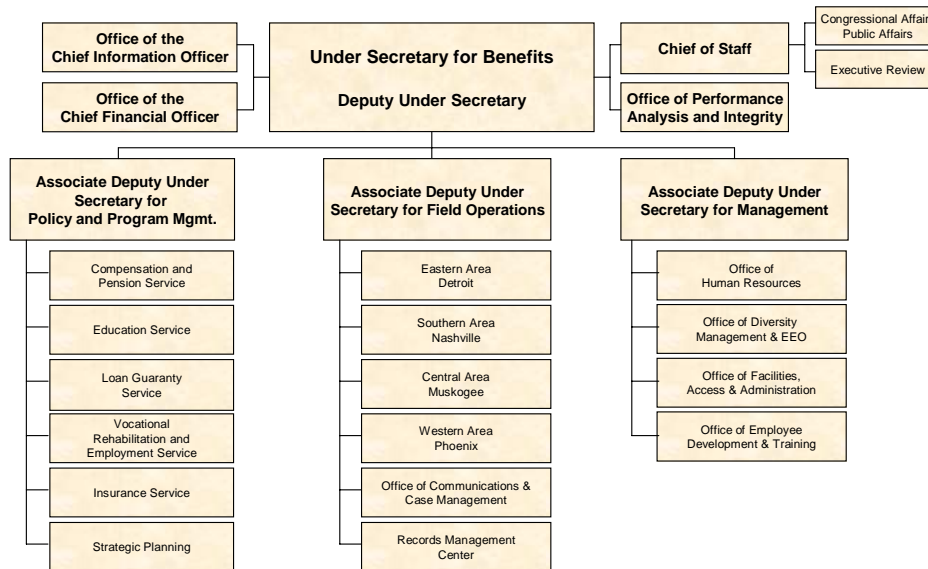
During the past 7 years, VHA has undergone a profound transformation. Replacing an older, top-down organization, VHA has made a profound shift in management philosophy and execution. Beginning in 1995, VHA restructured its management system from one in which a small number of regional directors remotely supervised numerous, complex field activities to one in which 21 Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN) provide close and continuing "hands on" supervision and leadership to local VA providers of care. The current, restructured veterans' health care system requires a data-driven, process focused customer education. Its goal is to deliver the right care at the right time in the right place. Moving from a hospital-based to a predominately outpatient system, that ratio of outpatient visits to inpatient admissions went from 29:1 in 1995 to 92:1 in 2004.

To assure this focus, VHA has redesigned systems including those for allocating resources, managing information and strategic planning. The new structure for planning, budgeting, and service delivery is the VISN, a network of facilities with a collective responsibility to coordinate care and maximize the health potential of veterans inpatient geographic regions. This has enabled the realignment of responsibility and accountability closer to the point of care delivery. In addition, a performance measurement system, including contracts or performance agreements with VHA's top managers, assures the alignment of action with organizational goals and alignment of all levels of the organization toward achievement of the goals.

Along with these structural changes, VHA has fostered new strategic goals that will move it forward within its domains of value: quality, satisfaction, functional status, and cost. Based on these goals, VHA has emerged as a national leader in providing a coordinated continuum of care at an increasingly predictable and consistent level and characterized by the achievement of performance outcomes in terms of cost, access, customer satisfaction, and improved patient care. VHA has made substantial progress in establishing a patient-centered, community-based health care system delivering accessible quality care. Always striving for improvement, VHA is moving in these directions so that the veterans' health care system can continue to provide high quality health care to our nation's veterans.

POINT OF CONTACT: *Diane Harvey, Veterans Health Administration, (202) 273-8290*

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION



The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) is responsible for administering the Department's programs that provide financial and other forms of assistance to veterans, their dependents, and survivors. Major benefits include veterans' compensation, veterans' pension, survivors' benefits, rehabilitation and employment assistance, education assistance, home loan guaranties, and life insurance coverage.

VBA MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

VBA has five key leadership positions reporting through the Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits to the Under Secretary for Benefits. Together with the Deputy Under Secretary and the Chief of Staff, five incumbents in these positions serve as VBA's governance board. The following summarizes the organizational elements and functions aligned under these leadership positions.

The Associate Deputy Under Secretary for Policy and Program Management (ADUSPPM) has oversight responsibility for the management of VBA's five core business lines: Compensation and Pension, Education, Loan Guaranty, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, and Insurance. (For program descriptions, see "VBA Benefit Programs" below.) In addition to responsibility for managing VBA's five major program offices, the ADUSPPM has responsibility for strategic planning. The Office of Strategic Planning responsibilities include developing long-range strategic plans for VBA, analyzing strategic data, researching and identifying long-range risks and challenges for the organization, and conducting organizational assessments.

The Associate Deputy Under Secretary for Field Operations (ADUSFO) has oversight responsibility for the management of the field organization. Within the field, 57 regional offices administer VBA's benefit programs. These regional offices are aligned under four Area Office Directors that report to the ADUSFO.

The Associate Deputy Under Secretary for Management (ADUSM) has oversight responsibility for four staff offices that manage, coordinate and integrate programs to support VBA business lines and regional office operations.

- The Office of Human Resources has responsibility for human resource functions within VBA headquarters. These include labor relations, employee relations, employee compensation and benefits, recruitment and classification, and human resources policy and planning. The office is also responsible for overall policy and directions governing human resources functions administered at the four Human Resource Centers and the regional offices.
- The Office of Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity is responsible for EEO programs and functions, which include diversity management and affirmative employment, discrimination complaint processing, and coordinating programs for minority veterans.
- The Office of Facilities, Access and Administration is responsible for ensuring and enhancing access to VBA services by veterans and their families; physical facilities development and planning; emergency preparedness; VBA's administrative policies and procedures; and support services such as security and fire safety.
- The Office of Employee Development and Training is responsible for all employee training activities in VBA headquarters and for coordinating training activities at VBA's field facilities. Functions include development of the VBA Strategic Training Plan, management of the strategic technical training delivery system (TPSS) in support of the business lines, and the administration of nationwide training via satellite, desktop delivery, and video teleconferencing.

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is fully responsible for all aspects of the formulation, presentation, defense, and execution of VBA's benefits and general operating expense budgets, totaling over \$37 billion. This responsibility includes managing and directing VBA's financial accounting and reporting; policy and systems development; and development and implementation of project management methodologies and processes across all project initiatives within VBA.

The Deputy Chief Information Officer for Benefits (DCIO/B) leads and directs VBA's Office of Information Management and is responsible for planning, developing, integrating, and implementing VBA's information management and technology investments, and for ensuring that VBA's information technology (IT) requirements and resource needs are identified. Additionally, the DCIO/B provides executive leadership to support VBA IT related field operations and acquisition support and integrates the policy and strategic plans of the Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology into VBA IT.

VBA BENEFIT PROGRAMS

Compensation and Pension Programs provide direct payments to veterans, dependents, and survivors as a result of the veteran's service-connected disability or because of financial need.

- Disability Compensation is a monetary benefit paid to veterans with disabilities that are the result of a disease or injury incurred or aggravated during active military service. The benefit amount is graduated according to the degree of the veteran's disability on a scale from 10 percent to 100 percent (in increments of 10 percent).

- Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) benefits are generally payable to the survivors of servicemembers who died while on active duty or survivors of veterans who died from their service-connected disabilities.
- Pension programs are designed to provide income support to veterans with wartime service and their families for a nonservice-connected disability or death. These programs for veterans and survivors experiencing financial hardship are means-tested.
- Burial and Interment Allowances are payable for certain veterans. A higher rate of burial allowance applies if the veteran's death is service-connected.
- Spina Bifida Monthly Allowance under 38 U.S.C. 1805 is provided for children born with spina bifida who are children of individuals who served in the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam Era or served in or near the demilitarization zone in Korea during the period September 1, 1967, through August 31, 1971. Payment is made at one of three levels and is based on degree of disability suffered by the child.
- Children of Women Vietnam Veterans Born with Certain Defects. This program provides a monetary allowance, healthcare, and vocational training benefits to eligible children born to women who served in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on February 28, 1961, and ending May 7, 1975, if they suffer from certain covered birth defects. VA identifies the birth defects as those that are associated with the service of the mother in Vietnam and result in permanent physical or mental disability.

Education Programs provide veterans, servicepersons, reservists, and certain veterans' dependents with educational resources to supplement opportunities missed because of military service and to assist in the readjustment to civilian life. Generally, a veteran has 10 years from the last separation from active duty to use this benefit. Currently there are six education programs. Details may be found at www.gibill.va.gov.

- Post-Vietnam Era Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) is available for eligible veterans who entered active duty between January 1, 1977 and June 30, 1985. Benefits and entitlement are determined by the contributions paid while on active duty and veterans have 10 years after separation in which to use the benefit.
- Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB) provides a program of education benefits that may be used while on active duty or after separation. There are several distinct eligibility categories. Generally a veteran will receive 36 months of entitlement and has 10 years after separation to use the benefit.
- Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) is a program funded and managed by DoD and is available to members of the Selected Reserve. VA administers this program but DoD determines the member's eligibility. Generally a qualified member of the Reserve will receive 36 months of entitlement and will have 14 years in which to use the benefit.

- Reservists Educational Assistance Program (REAP) is a program funded and managed by DoD and is available to members of the Selected or Ready Reserve who are called to active duty to support contingency operations. VA administers this program but DoD determines the member's eligibility. Generally a qualified member of the Selected or Ready Reserve will receive 36 months of entitlement and will be able to use the benefit as long as he or she remains in the Selected or Ready Reserve.
- National Call to Service is a program of education benefits that may be used while on active duty or after separation. The person must have enlisted on or after October 1, 2003, under the National Call to Service program and selected one of the two education incentives provided by that program. A veteran will receive education benefits based on the education initiative selected. These are either (1) education benefits of up to 12 months of MGIB benefits (the 3-year rate) or (2) education benefits of up to 36 months of the MGIB benefits (half the 2-year rate).
- Dependents Educational Assistance Program (DEA) is designed to assist dependents of veterans who (1) have been determined to be 100 percent permanently and totally disabled due to a service connected condition, (2) died due to a service-connected condition, or (3) died while on active duty. Dependents typically receive 45 months of eligibility. The criteria for using this benefit is shown below:
 - ✓ Children have 8 years to use this benefit.
 - ✓ A spouse of a living veteran has 10 years to use this benefit.
 - ✓ A surviving spouse of a veteran who died with a 100 percent service-connected condition has 10 years to use this benefit.
 - ✓ A surviving spouse of a veteran who died on active duty as 20 years to use this benefit.

The Loan Guaranty Program provides housing credit assistance to veterans and servicemembers to enable them to buy homes. Assistance is provided through VA's partial guaranty of loans made by private lenders in lieu of the substantial down payment and other investment safeguards required in conventional mortgage transactions. The program also provides Specially Adapted Housing Grants to assist certain veterans with severe disabilities to make their homes wheelchair accessible.

The Insurance Programs were created to provide life insurance at a "standard" premium rate to members of the armed forces who are exposed to the extra hazards of military service. Veterans are eligible to maintain their VA life insurance following discharge. In general, a new program was created for each wartime period after World War I. There are four programs that still issue coverage:

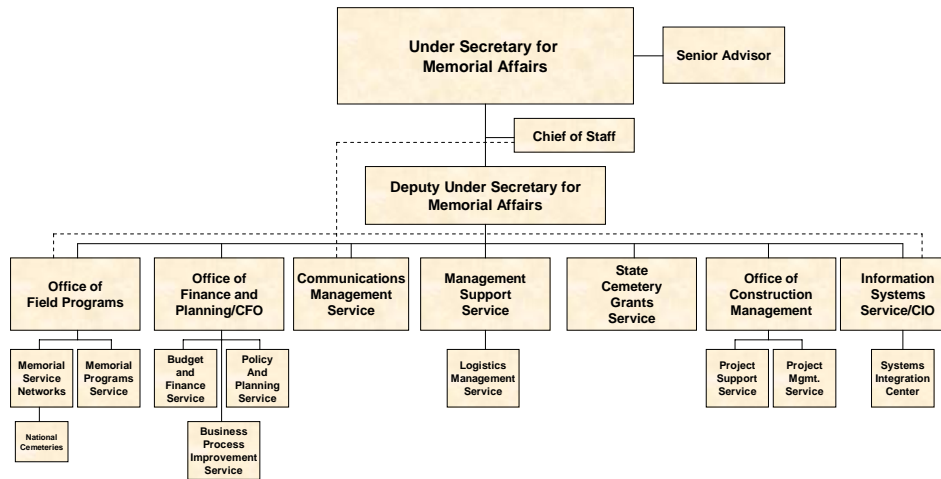
- Servicemember's Group Life Insurance (SGLI) – For active-duty members of the Uniformed Services and members of the Ready Reserves.
- Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) – Individuals who separate from service with SGLI coverage can convert to FVLI by submitting the premium within 120 days. After 120 days, the individual may be granted VGLI provided evidence of insurability is submitted within one-year of the end of the 120-day period.

- Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (SDVI) – A veteran who has a service-connected disability but is otherwise in good health may apply for life insurance coverage within 10 years from the date of being notified by VA of the service-connected status. This insurance is limited to veterans who left service after April 24, 1951.
- Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) – Available to severely disabled veterans who receive a Specially Adapted Housing Grant.

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program helps veterans with service-connected disabilities become employable in order to obtain and maintain suitable employment. When the severity of disability prohibits suitable employment as an immediate goal, the veteran is assisted in achieving independence in daily living. The program also provides educational and vocational counseling for eligible servicemembers, veterans, and dependents in selecting a program of training or an institution where the training is offered.

POINT OF CONTACT: Bruce Grimes, Veterans Benefits Administration, (202) 273-7124

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

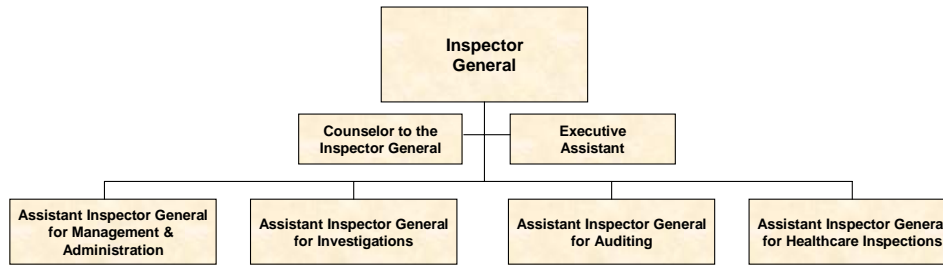


The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) operates 120 national cemeteries in the United States and territories, together with oversight/management of 33 soldiers' lots, confederate cemeteries, and monument sites. The mission of NCA is to honor our Nation's veterans with a final resting place and commemorate their service to our Nation. This mission is accomplished through four major program areas:

- Providing for the interment of eligible service members, veterans, reservists, National Guard members, and certain family members in national cemeteries. A total of 93,033 veterans and eligible family members were buried in national cemeteries in FY 2004. More than 3.1 million veterans, spouses, and dependents are buried in the system's 7,156 acres of developed land. NCA maintains these cemeteries and memorials as national shrines.
- Furnishing headstones and markers for the unmarked graves of veterans throughout the United States and the world. In FY 2004, NCA furnished 349,170 headstones, markers, and inscriptions as lasting memorials to our Nation's veterans. The Government does not provide for the cost of setting the headstone or marker in private cemeteries. In national cemeteries, a headstone or marker is provided, including the cost of placement.
- Administering the State Cemetery Grants Program, which provides financial assistance to states for establishing, expanding, and improving state veterans' cemeteries. Since the program was established in 1978, 135 grants have been made, totaling over \$208.6 million through FY 2004. The program provides Federal funding up to 100 percent of the cost of establishing, expanding, or improving state veterans cemeteries that complement NCA. There are currently 60 state veterans cemeteries in 30 states throughout the Nation and Guam. In FY 2004, 19,246 veterans and dependents were buried in these cemeteries.
- Providing Presidential Memorial Certificates to veterans' loved ones to honor the service of honorably discharged deceased service members or veterans. In FY 2004, NCA issued 435,434 Presidential Memorial Certificates on behalf of the President.

POINT OF CONTACT: Robert Kline, National Cemetery Administration, (202) 273-5232

INSPECTOR GENERAL



The Office of Inspector General (OIG) was established in VA on January 1, 1978. The Inspector General Act of 1978 (Public Law No. 95-452), enacted in October 1978, formally established the OIG for the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Inspector General Amendments of 1988 (Public Law No. 100-504) established detailed reporting requirements on the resolution and implementation status of issued OIG reports. Public Law No. 100-322 expanded OIG activities to monitor and evaluate VHA Quality Assurance Programs and activities of the Medical Inspector.

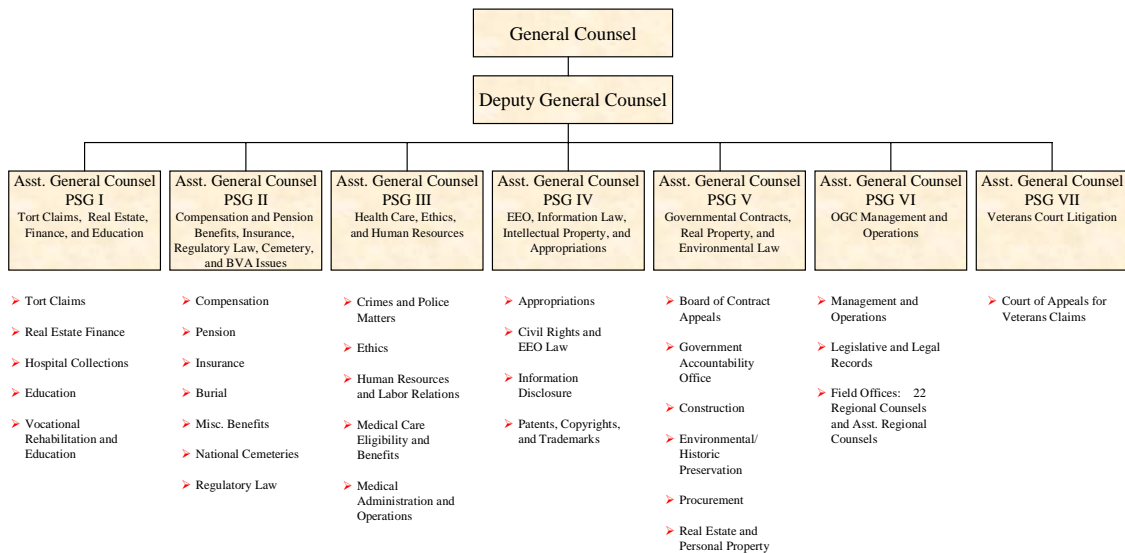
VA's OIG directs an independent and objective organization. The purpose of this organization is to conduct audits, investigations, and inspections of VA programs, operations, and other activities carried out or financed by VA; to recommend policies that promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness; and to prevent and detect criminal activity, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in VA.

Accomplishments of the office are described in semiannual reports required by the Inspector General Act. These reports are provided to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Congress, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Operations of the OIG are centrally managed in Washington, DC, and are divided among field offices established for audits, investigations, and health care inspections.

POINT OF CONTACT: Lawrence J. Timko, Office of the Inspector General, (202) 565-8182

GENERAL COUNSEL



The Office of General Counsel (OGC) assists in the formulation of policy and provides legal advice and services to the Secretary and all organizational components in the Department. The General Counsel serves as the chief legal officer for the Department on all matters of law, litigation, and legislation. The OGC interprets all laws pertaining to the Department and serves as the final legal authority in issuing Departmental regulations that implement laws pertaining to the Department. OGC responsibilities also include the Department's ethics program. The OGC represents the Secretary in litigation involving the Department and works in close cooperation with the Department of Justice and the United States Attorneys throughout the country in defending the Department in legal actions brought against it. Working in close cooperation with Department officials, OGC prepares for the Secretary's approval, legislative initiatives for submission to the Office of Management and Budget and the Congress.

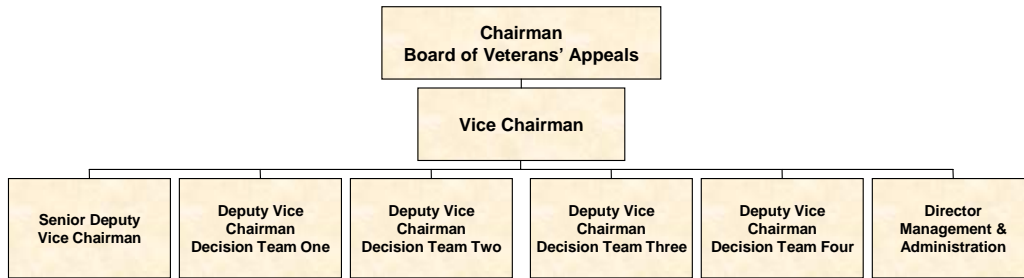
At VACO, the responsibility for the full range of legal, litigation, and legislative activities is distributed among seven Professional Staff Groups (PSG's), each headed by an Assistant General Counsel. Each PSG has expertise in the specific subject matter areas noted in the chart above, and is responsible for providing legal advice to program officials, reviewing proposed regulations and directives, and handling litigation involving VA programs. One of the Assistant General Counsels is the VA's Designated Ethics Official. Each PSG also prepares any draft legislation that is needed in its assigned subject areas.

The OGC maintains 22 field offices, each under the supervision of a Regional Counsel. Each Regional Counsel is responsible for providing legal advice and assistance to Directors and other officials of regional offices, VISN Directors and other officials of medical facilities, and officials of readjustment counseling centers and national cemeteries located within the assigned region. The responsibilities of a Regional Counsel include: (1) performing necessary legal review in administrative tort claims and providing appropriate legal service and support to the local U.S. Attorneys' Offices in tort litigation cases; (2) recovering funds owed the United States by applying legal collection remedies to include conducting litigation in federal and state courts to effect collection; (3) initiating required court actions in guardianship commitment matters by appearing in

state courts and furnishing legal assistance to appropriate elements of VBA; (4) providing necessary legal services in connection with the loan guaranty program; (5) advising and representing management of VA facilities located within the Regional Counsel's jurisdiction on issues relating to personnel and labor law; (6) providing training to employees of VA facilities within the assigned region; and (7) maintaining liaison with state agencies and legislatures and with state and local bar associations.

POINT OF CONTACT: *Paul Hutter, Office of the General Counsel, (202) 273-8660*

BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS



The Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA), a statutory Board created in 1933, makes final decisions on appeals to the Secretary under laws affecting the provision of benefits by the Department to veterans, their dependents, or their survivors. The BVA conducts hearings in Washington, DC, and at VA regional offices. Hearings by videoconference are available at most regional offices. The BVA also may review the reasonableness of fee agreements of attorneys or agents for representation of claimants and appellants before the Department, including the BVA. Final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. Appeals in insurance cases involving contracts may be taken into Federal courts after administrative remedies are exhausted.

The Board consists of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Senior Deputy Vice Chairman, four Deputy Vice Chairmen, and sufficient members to conduct hearings and decide appeals in a proper and timely manner. The Chairman serves at the Assistant Secretary level within the Department and is appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, for a term of six years. The other members of the Board, including the Vice Chairman, are appointed by the Secretary, with the approval of the President, based upon recommendations of the Chairman. The Secretary designates one member of the Board as Vice Chairman.

The Board is organized into an Appellate Group, four Decision Teams, and a Management and Administration section. The Appellate Group, headed by the Senior Deputy Vice Chairman, provides counsel to the Chairman and serves as BVA's liaison with VA's Office of the General Counsel, VHA, VBA, and other elements of the agency. The Appellate Group is also responsible for the Board's professional training and quality assurance programs, BVA's research center, and one medical advisor.

Each of BVA's decision teams is headed by a Deputy Vice Chairman, and is comprised of approximately 13 Board members and 55 attorney advisors. Decisions of the Board are rendered by individual Board members or by panels of not less than three Board members. Board counsel assist Board members, review appeals, conduct research, and prepare tentative decisions. Each decision team decides cases from regional offices in one of four geographic regions.

BVA's Management and Administration section is responsible for case management and tracking, docket control, hearing scheduling, correspondence, secretarial and transcription services, procurement, and liaison with parties outside BVA.

POINT OF CONTACT: Susan Toth, Board of Veterans' Appeals, (202) 565-4275

BOARD OF CONTRACT APPEALS

The Board of Contract Appeals is a statutory tribunal constituted under the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (CDA), that hears and decides appeals from decisions of Contracting Officers on claims relating to contracts awarded by VA, or by any other Agency when such Agency or the Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy has designated the Board to decide the appeal. The Board consists of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and four Administrative Judges appointed by the Secretary, who are assisted by a legal and administrative support staff. The Board also decides applications for attorney fees and expenses under the *Equal Access to Justice Act* (5 U.S.C. §504), which are submitted for appeals it hears or resolves.

Proceedings before the Board under the CDA are adversarial, intended to be less formal than civil courts, and designed to provide due process to the parties. The Board's rules provide for the right to discovery, to a hearing, to cross-examination of witnesses, and to a verbatim record of the proceedings upon which to base an appeal. Decisions of the Board are final unless appealed, either by the Government or by the Appellant, to the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

The Board's Chair is designated VA's Dispute Resolution Specialist pursuant to the *Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Act* (5 U.S.C. §571-584). Among other things, the Chair, Judges of the Board, and staff coordinate the Department's ADR effort; promote the appropriate use of ADR throughout the Department; provide training and assistance to VA organizations in the design and implementation of ADR programs in contracts, discrimination, labor, personnel and other arenas; and represent the Department in interagency ADR meetings and groups, including the Interagency ADR Working Group and the Interagency Program for Sharing Neutrals. The Board also has an active contracts ADR program where Board Judges serve as Settlement Judges or Neutrals to assist in pre-trial resolution of both docketed appeals and contract disputes prior to the issuance of a Contracting Officer Final Decision.

The Board is also charged with resolving any disputes between drug manufacturers and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with regard to Pharmaceutical Pricing Agreements Provisions of the *Veterans Health Care Act of 1992* (Public Law No. 102-585). The Board is responsible for holding the administrative hearings under VA's Administrative Offset of Employees' Salaries regulation (38 CFR 1.923(c)) and is negotiating with other Federal agencies to provide similar services. The Board also reviews the determinations of the Office of General Counsel (OGC) to de-credential veterans representatives, and reviews and renders fact finding determinations in OGC-referred tort claims under the *Federal Tort Claims Act* (5 U.S.C. §552a).

Finally, the Board acts as a trier of material facts in dispute in debarment or suspension proceedings.

POINT OF CONTACT: Gloria Brown, Board of Contract Appeals, (202) 273-6743

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY FOR VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS LIAISON

The Special Assistant to the Secretary for Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) Liaison is the Secretary's primary advisor on matters affecting VSOs and is responsible for the Department's day-to-day liaison with those organizations.

Liaison responsibilities include communicating regularly with VSO officials to ensure VA's responsiveness to the needs of the organizations and their members; attending the VSO Midwinter conferences and National conventions; and communicating with veterans concerning issues they feel strongly about, including health care. The incumbent attends all National Commanders' testimony on veteran's issues to the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees. Other responsibilities include articulating the Department's points of view on issues affecting America's veterans; maintaining and publishing lists of VSOs and their representatives for use by VA and the public; advising the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of VSO policy statements or specific positions on veterans' issues; and assisting VSOs in their dealings with other Federal agencies.

POINT OF CONTACT: *George R. Cramer, Veterans Service Organizations Liaison,
(202) 273-4835*

SMALL AND DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS UTILIZATION

The Director, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, serves as the Department's advocate for the participation of small, small disadvantaged, veteran-owned, service-disabled veteran-owned, women-owned, and Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBZone) in VA contracts and subcontracts. This office plans, implements, and coordinates Department programs for small businesses as directed by statutes, Executive Orders, and applicable regulations.

The Director serves as the Department's principal liaison to the Small Business Administration. In matters relating to the Department's socioeconomic acquisition program, the Director is a liaison with the Department of Commerce, the General Services Administration, and the Office of Federal Procurement Policy.

Activities in the program include conducting contract bundling reviews, training acquisition officials, sharing acquisition information with service organizations, counseling entrepreneurs, participating as small business experts at conferences, and disseminating informational materials that describe how to do business with the Department. This office ascertains the effectiveness of current policy, procedures, and plans in promoting socioeconomic programs for application throughout VA. This office also negotiates, establishes, and maintains the Department-wide procurement goals, and reports on the progress toward accomplishing these goals.

In response to Public Law No. 106-50, *The Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999*, this office established the VA Center for Veterans Enterprise. Dedicated in February 2001, the Center provides assistance to veterans and service-disabled veterans who want to open or expand a business. The Center works extensively with the Small Business Administration, the Association of Small Business Development Centers, the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers in DoD, the Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Service, and government and corporate buying activities. Principal functions of the Center include case management, community education and outreach programs, policy and legislative initiatives, and research and information management. The Center also supports the Secretary of Veterans Affairs who is a member of the Board of Directors for the National Veterans Business Development Corporation. VA must, by law, annually provide a notice to every business owned by a veteran that assistance is available to help the company move into the Federal marketplace. Additionally, VA must annually provide to every Federal agency a listing of each service-disabled veteran-owned business and the products and services the company provides.

POINT OF CONTACT: Scott Denniston, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization,
(202) 565-8124

CENTER FOR MINORITY VETERANS

The Center for Minority Veterans (CMV) was established by Congress on November 2, 1994, to promote, evaluate and assess minority veterans' use of VA programs and recommend solutions to better serve minority veterans. Serving as a principal advisor to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the CMV is charged with identifying barriers to service and health care access as well as increasing local awareness of minority veteran-related issues by developing strategies for improving minority participation in existing VA benefits programs.

Specifically, these veterans include the following minority groups: African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, and Native American, including American Indians, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiians. Oftentimes, cultural, economic, and ethnic differences may hinder access to VA services by veteran minority groups. Outreach activities, surveys, site visits, and direct contact with veterans are some of the channels through which the CMV gleans information to identify areas for improvement.

The Center utilizes three major outreach initiatives to assist in identifying and addressing minority veterans concerns:

- The Secretary's Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans are recognized authorities in fields pertinent to the needs of the minority group they represent. This diverse Committee advises the Secretary and Congress on VA's administration of benefits and provisions of health care, benefits, and services to minority veterans. Additionally, they provide an annual report to Congress outlining recommendations, concerns, and observations on VA's delivery of services to minority veterans.
- Another outreach initiative is through a team of over 280 Minority Veterans Program Coordinators (MVPC), who are assigned throughout VA and located in regional offices, medical centers, and national cemeteries. MVPCs focus on the needs of minority veterans in their respective local communities by educating them on VA benefits, services, programs, and advocate on behalf of these veterans by identifying gaps in services.
- Through the Veteran Business and Economic Development outreach, the Center has partnered with VA's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization to co-sponsor business outreach activities to target minority veterans, disabled minority veterans, and current minority business owners to address business related needs and provide access to business opportunities within the Federal government and private sector.

POINT OF CONTACT: Charles W. Nesby, Center for Minority Veterans, (202) 273-6708

CENTER FOR WOMEN VETERANS

The Center for Women Veterans is responsible for advising the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on VA health care services, benefit programs, legislation, and all VA policies that may affect women veterans.

The Center's mission is to ensure that: women veterans have access to VA benefits and services on par with male veterans; VA programs are responsive to gender-specific needs of women veterans; outreach is performed to improve women veterans' awareness of services, benefits and eligibility criteria; and women veterans are treated with dignity and respect.

The Center works closely with the three administrations – VHA, VBA, and NCA – to develop program initiatives. Additionally, ensures that women veterans are afforded equal access to all VA benefits and health care programs. The priority is to ensure that women veterans' issues are included in the national VA agenda such as the Secretary's Annual Statement and the VA Strategic and Performance Plan, ensure directives and policies are "gender neutral", and that they are not inadvertently discriminatory or insensitive to women veterans. Outreach, a primary component of the Center's mission, enhances access for women veterans to information regarding health and benefits, and promotes educational activities to improve the sensitivity of VA staff to the specific needs of these veterans.

The Center collaborates with the Women Veterans Health Program Office, and the women veteran's program managers at local and regional levels to identify and resolve policy, programmatic, and clinical issues that may have an impact on the care and services provided for women veterans. Through active partnerships with states, counties, veterans service organizations, various Federal agencies, and community-based program officials, it's assured that women veterans' issues and concerns are identified, discussed, and included in program development and implementation.

The Center provides consultation and support to the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans. This statutory Committee provides advice and consultation to the Secretary on programs for women veterans. The Committee is comprised of individuals who both reflect the diversity of the women veterans' population and possess the knowledge and skills necessary to assess the Department's responsiveness to the needs of this group.

POINT OF CONTACT: *Irene Trowell-Harris, Center for Women Veterans, (202) 273-6193*

CENTER FOR VETERANS ENTERPRISE (CVE)

The Center for Veterans Enterprise (CVE) maintains a free internet database of veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned business, the VetBiz Vendor Information Pages (VIP). The purpose of VIP is to help Federal and corporate officials to quickly locate veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses for contracting opportunities. Information on all services available at the CVE can be found at www.vetbiz.gov.

POINT OF CONTACT: *Gail Wegner, Center for Veterans Enterprise, (202) 254-0233*

OFFICE OF REGULATION POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

The Office of Regulation Policy and Management (00REG) is responsible for the centralized management, control, and coordination of all VA regulations. 00REG supervises VA's Regulation Rewrite Project, a comprehensive effort to review, reorganize, and rewrite VA regulations lacking clarity, consistency, or logical organization. 00REG also is responsible for devising and implementing new procedures to centralize control and improve Secretarial oversight, management, drafting efficiency, policy resolution, impact analysis, and coordination of diverse VA regulations.

00REG supervises the work of special regulation analysis and drafting teams as part of the VA's Regulation Rewrite Project. The Project is staffed by subject matter experts and legal advisors detailed from their parent organizations, who have been tasked with identifying and rewriting confusing, ambiguous, and disorganized VA regulations. Initially, the Project is focusing on 275 Compensation and Pension Service (C&P) regulations (contained in Part 3 of 38 CFR). Project team members have included employees from the Board of Veterans' Appeals, VBA, and Office of General Counsel. The C&P portion of the Project requires at least two years of dedicated effort. All of the detailed employees return to their parent organizations once they have accomplished their assigned tasks. Once that effort is concluded, the Rewrite Project will focus on other VA regulations.

00REG also has a permanent office to remedy long-standing deficiencies in VA's rulemaking process. 00REG provides centralized supervision and coordination of regulation development, tracking, control, policy integration, and economic impact analyses for proposed VA regulations. 00REG has redressed the problems identified with the VA's decentralized process--the lack of strategic focus and direction--and worked to reduce unnecessary delays, internal inconsistencies, poor coordination, and lack of policy integration.

By efficiently managing and standardizing the rulemaking process in VA, 00REG improves the Secretary's ability to articulate and implement his priorities, policies, and goals. The Regulatory Policy Council provides early, senior-level policy articulation. 00REG sets goals for regulatory development and publication against which progress can be measured, serving as the basis for an improved regulatory tracking system that will be accessible, understandable, and useful to VA leaders and managers. Clear, understandable, and timely publication of VA regulations will enhance the delivery of services to our veterans.

POINT OF CONTACT: *Robert C. McFetridge, Office of Regulation Policy and Management,
(202) 273-9515*

EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT ADJUDICATION

The Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication (OEDCA) began operations on February 19, 1998, pursuant to The Veterans Benefits Act of 1997. The Director of OEDCA is required to:

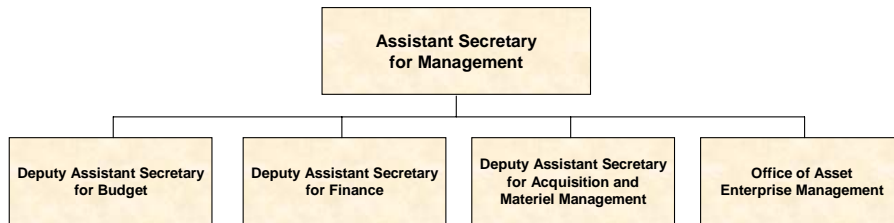
- Issue final agency decisions and orders on the merits of EEO complaints and on any relief that may be available.
- Report cases involving a finding of intentional discrimination or retaliation against employees asserting rights under an equal employment opportunity law to the Secretary or Deputy Secretary.

OEDCA is an independent office responsible for issuing final agency decisions and orders on the substantive merits of employment discrimination complaints filed by employees and applicants for employment. In order to avoid a conflict of interest, complaints alleging that the Secretary or Deputy Secretary personally made a decision directly related to the matters in dispute, or were otherwise personally involved in such matters, will be referred for decision-making to another Federal agency pursuant to a cost-reimbursable agreement. Such a referral will not be made, however, when the action complained of relates merely to routine, ministerial approval of selection recommendations submitted to the Secretary by the Under Secretary for Health, Under Secretary for Benefits, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, Assistant Secretaries, or Other Key Officials.

Final agency decisions and orders are rendered in a fair and impartial manner and are based on evidence contained in the investigation report and, if applicable, the hearing transcript and exhibits provided by an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) appointed administrative judge. OEDCA is also responsible for determining equitable relief and issuing final agency decisions on a complainant's entitlement to compensatory damages, attorney's fees, and costs where the complainant is a prevailing party. The Director's decisions are not subject to further review or appeal by any official within the Department. Complainants who are dissatisfied with a final agency decision or order may either appeal to the EEOC (or in some cases the Merit Systems Protection Board) or file a civil action in an appropriate United States District Court.

POINT OF CONTACT: Charles R. Delobe, Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication,
(202) 254-0063

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR MANAGEMENT



The Assistant Secretary for Management oversees all resource requirements, development and implementation of agency performance measures, and financial management activities relating to VA programs and operations. Responsibility also includes a Departmental accounting and financial management system that provides for management, cost, budgeting, and accounting information. In addition, the office oversees the Department's acquisition and materiel management activities as well as capital asset management activities, including development and implementation of policies and regulations.

OFFICE OF BUDGET

The Office of Budget is responsible for overseeing VA budget formulation, analyzing resource requirements, preparing and justifying budget submissions, and representing VA in budget deliberations with Congress and OMB. This office also monitors the financial execution of the budget, and the development and implementation of performance measurements as defined in the Chief Financial Officers Act as well as the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993. Budget execution includes examining actual expenditures and performance with the approved operating budget plan.

OFFICE OF FINANCE

The Office of Finance is responsible for continually improving the quality of the Department's financial services. It maintains stewardship of Departmental resources and provides financial information on appropriations and general, revolving, special, and deposit funds for cost and obligation accounting. The Office of Finance establishes financial policy, systems and operating procedures for all Department financial entities, provides guidance on all aspects of financial management, and directs and manages the Department's financial operations and systems support.

The office is responsible for the continued maintenance and update of VA's central payroll and human resources system, PAID, and implementation of legislative and other mandated changes. The office leads VA efforts to implement high quality, cost-effective and operational improvements to PAID and related self-service applications, such as Web-enabling online data entry screens and movement to Employee Express, a Web-based government off-the-shelf application. The office also maintains VA's legacy core accounting system, the Financial Management System (FMS). Current efforts include developing a new financial reporting capability and data warehouse to FMS to improve and automate VA's production of its financial statements and other reports and working with VA's Chief Information Officer to develop a new core financial and logistics system.

The office is also leading VA's efforts in support of two of the administration's e-Government initiatives -- e-Payroll and e-Travel. The administration's e-Payroll initiative will standardize, consolidate, and integrate Federal civilian payroll services and procedures by reducing the number of payroll providers from 22 to 4. As a result of the Office of Personnel Management's alignment of VA with the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS), the Office of Finance, as VA's primary liaison, is responsible for working with all VA offices and DFAS on plans for accomplishing the planned migration of VA's payroll servicing. The office is also responsible for overseeing VA's implementation of a new Web-based electronic travel system in concert with the Federal government's e-Travel program.

The Office of Finance is responsible for issuing VA's quarterly and annual consolidated financial statements and providing external Departmental financial reports to the Department of the Treasury, OMB, and Congress. It also establishes Department-wide standards and policies in financial management and reporting, cost accounting, cash management, debt collection, payroll and management controls.

The Office of Finance also directs and manages the Departmentwide travel and purchase card programs, as well as analyzes and oversees the performance and effectiveness of the Medical Care Collection Fund and trusts established under VA's enhanced-use leasing program. It is also responsible for VA financial operations at Central Office and the Financial Services Center in Austin, Texas, and debt collection operations provided by VA's Debt Management Center in St. Paul, Minnesota.

The Office of Finance also oversees the management and direction of VA's Franchise Fund through its Enterprise Fund Office. The Fund is comprised of the following business lines (Enterprise Centers): Austin Automation Center, Debt Management Center, Financial Services Center, Law Enforcement Training Center, Security and Investigations Center, and VA Records Center and Vault. These centers are authorized to sell common administrative services to VA and other Government agencies. The Enterprise Centers operate entirely on revenues earned from customers and receive no appropriated funding.

OFFICE OF ACQUISITION AND MATERIEL MANAGEMENT

The Office of Acquisition and Materiel Management (OA&MM) operates the largest Federal procurement and supply system outside DoD. VA's Supply Fund, a self-sustaining, revolving fund authorized by statute, funds all OA&MM activities, the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, and VHA's Logistics Office.

In support of VA's mission, OA&MM serves two fundamental roles:

- **Operations:** To provide acquisition and materiel management support and Supply Fund financial services for the administrations and staff offices to help fulfill their missions.
- **Program Oversight and Stewardship:** To ensure VA compliance with acquisition and materiel management laws, regulations, and national policies governing Federal acquisition and property management.

Three major business lines exist within OA&MM - acquisitions, materiel management, and Supply Fund financial services.

The Office of Acquisitions procures goods and services for VA. The office awards and administers cost-effective national contracts to meet supply and equipment needs of VA facilities around the country. Contracts include medical-related Federal Supply Schedules (with authority delegated by the General Services Administration); blanket purchase agreements; direct delivery (for high-tech medical equipment and systems); centralized purchases; and prime vendor (PV) distribution contracts. VA facilities use PV contracts to purchase pharmaceuticals; medical, surgical, and dental equipment and supplies; information technology equipment and services; nonperishable food items; consulting services; and other health-care items needed to operate the largest health-care system in the Nation.

The Office of Acquisitions also develops Department-wide acquisition policy, manages VA's mandatory acquisition training program, and offers continuing education programs for VA procurement staff around the country. In addition, the office manages VA's Contracting Officer Certification Program and is responsible for warranting all VA contracting officers. To ensure the integrity of VA's acquisition program, the office conducts business reviews of all major contract actions and makes site visits to VA contracting offices.

The Office of Program Management and Operations is responsible for establishing policy and policy oversight of materiel management; warehousing; and supply, processing, and distribution at VA medical centers. The office distributes such items as hearing aids, prosthetic devices, and interment flags to VA facilities nationwide, in addition to providing hearing aid repair services. The office designs, prints, and distributes VA forms and publications. Program management responsibility for VA's metric system, value engineering, and environmental programs resides within this organization. The office also provides transportation services for supplies and household goods and coordinates a program to acquire and distribute clothing for veterans served by VA's Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program. Other program responsibilities include employee relocation, inspection of X-ray and laundry equipment, recovery and sale of precious metals, and materiel management training.

OA&MM operates VA's Supply Fund. The Fund offers innovative financial services to its customers. For example, VA organizations and facilities can use the OneVA+ Program to extend obligation authority of appropriated funds for up to 4 years beyond the current fiscal year for bona fide needs. In addition, the Fund's capital equipment leasing program allows VA and other government agency customers to acquire equipment on a lease-to-own basis on terms of 1 to 5 years.

OA&MM partners with other government agencies to achieve maximum cost avoidance and savings. For example, VA and DoD jointly negotiate purchases of pharmaceuticals, medical and surgical supplies, and high-tech, high-cost medical equipment. Additionally, other Federal agencies use VA national contracts to take advantage of lower prices and streamline their acquisition process. OA&MM will continue to expand its outreach efforts.

OFFICE OF ASSET ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT

In July 2001, a corporate capital asset planning and management office was established – the Office of Asset Enterprise Management (OAEM). OAEM acts as one of the principal policy offices and business advisors to the Assistant Secretary for Management and Deputy Secretary regarding the acquisition, management, and disposal of all Department capital assets. OAEM provides oversight in the capital asset arena to ensure a consistent and cohesive Departmental approach by promoting and evaluating the effectiveness of capital asset management policies, principles,

standards, and guidelines. This office is responsible for making recommendations and promulgating Departmental capital asset policies – approved by the Secretary and/or Senior Management Council – that govern the acquisition, management, and disposal of capital assets. OAEM also provides guidance, standards, and technical expertise with respect to individual investments, and develops the Department's 5-year capital asset plan and annual asset management plan. In appropriate cases, OAEM is responsible for Departmental asset initiatives that are precedent setting in the manner by which the Department acquires and manages its capital holdings, or are initiatives identified as high visibility or significance within the Department.

OAEM also leads and manages the Department's energy conservation initiatives and investments. In addition, OAEM has fully developed and deployed the Department-wide capital asset management system (CAMS). CAMS provides for life-cycle portfolio management across the enterprise and integrated business programs. CAMS extracts key capital asset-related data from several data sources within the Department; this data is then organized and analyzed for strategic use in monitoring VA's performance against capital asset goals within and across asset types and the administrations. CAMS integrates asset management and governance at multiple levels of the Department, improves financial and analytical capabilities, and improves performance management. It facilitates improved service delivery to veterans and increased financial accountability to the general public.

OFFICE OF BUSINESS OVERSIGHT

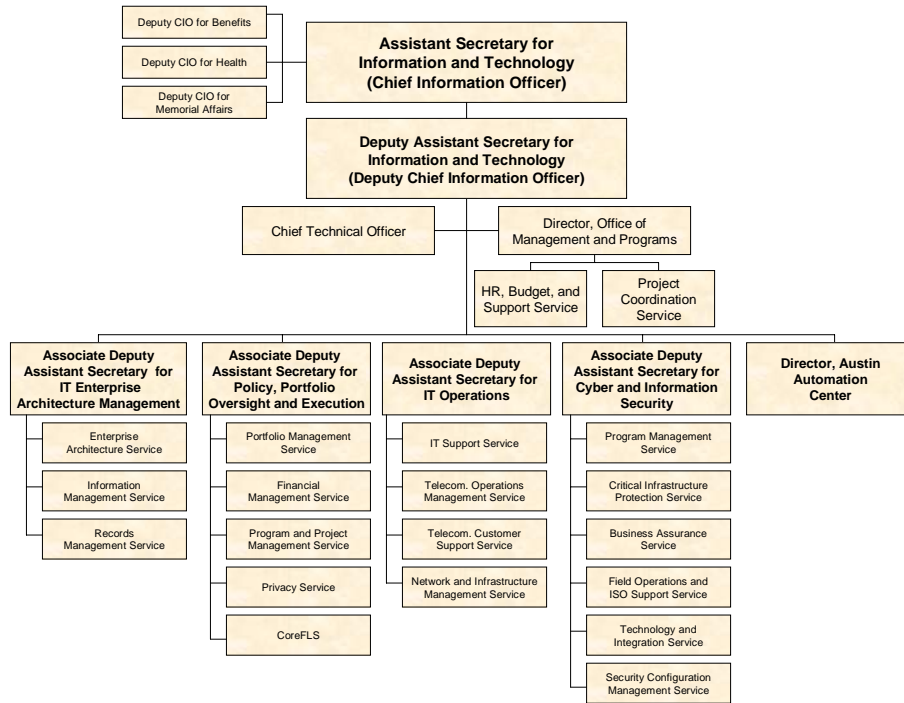
The Office of Business Oversight was created in March 2004 as part of the Department's finance, acquisition, and capital asset management activities realignment. The office has overall responsibility for oversight and compliance of the Department's business activities. The goals are to improve internal audit review coverage of field facilities, establish a clearer line of authority for oversight, and help standardize business practices throughout VA. The office includes a director's office, located in Washington, DC, and two supporting services, the Management Quality Assurance Service and the Systems Quality Assurance Service, both located in Austin, Texas.

The Management Quality Assurance Service performs internal audit reviews of the Department's financial, capital asset management, acquisition, and logistics activities and conducts financial analysis, monitoring, risk assessment and advisory services for VA's Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The Systems Quality Assurance Service manages and oversees independent verification and validation of internal control areas for financial and interfacing automated information systems. This service also conducts financial system (A-127) reviews.

The Office of Business Oversight also established the VA Finance and Logistics Council. This council consists of the VA CFO and Deputy CFO, Director of the Office of Asset Enterprise Management, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Acquisition and Materiel Management, the three administration CFOs, VHA's Chief Business Officer, and a Chief Logistics Officer from each administration. In addition to addressing general financial management, logistics, acquisition, capital asset management, and budget issues, the council will manage the oversight and field assistance activities of the Office of Business Oversight.

POINT OF CONTACT: *Patti Costello, Office of Management, (202) 273-5583*

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY



The Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology is the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for VA and is the principal advisor to the Secretary on matters relating to information technology (IT) management in the Department. The office provides technical direction, guidance, and policy to ensure that IT resources are acquired and managed for the Department in a manner that implements the policies and procedures of the Clinger-Cohen Act and the priorities established by the Secretary. This office oversees the management of VA's enterprise architecture; the cyber and information security program; VA IT capital planning, execution and financial management programs; IT project management oversight; the Department's data processing centers; wide area data and local area network management; telecommunications (voice, video and data) program management; records management and e-Government; and office automation support services to the VACO campus.

The office is composed of eight major organizational elements that report to the CIO and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology (Deputy CIO): Office of the Deputy CIO for Benefits; Office of the Deputy CIO for Health; Office of the Deputy CIO for Memorial Affairs; Office of IT Enterprise Architecture Management; Office of IT Policy, Portfolio Oversight and Execution; Office of IT Operations; Office of Cyber and Information Security; and the Austin Automation Center.

OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

In coordination and collaboration with Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials, and as directed by the CIO, the Office of Information and Technology oversees and facilitates all IT activities of the Department in order to improve the effectiveness of program operations and assist line and staff organizations in the performance of their missions.

The office advises and assists the CIO, as directed, on matters relating to Department-wide IT responsibilities and functions, including policy/budget formulation, planning, acquisition, execution, and oversight; internal and external coordination; development and analysis of Department-level program data; and assessment of Department IT requirements. (IT is defined in OMB Circular A-130 which implements the Clinger-Cohen Act for the Federal government.)

The office oversees the acquisition, development, implementation and post-implementation of all IT resources within the Department, and executes these responsibilities through the programs administered by the Deputy CIO's for Health, Benefits, and Memorial Affairs; and through programs which include cyber and information security; telecommunications; IT enterprise architecture management; and IT policy, portfolio oversight and execution, project management, and financial management. This office also oversees the management of the Austin Automation Center.

The office oversees the formulation of VA policies pertaining to IT which also includes e-Government; records management; directives management; forms; form letters; correspondence management; mail management; Freedom of Information Act; the Privacy Act; data confidentiality; computer matching; and the Data Integrity Board. In addition, this office advises and assists Departmental offices on the development of plans for and the acquisition of IT.

The office oversees the management and development of the annual Departmental IT planning process and IT Capital Plan; as well as the modernization and integration of IT across the Department. In coordination with all affected IT program offices, the office establishes guidelines for the acquisition of IT.

The Office of Information and Technology is the steward of VA's IT assets and, as such, is responsible for ensuring the efficient and effective operation of VA's IT program to meet mission requirements of VA's Secretary, Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials. The office represents VA's IT program internally and externally to Congress, OMB, GAO, other Federal agencies, and interested parties.

OFFICE OF POLICY, PORTFOLIO OVERSIGHT AND EXECUTION

The Office of Policy, Portfolio Oversight and Execution advises and assists the CIO and Deputy CIO by providing Departmental oversight in the program areas of IT portfolio investment planning and execution, IT financial management, and IT oversight and review. The office formulates and establishes Department-wide policies, plans, guidelines, and standards for IT capital planning, capital investment, acquisition review, program management and financial management to promote improvements in the effectiveness of IT in the Department and the efficiency of IT planned and operating budgets.

The office oversees and coordinates VA-wide implementation of IT legislation and guidance, including OMB Circular A-130, Circular A-11, Part 7, and the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996. It develops and manages the VA IT Portfolio Integrated Management Process. The latter incorporates IT capital planning and investment control and includes providing policies and support for milestone reviews. The office also participates on VA's Capital Investment Panel and supports VA's Enterprise Information Board (EIB). The office tracks and evaluates VA IT budget submissions and budget execution for adherence to and support of VA corporate plans. It also develops and publishes data for Department use on IT budget trends, acquisition strategies, and return on investment projections, including Exhibit 53 data on IT spending for submission to OMB.

The office conducts or directs post-implementation reviews on projects taken from a sampling of VA CIO-approved projects once the projects are fully implemented. It manages the technical and performance aspects of the Procurement of Computer Hardware and Software (PCHS-2) contract, a mandatory nationwide vehicle for buying IT resources; develops VA's IT Strategic Plan; and serves as an IT point of contact with VA's Office of Inspector General (OIG) and GAO for studies, audits, and reports concerning areas of responsibility. The office also coordinates Department-wide responses to GAO and OIG report recommendations and monitors implementation of corrective actions as they pertain to areas of responsibility. Staff provides expert consultant services to VA components and senior officials, ensuring adherence to legislative requirements and meeting the IT needs of the Department. They also participate on behalf of the Department in external working groups and partnerships with other Federal agencies and private industry to promote sharing above and beyond corporate boundaries.

OFFICE OF IT ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE MANAGEMENT

The Office of IT Enterprise Architecture Management (ITEAM) reports to the CIO and Deputy CIO. It performs a number of functions that enhance services to veterans while also improving VA's use of, and investment in, information and technology.

ITEAM prepares and manages the Department's Enterprise Architecture (EA), the primary purpose of which is to ensure IT capital investments are aligned with the business needs of the Department. This is accomplished by linking the Secretary's strategic vision with the business requirements of the administrations and then ensuring IT capital investments support those business needs. Duplicative or low return on investment systems will be eliminated and new systems will support the OneVA culture by providing common services through Department-wide enterprise systems versus legacy stovepipe systems. Principal working products of the Department's Chief Architect include an "as-is" baseline architecture which inventories existing systems; a "target" architecture documenting the next or, "to-be," architecture in development; and a "vision," or future, architecture that identifies stretch goals and key elements of future IT investments. All three architectures are linked to business requirements.

In direct support of EA, ITEAM recently established and executed a Department-wide Data Architecting Service. The mission and goals of the Data Architecting Service is to standardize the management of data and practices within VA through policies, tools and an enterprise data repository. This effort directly supports the OneVA strategy and will both enhance service to veterans and reduce costs. The Data Architecting Service is developing a data management strategy that will be a key building block in the transformation of VA's approach to systems development. In addition, the Data Architecting Service and systems developers de-emphasize unique systems for administrations and focus more intensely on establishment of an "enterprise data layer" from which all VA employees, partners and customers will be able to draw the same information with confidence from a OneVA information and services architecture.

ITEAM also manages enterprise projects with Department-wide scope that intend to link common processes across the Agency. Two of these projects are Registration Eligibility/Enrollment and Contact Management. Registration Eligibility/Enrollment uses common data elements to describe a veteran's personal and administrative data, facilitating a single one-time enrollment. Contact Management examines the potential for greater synergies across administrations for call center and internet access to VA by veterans. Both projects directly support the OneVA strategy and enhance services to veterans.

ITEAM also includes the Records Management Service for the Agency, leads the Americans with Disabilities Act Section 508 accommodation effort, and is the lead coordinator for VA's e-Government initiatives. This function entails coordination with OMB, other Government agencies, and all of VA's administrations and staff offices.

OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY OPERATIONS

The Office of Information Technology Operations advises and assists the CIO and Deputy CIO on matters pertaining to wide area network management; local area network management; facility telecommunications needs; national telecommunications policy; planning and oversight; the national delivery of telecommunications services; management and administration of VA's Federal Technology Service (FTS) programs and services; the nationwide implementation of VA and Federal telecommunications policies and directives; and management of data center services supporting a portion of the VACO complex. The office manages and oversees these responsibilities to facilitate the effectiveness of administration and staff office operations.

The office is responsible for establishing telecommunications standards. It leads the development and acquisition of effective and reliable telecommunications services in support of the Department's goals of integrating technology and implementing innovative management techniques in order to provide quality care and benefits to veterans. As such, the office oversees and manages the Department's voice, data and video services provisioned under the FTS contract. It also provides systems management, office automation, IT day-to-day technical operations, and customer desktop support for the VACO campus.

The office is responsible for establishing guidelines for Department-wide acquisition, installation, and management of telecommunications and local area network systems and service; overseeing technical support for design, engineering, and consultant services for telecommunications, local area network communications and related activities within the Department; analyzing and recommending action on proposals for the purchase or lease of telecommunications network and local area network communications equipment or systems in accordance with applicable internal/external guidance; maintaining liaison with industry and other Federal government agencies to keep abreast of the general policies, guidelines, procedures, and tariff regulations related to specific program areas; and developing plans, programs and budgets for the Office of Information Technology Operations that are properly aligned with and support business unit requirements.

The office serves as an IT point of contact with VA's OIG and GAO, for studies, audits, and reports concerning the office's areas of responsibility. It also coordinates Department-wide responses to GAO and OIG report recommendations and monitors implementation of corrective actions as they pertain to the Office's areas of responsibility. The office also provides expert consultant services to VA components and senior officials; ensuring adherence to legislative requirements and meeting the IT needs of the Department in this program area. In addition, on behalf of the Department, the office participates in external working groups and partnerships with other Federal agencies and private industry to promote sharing.

The office supports IT projects that are enterprise-wide in scope, utilitarian in nature and will be operated and maintained within the National Capital Regional Data Centers and for the Office of Information and Technology. Areas of responsibility include the Exchange Consolidation Project, the Web Hosting and Consolidation Project, and the Optical Regional Area Network (ORAN). Maintenance and operations support is provided for IT servers 75 miles outside of the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, extending the Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) to Martinsburg, West Virginia. The organization ensures that Information Technology Security Certification and Accreditation Program (ITSCAP) documentation will be completed and that independent security verification activities take place for enterprise projects under its control. The office develops policy for shared responsibilities for implementation and operational changes throughout the enterprise. The goal of the office is to safeguard the business process requirements of all stakeholders and to assist in resolving conflicts to accomplish successful OneVA management and implementation strategies.

OFFICE OF CYBER AND INFORMATION SECURITY

The Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Cyber and Information Security (OCIS) serves as the Department's Chief Information Security Officer. This office reports to the CIO and Deputy CIO on issues relating to information security in the Department. OCIS organizational components provide a centralized management and operational framework for formulating, developing, and implementing VA's Department-wide IT security program in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA).

The office's management components establish and monitor compliance with VA IT security policies, procedures and standards; oversee the Department's certification and accreditation program; sponsor an annual security assessment for each of VA's almost 700 systems; and compile required FISMA reporting for OMB. Additionally, these components coordinate VA's Critical Infrastructure Protection Program and provide awareness training for all employees, volunteers and contractors, as well as role-based training for almost 500 facility information security officers.

The office's technical components are responsible for managing enterprise-wide security enhancements, including configuration management; implementation of firewalls; network intrusion detection systems; malicious code protection; and public key infrastructure. Additionally, these components oversee VA's Central Incident Response Capability (VA-CIRC) and subordinate Security Operations Centers (SOC), which provide continuous vulnerability scanning and penetration testing for VA systems. They serve as a global "early warning" information-sharing network, in cooperation with homeland defense, law enforcement, Federal agency, vendor, university and international emergency response teams.

The office is a member of the Department's EIB and also chairs sub-committees and working groups chartered by the EIB to advance the Department's information security program. The office serves as the Department's focal point for liaison with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), National Security Agency (NSA), OMB, GAO, and VA's OIG on information security issues.

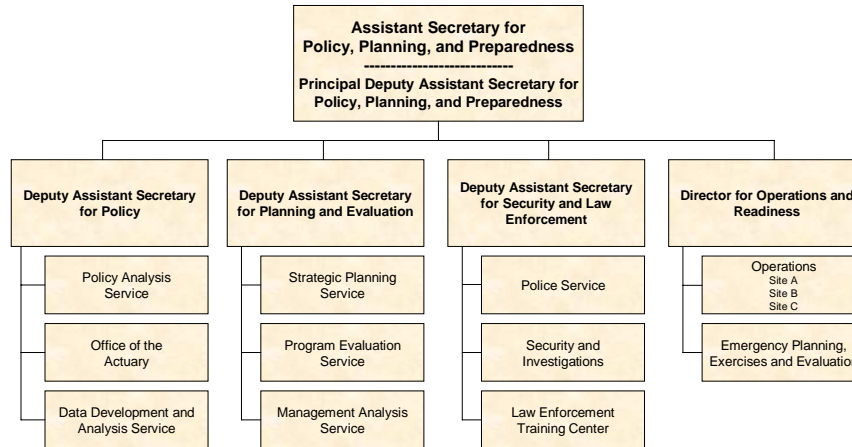
AUSTIN AUTOMATION CENTER

The Austin Automation Center (AAC) reports to the CIO and Deputy CIO and supports OneVA service to veterans and their families by delivering results-oriented, secure, highly-available, and cost-effective IT services. As a franchise fund entity, the AAC provides IT services to VA and other Federal customers. AAC focuses on continuously improving service delivery, demonstrating measurable value, and providing a culture that fosters teamwork and innovation. As the corporate IT center for VA's nationwide systems, over 100 major information systems are supported for VA and other Federal agency customers. Mission-critical functions such as payroll, financial management, human resources, logistics, medical systems, and eligibility benefits are supported. The AAC also offers a full complement of technical solutions to accommodate customers' varied IT e-Government initiatives. These solutions include platform-hosting services; application management; information assurance; customer business continuity; data conversion and interfacing; configuration management; and acquisition services.

The AAC also manages VA's Records Center and Vault (RC&V) as a Franchise Fund Enterprise Center. The RC&V operates a secure, subterranean climate-controlled facility in the Midwest, staffed by experienced archive technicians, that provides records storage, protection, and retrieval services. The RC&V also offers customized records storage solutions to other Federal agencies on a cost reimbursable basis.

POINT OF CONTACT: *Laura McCamley, Office of Information and Technology, (202) 273-9526*

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POLICY, PLANNING, AND PREPAREDNESS



The Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning, and Preparedness (OPP&P) oversees, on behalf of the Secretary, certain management activities and processes that require coordination across the Department or which call for the application of a broad perspective. OPP&P facilitates the Department's strategic planning process and implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA); supports the development, analysis, and review of issues affecting veterans' programs; provides quantitative and actuarial analysis to the Department in support of major policy deliberations; serves as the Department's focal point for access to and availability of official data; coordinates the independent evaluation of program performance focusing on program outcomes, service quality, customer satisfaction, and management efficiencies; fosters management improvement initiatives including business process reengineering throughout VA; and manages the Department's preparedness activities with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and other key Federal agencies in support of the National Response Plan.

OFFICE OF POLICY

The Office of Policy provides independent analyses to the Secretary and other VA policy and decision makers concerning future and current veteran policies and programs. The Office of Policy consists of the Policy Analysis Service, the Data Management and Analysis Service, and the Office of the Actuary.

The principal functions of the Office of Policy include:

- On-going analysis of VA and national current and proposed policies and programs to assess and facilitate enhancement of their impact and consistency with the President's Management Agenda as it relates to VA.
- Establishment of a policy research agenda and administering a broad-based research program in collaboration with VA administration and organizations, DoD, veteran service organizations, State Directors of Veterans Affairs, and other public and private sector organizations to continually identify and assess the impact of future national policy and program trends in technology, disability, health, resource and budget, and other areas on the formulation of future policies, benefits, services, programs, and resources.

- Providing a spectrum of economic, cost benefit, life cycle cost, veteran population forecasts, financial and liability projections, and other analyses of current veteran policies, benefits, services and programs to support a range of executive, enterprise planning, corporate governance, and Congressional activities and operational and strategic decision making processes.
- Administration of the National Survey of Veterans Programs and national statistical center functions to support continual enhancement of policies, programs, benefits, and services to veterans with emphasis on veteran cohorts including Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Guard and Reserve veterans, women veterans, minority veterans, aging veterans, and other specialized veteran groups.
- Facilitation of collaborations and innovations to enhance development of service delivery policies and strategies across VA administrations; other Federal, state, and local government agencies; and other organizations to leverage resources and improve outreach and the delivery of benefits and services to veterans.

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The Office of Planning and Evaluation oversees implementation of VA's governance and strategic planning processes, which include development of VA's Strategic Plan and the Secretary's Annual Statement. It provides conceptual, analytic, and information support to program officials collaborating on the identification and analysis of environmental factors and strategic issues that may affect VA and its ability to deliver benefits and services to veterans and their families.

The Office of Planning and Evaluation has responsibility for:

- Implementing the Program Evaluation process required under GPRA to measure the effectiveness of Federal programs against outcome goals and objectives.
- Coordinating the Department's implementation of Competitive Sourcing and Business Process Reengineering studies.
- Serving as the Department's internal coordinator and external liaison regarding strategic plans, management improvement initiatives, organizational assessment and transformation, quality awards, competitive sourcing, benchmarking, and best practices.
- Coordinating VA's collaborative efforts with DoD under the VA/DoD Joint Executive Council.

OFFICE OF SECURITY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Office of Security and Law Enforcement (S&LE) is responsible for making recommendations and developing policies and procedures to:

Provide oversight to ensure that an effective level of security and protection for VA employees is maintained at VA-owned facilities through the development and implementation of relevant policies, site inspections, and guidance.

- Provide training of VA police officers.

- Provide protection for the Secretary and Deputy Secretary.
- Develop and implement an effective security program for VACO facilities, employees, and clients.
- Direct VA's firearm management program.
- Manage VA's personnel security investigations program.
- Develop an effective working relationship with VA's OIG and other law enforcement entities.

S&LE executes these functions through three units: Police Service, Security and Investigations, and the Law Enforcement Training Academy. Security Investigations and the Law Enforcement Training Academy are enterprise activities. Their budget and staffing levels are based on the revenue generated by reimbursable services that they provide.

OFFICE OF OPERATIONS AND READINESS

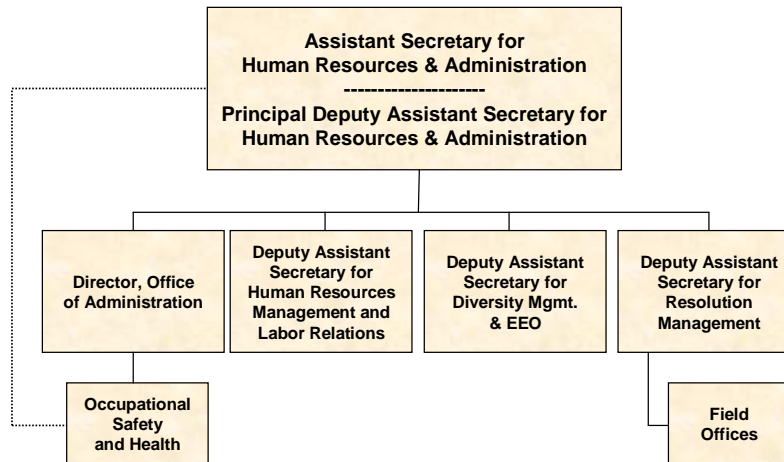
The Office of Operations and Readiness (O&R) is responsible for:

- Developing and managing VA policies and directives relating to emergency preparedness, Continuity of Operations Plan, Continuity of Government, homeland security, and related national security issues.
- Monitoring, on a 24/7 basis, the operational status of the VA system for continued delivery of services to veterans and their families and addressing problems as they develop.
- Developing, implementing, and evaluating preparedness training, exercises, and program evaluations.
- Coordinating and developing VA's emergency preparedness and crisis response activities agency-wide, and in coordination with other Federal, state, local and relief organizations.
- Developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with DoD, DHS, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and other Federal agencies.
- Managing the secure communications program for the Department as a part of VA's National and Homeland Security mission.
- Representing VA on DoD, DHS, FEMA, HHS, Centers for Disease Control, and other inter-agency committees and work groups.
- Ensuring VA's ability to execute emergency responses and DoD support contingencies with minimal disruption to on-going services to veterans and their families.
- Establishing a liaison with DHS, HHS, FEMA, and DoD to coordinate contingency and emergency planning as well as provide daily operations coverage as required.

- Coordinating the planning and execution of a comprehensive education, training, and exercise program to ensure all personnel are trained in emergency response and procedures.
- Exercising and evaluating emergency preparedness plans throughout VA.
- Managing, directing, and ensuring the immediate readiness and staffing of VA's Readiness Operations Centers in support of VA's COOP.
- Developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with VHA's Emergency Management Strategic Health Group.

POINT OF CONTACT: *Christy Fick, Office of Policy, Planning, and Preparedness, (202) 273-5032*

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HUMAN RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION



The Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration (HR&A) provides direction and oversight to four major program areas headed by the Deputy Assistant Secretaries for Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity, Human Resources Management and Labor Relations, and Resolution Management, and the Director, Office of Administration. With the assistance of these officials, the Assistant Secretary is responsible for directing both policy and operational functions in these program areas. The Assistant Secretary serves as the Department's Designated Agency Safety and Health Official and is responsible for administering the Occupational Safety and Health and Workers' Compensation programs. The Assistant Secretary also serves as the Department's Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO), advising and assisting the Secretary in carrying out VA's responsibilities for selecting, developing, training, and managing a high quality workforce in accordance with merit systems principles.

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION

The Office of Administration provides a wide range of support services, primarily to VACO. Local services include telecommunications, audiovisuals, transportation, personal property, space management, mail, and operation of the VACO building as well as administrative support to all VACO employees in satellite locations. Nationwide, the Office of Administration oversees the Department's Occupational Safety and Health, and Workers' Compensation programs, provides guidance and assistance to facilities in their audiovisual needs, the oversight and responsibility of the transit benefit program, the processing of executive correspondence (White House bulk mail), and protocol matters affecting the Department.

The office serves as Departmental liaison to the General Services Administration concerning space acquisition, telephone, and other support functions within the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. The office manages the VACO space inventory, and is responsible for alterations and renovation projects, and serves as the facility site manager for seven Washington area locations. It provides the full range of facilities management services to the U.S. Kids Child Development Center.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND LABOR RELATIONS

The Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations (HRM&LR) is responsible for advising and assisting the Secretary and other VACO and field officials to meet the established mission, goals, and objectives of the Department through a strategically aligned and customer-focused human resources and labor-management program.

This office is focused on policy development, workforce planning initiatives, human resources development, legislative changes, civil service reform, and labor-management relations. This includes the fundamental human resources functions of staffing (recruitment and retention), classification, compensation, executive resources, workforce planning, employee relations, employee work-life and benefits, career transition, oversight and effectiveness, and employee development within the human resources community.

The functions of HRM&LR include liaison with the Office of Personnel Management as well as representing the Department before Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, and other Federal agencies on human resources and labor-management issues.

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Office of Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity (DM&EEO) advises and supports the Assistant Secretary for HR&A in workforce diversity issues. The office also supports the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Under Secretaries, and Assistant Secretaries in their commitment to achieve and sustain a diverse workforce.

DM&EEO works proactively to enhance the employment of women, minorities, veterans, and persons with disabilities through the following:

- Leadership in diversity and affirmative employment policy.
- National Special Emphasis Programs.
- Diversity training and education.
- Workforce analysis and evaluation.
- Internship programs and partnerships.
- Electronic diversity tools and publications.

Our vision is an environment that fosters respect, fairness, and an opportunity for all employees.

OFFICE OF RESOLUTION MANAGEMENT

The Office of Resolution Management (ORM) provides EEO discrimination complaint processing services to VA employees, applicants for employment, and former employees. Complaint processing activities include counseling, mediation, investigation, and procedural final agency decisions. ORM accomplishes these responsibilities through a nationwide network of 7 field offices and 17 satellite offices.

ORM provides compliance oversight functions for the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication (OEDCA) final agency decisions, EEO Commission appellate decisions, complaint settlement agreements, and breaches of these agreements. In addition, ORM has oversight responsibility for the Department's Civil Rights Program, which carries out compliance and enforcement activities in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

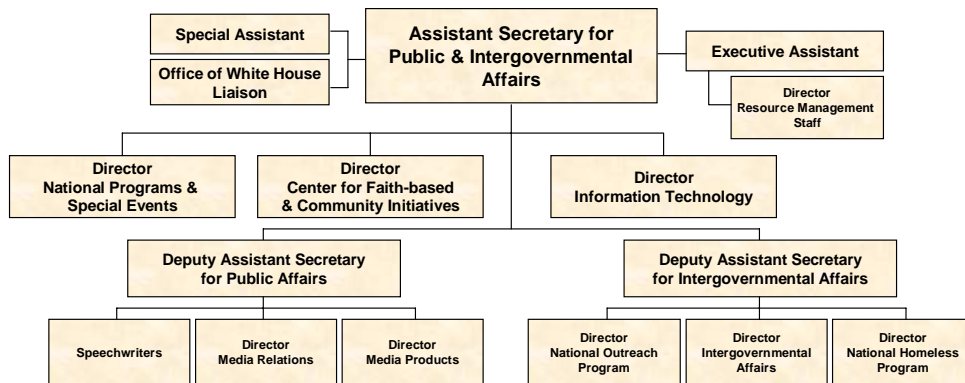
To meet Department goals, ORM has successfully undertaken significant initiatives designed to resolve work place disputes at the earliest possible stage. Resources are devoted to examining how VA is currently using Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) techniques, providing ADR awareness and mediation training programs, and assisting VA facilities with establishing effective ADR programs. This is accomplished by working with all elements of VA to promote the use of ADR in resolving conflicts in the work place.

ORM conducts analyses of the possible root causes or reasons complaints are filed when discrimination does not appear to be a factor. This information is routinely made available to VA managers as a resource to identify, evaluate, and address issues that result in work place disputes.

ORM's Stakeholders Council provides a forum for ORM to share information with our primary VA customers concerning the effectiveness of our programs and services, identify new program areas, and work on shared projects of interest. The Council is made up of representatives from each VA administration, General Counsel, OEDCA, HRM&LR, and ORM.

POINT OF CONTACT: *Suzanne Campbell, Office of Human Resources and Administration,
(202) 273-5355.*

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS



The Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs manages all aspects of communications with veterans and the general public, VA employees and the news media; an array of special events geared to the needs and interests of veterans and their families; and efforts by the agency to work with various state and local governments to better meet the needs of veterans across the nation. The responsibility includes coordination and distribution of the information VA communicates to its audiences, especially to the general public through the news media, and the provision of public affairs policy guidance for the department. The Assistant Secretary also directs and manages the intergovernmental, international, homeless, consumer affairs, and faith-based community initiatives programs, as well as the special events program office. The Office of the Assistant Secretary works to meet the needs of all VA audiences--first and foremost, veterans.

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs is responsible for providing external and internal communications services and public affairs policy guidance to administration and other operating elements to create awareness of VA programs, services, and responsibilities.

The primary mission of the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) is to provide the nation's veterans, and their eligible dependents and survivors, information through news media channels about department benefits and programs. Through the preparation and dissemination of various communications materials, the office provides essential information on program eligibility and operations to a variety of public entities. It maintains close liaison with media representatives and monitors print and broadcast news activity. It provides responses to inquiries concerning data and information about agency operations and policy. OPA provides assessments of public affairs issues to the Secretary and his staff, and assists VA field facilities in the formulation and execution of community affairs programs. OPA conducts public affairs training to enhance the ability of public affairs officers to communicate through the news media. It also communicates information on administration policy and priorities through a variety of means, including articles, speeches, and media interviews with agency officials. OPA provides timely advice, information, and counsel to public affairs officers based in field facilities maintained by VHA, VBA, and NCA. The program is designed to provide the Department with the means by which program objectives can be enhanced through supportive communication activities.

OPA supports publicity activities surrounding numerous national special events such as the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, National Veterans Wheelchair Games, National Veterans Golden Age Games, National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, Memorial Day and Veterans Day national ceremonies, publishes an annually updated handbook of federal veterans benefits information in English and Spanish, and produces the Department's print and electronic internal communications media. The office maintains Internet access to the benefits booklet (in English and Spanish), news releases, fact sheets, video products and other informational materials.

With personnel in Central Office and seven regional offices, OPA provides an array of public information and professional communications media services. These include news and feature releases, fact sheets, statistical summaries, radio and television materials, magazine articles, speeches, and official statements. The office also provides advice to the Secretary, administrations and staff offices concerning public interest and reaction to VA policies and programs.

The office produces a number of media specifically aimed at VA's internal audiences - employees, volunteers, veteran patients and clients, and other stakeholders. *Vanguard* is VA's employee magazine published six times a year and distributed nationally to all VA facilities. *VA News* is a weekly video newscast of events, activities, issues and achievements affecting VA employees. It is broadcast via satellite to all major VA facilities. The office sends via e-mail a daily message for all employees to inform them of VA achievements, initiatives and policy decisions and to recognize VA employees for their achievements. All of these products are posted on the OPA Web site, as well. The office also uses the employee leave and earnings statement to send messages communicating management priorities and program initiatives.

The office produces a monthly video news magazine called "The American Veteran" which is broadcast to military personnel around the world on the Pentagon Channel and on domestic cable and satellite television systems.

OFFICE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Intergovernmental Affairs serves as the Department liaison in all intergovernmental affairs matters and is the primary point of contact with Federal, state, and local government officials. The office coordinates VA's participation in intergovernmental affairs initiatives, including White House-sponsored activities and is responsible for the assessment of the issues and concerns of state and local officials and the impact of VA's action in their areas of jurisdiction. The office also facilitates continuous and bilateral communications between the states and VA to gain early knowledge of state actions and concerns, issues, and supporting programs.

The Intergovernmental Affairs Service has a strategic planning component and an operational component: The strategic planning team is focused on the future, how best to build relationships with states, territories and Native American tribal governments with special emphasis on those with the largest population of veterans. The team advises the Assistant Secretary and Deputy Assistant Secretary about important upcoming special events, forums, and/or conferences where VA participation would be beneficial. The staff serves as the primary liaison to national intergovernmental organizations. The operational team will execute the Strategic Team's plan, which involves coordinating all VA field events and participation in non-VA activities and conventions. The team will travel to venues, engage media and message VA's focus on state and organizational partnerships. They operate as a rapid response team when needed, serving as field liaisons to the states, territories and tribal governments.

Intergovernmental Affairs Service is responsible for developing, managing, and coordinating the Department's international programs. In coordination with the National Security Council (NSC), DoD and the State Department the staff develops state visit programs and subject matter exchanges for representatives of foreign governments concerning veterans' benefits. This provides a venue for the exchange of information on how best to assist countries in developing programs to better serve their veterans and to help foster our bilateral relations with participating countries. The service is also responsible for coordinating with foreign governments all international commemorative events such as the anniversary of foreign wars, battles, and official recognition by foreign governments of our veterans. A major responsibility of the service is to interface with the diplomatic community on all international matters concerning our veterans and all foreign official travel.

The Homeless Veterans Programs office coordinates Department-wide efforts to assist our Nation's homeless veterans. The staff is tasked with developing partnerships with other Federal agencies, state and local governments, national and local homeless service providers, veterans service organizations, and Native American tribal governments to improve internal and external systems of assisting homeless veterans. This office oversees all VA homeless programs and serves as the Department's coordinating office with the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH). In addition, this office coordinates the Department's Working Group on Homelessness which provides logistical support to the 15-member Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans. This office is a key internal partner to the loan guarantee for multifamily transitional housing for homeless veterans' initiative. The Office coordinates VA involvement in the planning and participation in joint conferences with Federal departments that assist homeless veterans; oversees VA participation with the Department of Labor's pilot to assist incarcerated veterans; and participates as a key component of the Secretary's Task Force on access and availability of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

The National Outreach Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the Department's outreach efforts, as well as developing and implementing administrative and operational policies for Department-wide application. The coordinator serves as the Department's primary point of contact and subject matter expert on outreach and related activities that affect the nature and benefits of targeted groups of veterans. The coordinator develops and implements Department-wide outreach policies and procedures, and oversees efforts with various communications offices to develop local, regional and national outreach communication plans. The coordinator liaisons VA outreach efforts with the White House, Congress, and other Federal, state and local officials in the development of coordinated outreach efforts.

CENTER FOR FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI), created by Executive Order 13342 on June 1, 2004, coordinates department-wide efforts to eliminate regulatory, contracting, and other programmatic obstacles preventing full and fair participation of faith-based and other community organizations in the provision of social and community services to veterans. The center serves as the liaison and point of contact with the White House OFBCI with unique operational and reporting requirements. Staff identify various programs within the administrations that would serve as opportunities for participation by faith-based and community organizations.

OFFICE OF NATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

The Office of National Programs and Special Events coordinates VA activities related to national memorial and commemorative veterans programs, and the four national rehabilitative special events for disabled veterans. Such activities include Veterans Day, Memorial Day, National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, National Veterans Wheelchair Games, National Veterans Golden Age Games, National Veterans Creative Arts Festival and nationally recognized historical events. This office also directs the activities of the National Rehabilitative Special Events Management Group currently chaired by the Deputy Secretary and vice-chaired by the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs.

OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

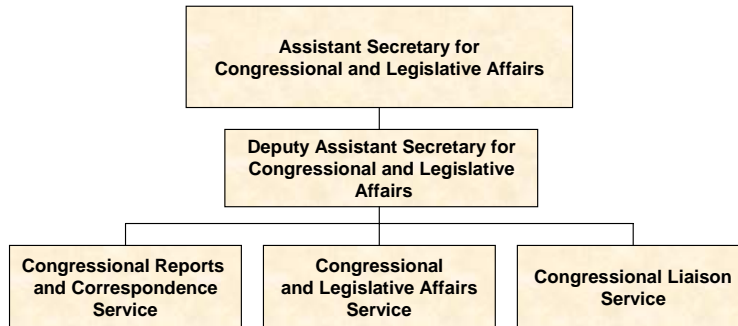
The Office of Information Technology is responsible for ensuring that electronic and office automation activities achieve and maintain state-of-the-art communications with respect to networks and systems employed department-wide by public affairs specialists and managers. It is responsible for ensuring that public affairs web-centric activities are operational and maintained, acting as an interface between content managers and computer technicians.

OFFICE OF WHITE HOUSE LIAISON

The Office of White House Liaison advises the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs on the placement of Senior-level non-career appointments in the Department of Veterans Affairs. The office also serves as the Department's Committee Management Office for VA's 26 advisory committees and is responsible for providing clear goals, standards, and uniform procedures with respect to the creation and operations of the advisory committees.

POINT OF CONTACT: *Karla Pringle, Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs,
(202) 273-5754.*

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CONGRESSIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS



The Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs is responsible for promoting the enactment of legislation authorizing improved veterans benefits and services by coordinating the development of pro-veteran legislation and advising the Secretary on legislative strategy; by maintaining healthy communications with Congress through constituent services, briefings, reports, hearings, and other informational exchanges; and by maintaining productive working relationships with congressional members/staff, congressional committees, and GAO.

OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

The Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs is responsible for advising senior Department officials on developing and maintaining VA's relationship with Members of Congress and congressional committees and on congressional interest in VA policy and program development and implementation, managing all congressional hearings, and ensuring that Congress receives pertinent and timely information about VA programs and policy issues. In addition, the office provides support and assistance with respect to specific legislative activity, monitors the status of pending legislation affecting VA, and works closely with the Legislative Advisor in developing the Department's annual legislative program.

OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

The Office of Congressional Reports and Correspondence is responsible for ensuring that VA is compliant and timely in meeting congressional mandates for reports. In addition, the office maintains the Department's liaison function between VA and GAO, and coordinates meetings and reports due to the GAO. Responses to pre- and post-hearing questions associated with congressional hearings are managed by the office, as well as office's internal correspondence function.

OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON

The Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs maintains two satellite offices located in the Hart Senate Office Building and the Rayburn House Office Building to provide constituent casework and related services, allowing for direct, face-to-face contact with Members of Congress and their staffs.

POINT OF CONTACT: Susan Theroux, Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, (202) 273-5628.