

WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED

This section of the report presents detailed information on the Department's program and financial performance during FY 2001. The discussion is structured around our strategic goals, as published in VA's Strategic Plan in September 2000 and the Secretary's priorities. These strategic goals reflect the combined effort of all organizational elements to deliver benefits and services to disabled veterans, veterans in transition from the military, the overall veteran population and their families, and the Nation at large.

In addition to our strategic goals, we have an enabling goal that focuses on management issues and fosters a climate of world-class service and benefits delivery.

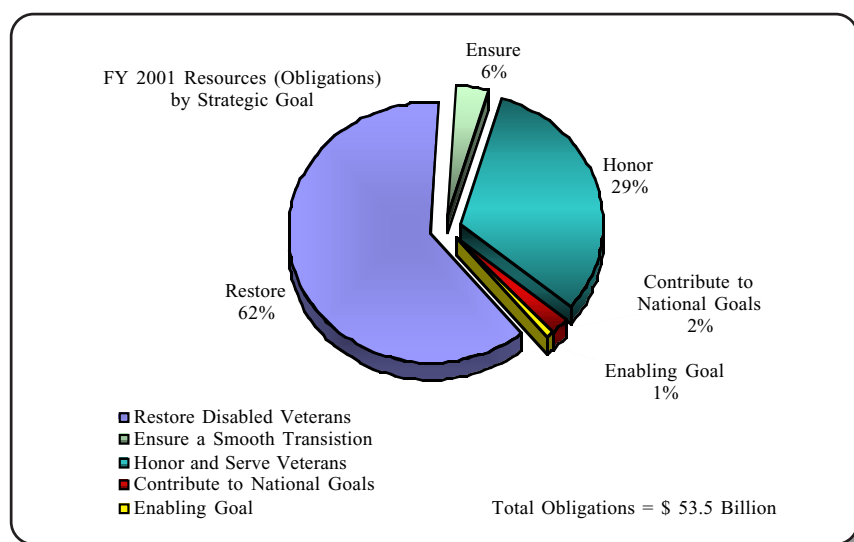
VA's Key Performance Goals and Measures

VA's senior leadership identified 26 key performance goals as critical to the success of the Department. Some of these deal with program outcomes; others pertain to the manner in which we administer our programs.

The Department is committed to continuously improving the delivery of benefits and services to veterans and their families. Whether the focus is on enhancing the quality of health care, expanding access to care, reducing the time it takes to complete claims for benefits, improving the accuracy of claims processing, or providing more veterans with a burial option, our aim is to better our performance each year.

At the end of each fiscal year, we evaluate performance for the previous year and set new annual performance targets that demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement. In many instances, the performance improvements we project from one year to the next, as well as the performance advancements we actually achieve, are dramatic. In other cases, the improvement is more limited. Nevertheless, we continuously strive to improve our performance in all programs every year.

While the vast majority of our performance measures remain the same from one year to the next, our list of measures does change in response to changing circumstances. For example, we are



constantly striving for better ways to measure performance. This is an ongoing process - with the introduction of new measures each year that reflect a more sophisticated and mature performance measurement system. There are also instances in which our actual performance has met or exceeded our original goals, and further performance improvements are unlikely or unreasonable. In these cases, we either drop the performance measure or replace it with a different one.

While some of VA's key performance measures support achievement of more than one strategic goal, we have aligned them with the strategic goal and Secretarial priority that they most closely support. For each of the Secretarial priorities, we present:

- the performance measure or measures used to gauge progress toward achieving the goal;
- historical data;
- means and strategies used to achieve the actual level of performance;
- crosscutting activities with other federal and private organizations;
- descriptions of any relevant management challenges affecting goal achievement;
- the source of the performance information and how it was validated.

Other goals and measures deemed important by the program offices continue to be monitored and are presented in the data tables beginning on page 128.