



Department Overview

Our Mission: *What we are Here to Do*

To fulfill President Lincoln’s promise – “To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan”– by serving and honoring the men and women who are America’s veterans.

President Lincoln’s immortal words – delivered in his Second Inaugural Address more than 140 years ago – describe better than any others the mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs. We care for veterans and their families – men and women who have responded when their Nation needed help. Our mission is clear-cut, direct, and historically significant. It is a mission that every employee is proud to fulfill.

VA fulfills these words by providing world-class benefits and services to the millions of men and women who have served this country with honor in the military. President Lincoln’s words guide the efforts of approximately 250,000 VA employees who are committed to providing the best medical care, benefits, social support, and lasting memorials to veterans and their dependents in recognition of veterans’ service to this Nation.

Our Programs: *What We Do*

Veterans Health Administration

Providing Medical Care

VA operates the largest direct health care delivery system in America. In this context, VA meets the health care needs of America’s veterans by providing a broad range of primary care, specialized care, and related medical and social support services. VA focuses on providing health care services that are uniquely related to veterans’ health or special needs. VA is also the Nation’s largest provider of health care education and training for medical residents and other health care trainees. These education and training programs are designed to help ensure an adequate supply of clinical care providers for veterans and the Nation.

Web: <http://www1.va.gov/health/index.asp>

Conducting Vet-Centered Medical Research

VA advances medical research and development in ways that support veterans’ needs by pursuing medical research in areas that most directly

address the diseases and conditions that affect veterans.

Shared VA medical research findings contribute to the public good by improving the Nation’s overall knowledge of disease and disability.

Web: <http://www.research.va.gov>

Veterans Benefits Administration

Delivering Compensation Benefits

The Compensation program provides monthly payments and ancillary benefits to veterans in accordance with rates specified by law, in recognition of the average potential loss of earning capacity caused by a disability or disease incurred in or aggravated during active military service.



This program also provides monthly payments, as specified by law, to surviving spouses, dependent children, and dependent parents in recognition of the economic loss caused by the veteran's death during active military service or, subsequent to discharge from military service, as a result of a service-connected disability.

Web: www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/compensation/

Providing Pension Benefits

Pension benefits are monthly payments, specified by law, provided to veterans with nonservice-connected disabilities who served in a time of war. Veterans must meet specific income limitations and must be permanently and totally disabled or must have reached the age of 65. This program also provides monthly payments, as specified by law, to income-eligible surviving spouses and dependent children of deceased wartime veterans who die as a result of a disability unrelated to military service.

Web: www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/pension/

Providing Educational Opportunities

VA's education programs provide eligible veterans, servicemembers, reservists, survivors, and dependents the opportunity to achieve their educational or vocational goals. Education programs also assist the armed forces in their recruitment and retention efforts, and help veterans in their readjustment to civilian life.

These benefits serve to enhance the Nation's competitiveness through the development of a better educated and more productive workforce. VA administers a number of education programs, including the Montgomery GI Bill and the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) for Reserve and National Guard troops activated in support of the Global War on Terror.

Web: www.gibill.va.gov

Delivering Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program assists veterans with service-connected disabilities to achieve functional independence in daily activities, become employable, and obtain and maintain suitable employment.

Web: <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/index.htm>

Promoting Home Ownership

Through loan guaranties, VA's Loan Guaranty program helps eligible veterans, active duty personnel, surviving spouses, and members of the Reserves and National Guard to purchase homes. We also assist veterans in retaining their homes through foreclosure avoidance services. In addition, VA offers grants to veterans who have specific service-connected disabilities for the purpose of constructing an adapted dwelling or modifying an existing one to meet the veteran's needs.

The Loan Guaranty program also provides direct loans to Native American veterans living on Federal trust land and offers some loans to the public when buying homes owned by the Department as a result of foreclosure.

Web: <http://www.homeloans.va.gov>

Meeting Insurance Needs

The Insurance program provides servicemembers and their families with universally available life insurance (automatically issued to all servicemembers and their families without underwriting), as well as traumatic injury protection insurance for servicemembers. It also provides for the optional continuation of insurance coverage after a servicemember's separation from service. In this context, the program continues to provide life insurance coverage to 1.2 million WWII and Korean War-era veterans.



In addition, the program provides life insurance to veterans who have lost or impaired insurability resulting from military service and therefore cannot obtain commercial insurance at standard (healthy) rates. Insurance coverage is made available in reasonable amounts and at premium rates largely comparable to those offered by commercial companies. The program ensures a competitive, secure rate of return on investments held on behalf of the insured.

Web: <http://www.insurance.va.gov>

National Cemetery Administration

Delivering Burial Services to Veterans

Primarily through the National Cemetery Administration (NCA), VA honors veterans with final resting places in national shrine cemeteries and with lasting tributes that commemorate their service to our Nation.

Web: <http://www.cem.va.gov>

Staff Offices

The Department's staff offices are critical to VA's ability to deliver services to veterans in a cost-effective manner. These offices provide a variety of services including information technology, human resources management, financial management, acquisition, and facilities management.



Our Programs: *Who We Serve*

As described on the previous pages, VA programs and services are as varied as the veterans and family members we serve. From space-age technology used in prosthetic devices that bring mobility to the severely disabled, to the pension benefits paid to three survivors of Civil War veterans, VA's commitment to those who have "borne the battle" continues. As shown below, VA is serving more veterans and their dependents than ever before.

Program	Year-to-Year Comparison		
	FY 2007 Participants ⁽¹⁾	FY 2008 Participants ⁽¹⁾	Percent Change
Medical Care			
Unique Patients	5,479,000	5,565,000	1.6
Compensation			
Veterans	2,839,700	2,951,600	3.8
Survivors/Children	329,700	333,200	1.1
Pension			
Veterans	322,900	317,600	-1.7
Survivors	194,600	195,600	0.5
Education⁽²⁾			
Veterans/Servicemembers	345,000	352,600	2.2
Reservists	101,700	106,200	4.4
Survivors/Dependents	77,300	80,100	3.6
Vocational Rehabilitation⁽²⁾			
Program Participants	90,600	97,116	6.4
Housing			
Loans Guaranteed	133,300	179,700	34.8
Insurance			
Veterans	1,695,000	1,630,000	-3.8
Servicemembers/Reservists	2,354,000	2,337,000	-0.7
Spouses/Dependents	3,075,000	3,078,000	0.1
Burial			
Interments	100,200	103,300	3.1
Graves Maintained	2,842,700	2,914,500	2.5
Headstones/Markers (Processed)	359,500	361,200	0.5
Presidential Memorial Certificates	423,100	511,400	20.9

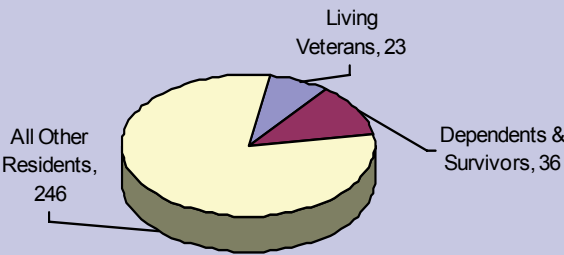
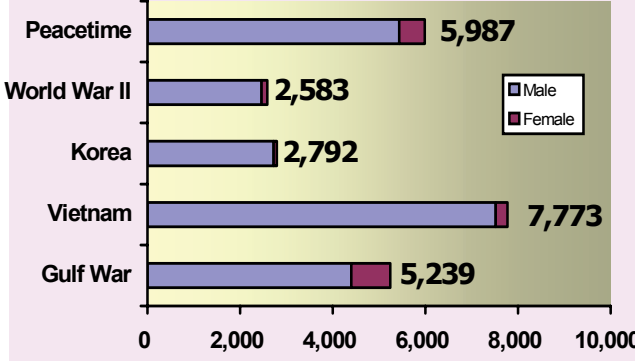
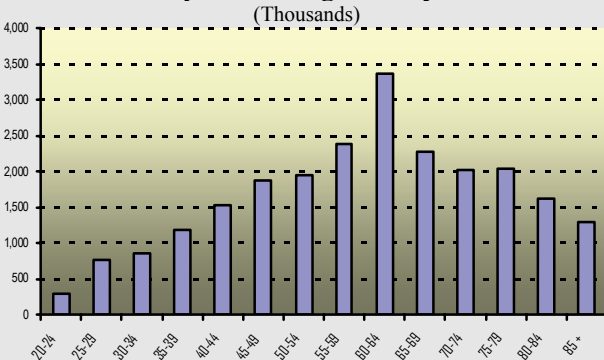
⁽¹⁾Figures are rounded to nearest hundred.

⁽²⁾Figures represent 12-month rolling data through September.



America's Veterans: *A Demographic Profile*

Beginning with our Nation's struggle for freedom more than two centuries ago, approximately 43 million men and women have served this country during wartime periods. The charts below provide various social and demographic information on today's veteran population.

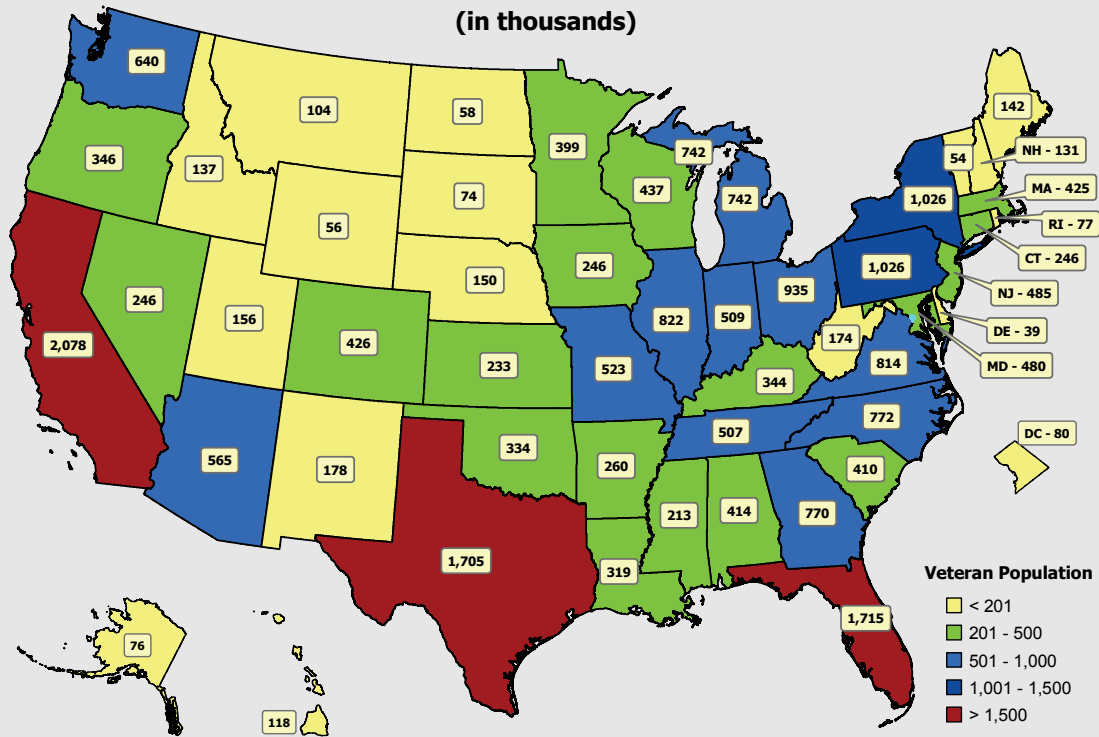
Data	Analysis
<p>Veteran Population Compared to Total U.S. Population (Millions)</p>  <p>A 3D pie chart showing the distribution of the U.S. population. The largest slice is 'All Other Residents' at 246 million, followed by 'Dependents & Survivors' at 36 million, and 'Living Veterans' at 23 million.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently there are about 23.4 million living U.S. veterans, 8 percent of whom are women. The percentage of women veterans is expected to increase over time given the increased role of women in the Armed Forces. • There are an estimated 36 million dependents (spouses and dependent children) of living veterans and survivors of deceased veterans in the U.S. • Together, veterans, dependents, and survivors make up about 19 percent of America's population.
<p>Veteran Population by Period of Service* (Thousands)</p>  <p>A stacked bar chart showing the number of male and female veterans by period of service. The x-axis represents the number of veterans in thousands, ranging from 0 to 10,000. The y-axis lists the periods of service: Peacetime, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and Gulf War. The bars are stacked with male veterans in blue and female veterans in red.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 17 million (74 percent) of America's veterans served during at least one wartime period. • The nearly 8 million Vietnam Era veterans account for the largest segment of the veteran population. • About 73 percent of all women veterans served during the post-Vietnam Era compared to 34 percent of men. • Between 2008 and 2018, the number of women veterans enrolled in VA's health care system is expected to increase from 474,621 to 747,408, or 58 percent.
<p>Age Distribution of the Veteran Population By 5-Year Age Groups (Thousands)</p>  <p>A bar chart showing the number of veterans in thousands across various 5-year age groups. The x-axis represents age groups from 20-24 to 85+. The y-axis represents the number of veterans in thousands, ranging from 0 to 4,000. The bars are blue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of September 2008, the median age of all living veterans was 61 years. • Men's median age was 61; women's 48. • The number of veterans 85 and older totaled about 1,290,000, compared to 164,000 in 1990. • Between 2008 and 2018, veterans 85 and older enrolled in VA's health care system are expected to increase from 546,922 to 774,177, or 42 percent.

* The sum of period of service will exceed number of all veterans because veterans who served in multiple periods are shown in each period.



Data

Veteran Population by State As of September 30, 2008 (in thousands)



Analysis

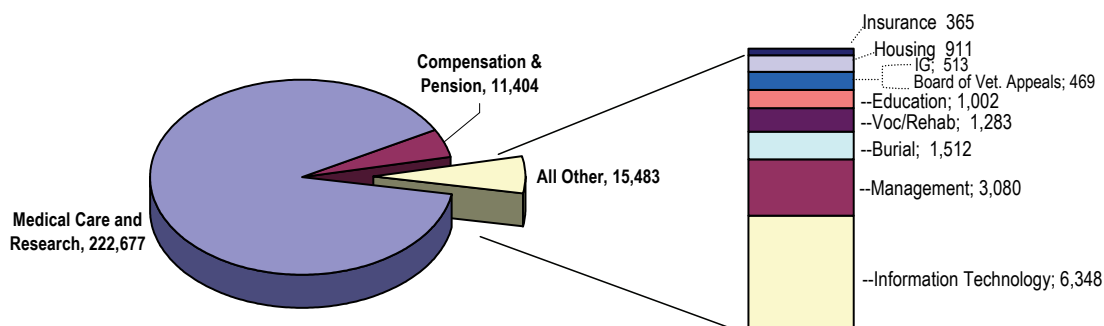
- Veterans in just three States – California, Texas and Florida – comprised almost 24 percent of the total number of veterans living in the U.S.
- The three next largest States in terms of veteran population are New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. These States account for 13 percent of the total number of veterans living in the U.S.
- Together, these six States account for about 37 percent of the total veteran population.



Resources: *Our People*

As of September 30, 2008, the Department employed about 250,000 staff nationwide. The charts below show the distribution of full-time equivalent employees by program area.

Number of Full-Time Equivalent Employees
as of September 30, 2008

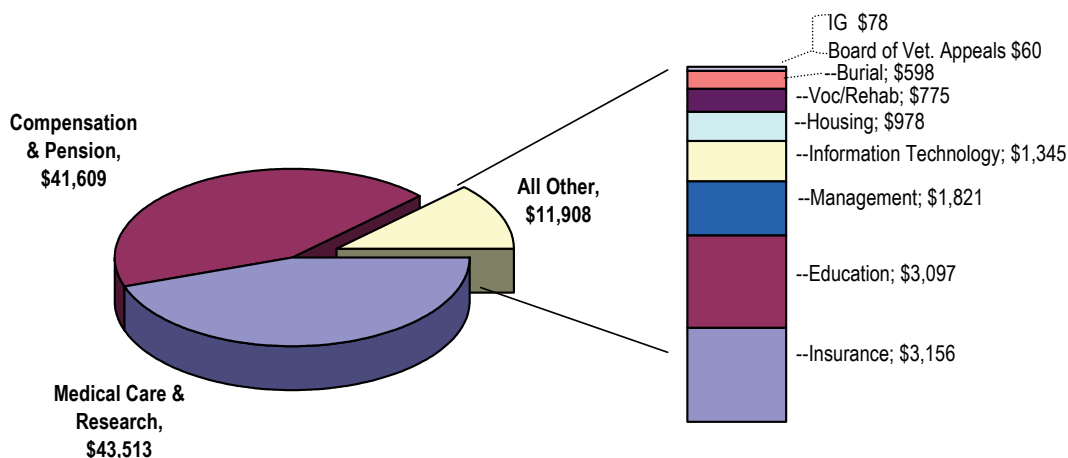


As shown above, more than 222,000 employees support VA's health care system, one of the largest in the world. Of the remaining employees, approximately 15,000 are involved with providing compensation and pension as well as other benefits to veterans and their families. About 1,500 provide burial and memorial services for veterans and their eligible spouses and children, and about 9,900 employees, located primarily in the Washington, DC area, provide policy, administrative, information technology, and management support to the programs.

Resources: *Budgetary*

In 2008 VA obligated approximately \$97.0 billion. Approximately 98 percent of total funding went directly to veterans in the form of monthly payments of benefits or for direct services such as medical care. The depictions below show how VA spent the funds with which it was entrusted.

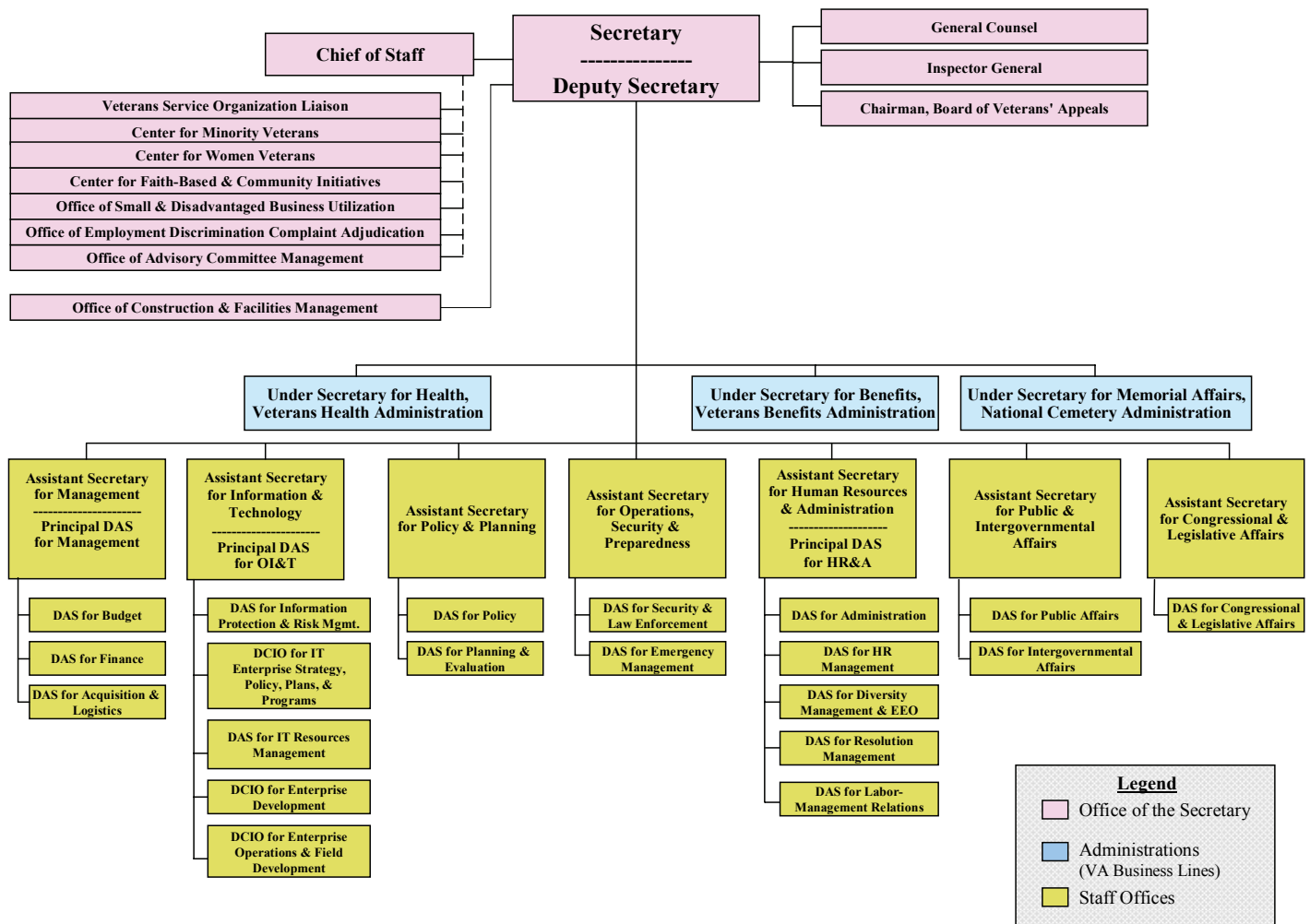
FY 2008 Obligations
(\$ Millions)





Our Organization

Department of Veterans Affairs





Leadership and Governance

VA senior leadership makes policy decisions through various internal governing bodies. Two of the most critical are described below together with key actions they undertook in 2008.

Governance	Major FY 2008 Actions
Strategic Management Council	
<p><u>Membership</u></p> <p>The Strategic Management Council (SMC) is chaired by the Deputy Secretary and includes VA's seven Assistant Secretaries; the Deputy Under Secretaries for Health, Benefits, and Memorial Affairs; the Deputy General Counsel; Chair for the Board of Veterans' Appeals; Chief of Staff; Counselor to the Secretary; and the Senior Advisor to the Deputy Secretary.</p> <p><u>Purpose</u></p> <p>The SMC serves as a collaborative and deliberative body that provides oversight and guidance on key strategic and operational issues that confront VA decision-makers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided policy direction on several initiatives arising out of the <i>Disability Evaluation Report</i>. Those initiatives/improvements include the Disability Evaluation System (DES) pilot and the Federal Recovery Coordinator (FRC) program. • Provided policy direction on Joint Ventures between VA, DoD, academic affiliates, or other public or private entities. • Provided periodic assessments of high-risk activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FLITE, VA's multi-year initiative to deploy enterprise-level integrated financial asset management system. ○ The capital investment process. ○ Reorganization of the Office of Information and Technology. • Provided policy direction on workforce planning within the Veterans Health Administration. • Reviewed the status of VA's labor agreements and pending negotiations.
Monthly Performance Reviews (MPRs)	
<p><u>Membership</u></p> <p>MPRs are chaired by the Deputy Secretary and are attended by principals from every VA organization.</p> <p><u>Purpose</u></p> <p>MPRs focus on financial and program performance. In this context, the principals discuss and make decisions on mission-critical issues within the context of performance, budget, and workload targets and associated results. Necessary corrective actions are identified and implemented to help ensure program goals and objectives are accomplished.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once a month, all VA Administrations and staff offices reported on progress made in meeting established monthly and/or fiscal year-to-date financial and performance goals. • MPR reporting was enhanced to improve the clarity and utility of reports presented to senior leadership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Created more dashboard style presentations that integrated quantifiable data and robust narrative analysis on a single page. • Developed special snapshot reports used by all organizations to focus leadership on Near-term (next 45 days) as well as Long-term (next 12 months) challenges. • Initiated quarterly "drill down" presentations to provide cross-cutting, specialized analyses on Capital Assets, Construction, Information Technology, Human Capital, Budget Execution, and Program Performance.