

# Update to Defense Health Board Disability Evaluation System (DES)



**Dr. Joe Kelley (DoD)**

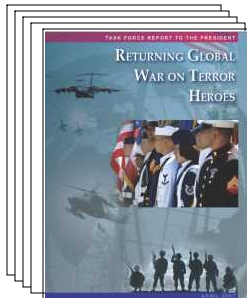
**Mr. Bill Wilson (VA)**

**April 23, 2008**



# Many Efforts Informed Us...

## Returning Global War on Terror Heroes



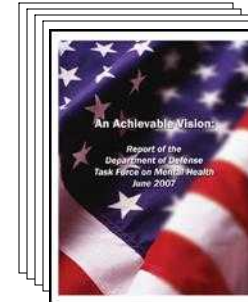
*Nicholson*

## DoD/VVA Interagency Care Transition



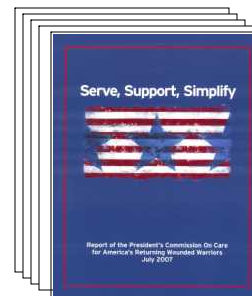
*DoD Inspector General*

## DoD Task Force on Mental Health



*Arthur, MacDermid, Kiley*

## President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors



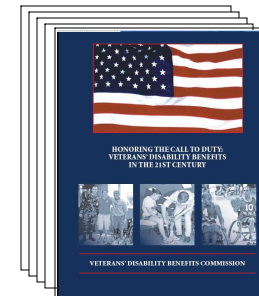
*Dole/Shalala*

## Independent Review Group



*West/Marsh*

## Veterans Disability Benefits Commission



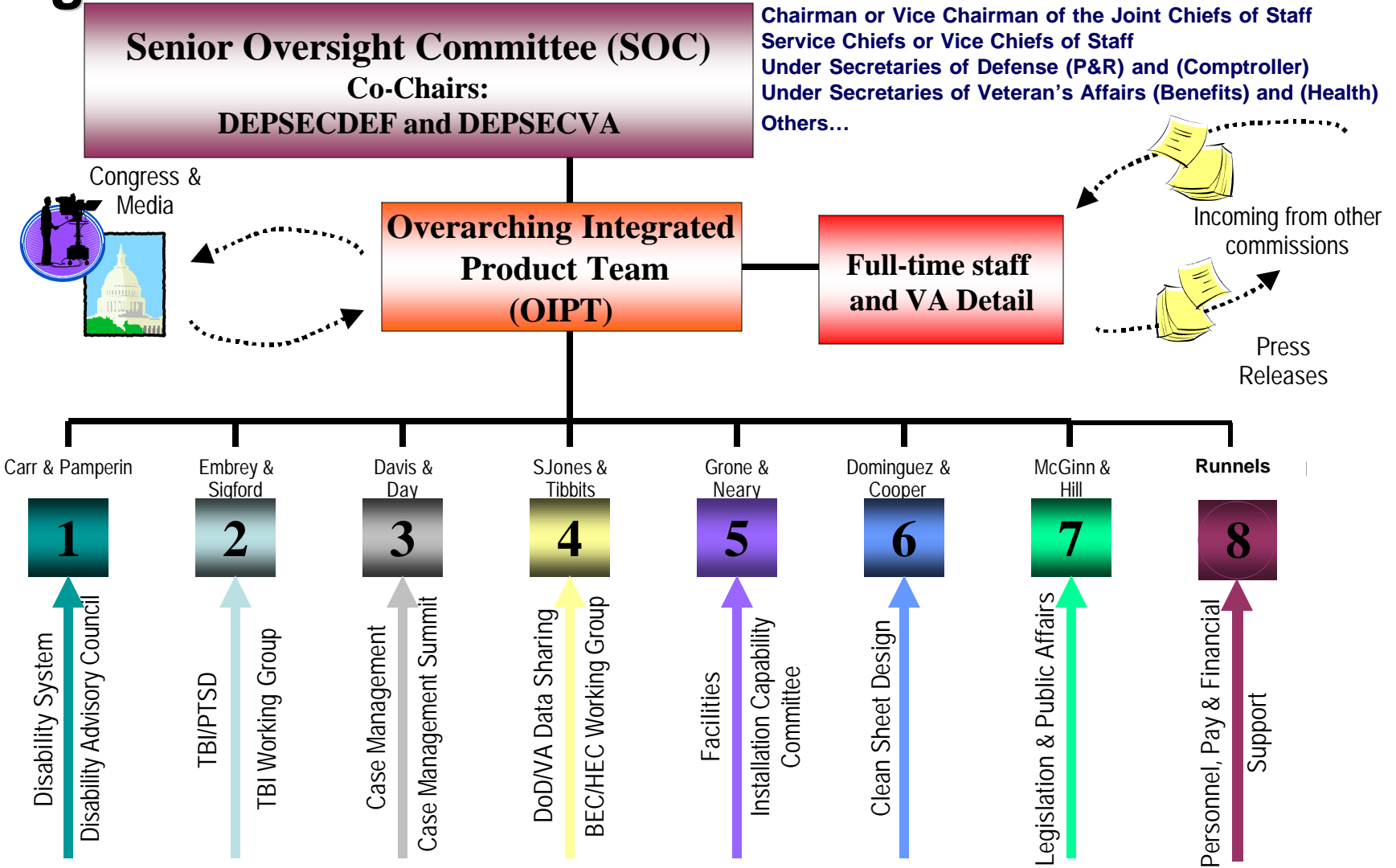
*Scott Commission*

...and others



# We Organized Ourselves...

**Co-Chairs:** Deputy Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs  
**Members:** Service Secretaries  
 Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  
 Service Chiefs or Vice Chiefs of Staff  
 Under Secretaries of Defense (P&R) and (Comptroller)  
 Under Secretaries of Veteran's Affairs (Benefits) and (Health)  
 Others...





## Line of Action (LOA) #1 Disability Evaluation System

### • **Background**

- LOA1 consists of Senior Leaders from DoD, Military Services, VA, & Legal; Oversight by Disability Advisory Council (DAC)
- Faced multiple recommendations with redesign

### • **DES Reform**

- Aug 07, DoD/VA subject matter experts tested 4 scenarios
  - Tabletop exercise used members' records who recently completed DES & received VA ratings
  - Looked at a joint fit for duty & rating board, a single exam at different stages, & VA ratings; stayed inside current legislative requirements
  - Final scenario developed; Piloting in National Capital Region
    - Includes all new medical evaluation board referrals from 26 Nov 07
      - Initiated at Walter Reed, Bethesda National Naval, Malcolm Grow
      - Regardless of whether injury was incurred in war
      - Did not include reserve component non-duty related conditions or temporary duty retirement list (TDRL) re-evaluations



# DES Pilot Overview

- **VISION:**

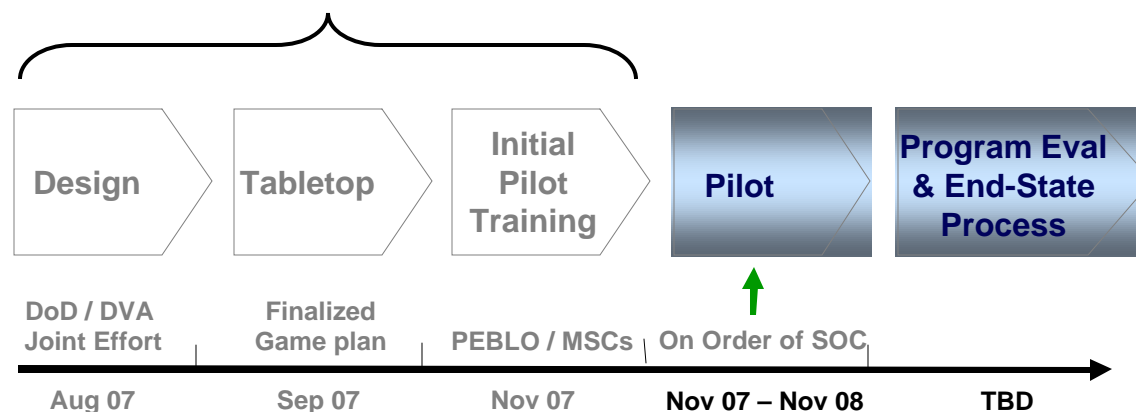
A seamless, transparent DES; administered jointly by DoD & VA

- **FEATURES / GOALS (*Task Force, Audit & Study Recommendations*)**

- Less complex, Less adversarial
- Faster, more consistent evaluations & compensation
- Single disability/med evaluation & single-source disability rating
- Seamless transition to Veteran status, better continuum of care with advocacy & expectation management
- Updated VASRD

*A collaboration of VA and DoD experts developed processes and estimated timelines*

## Timeline

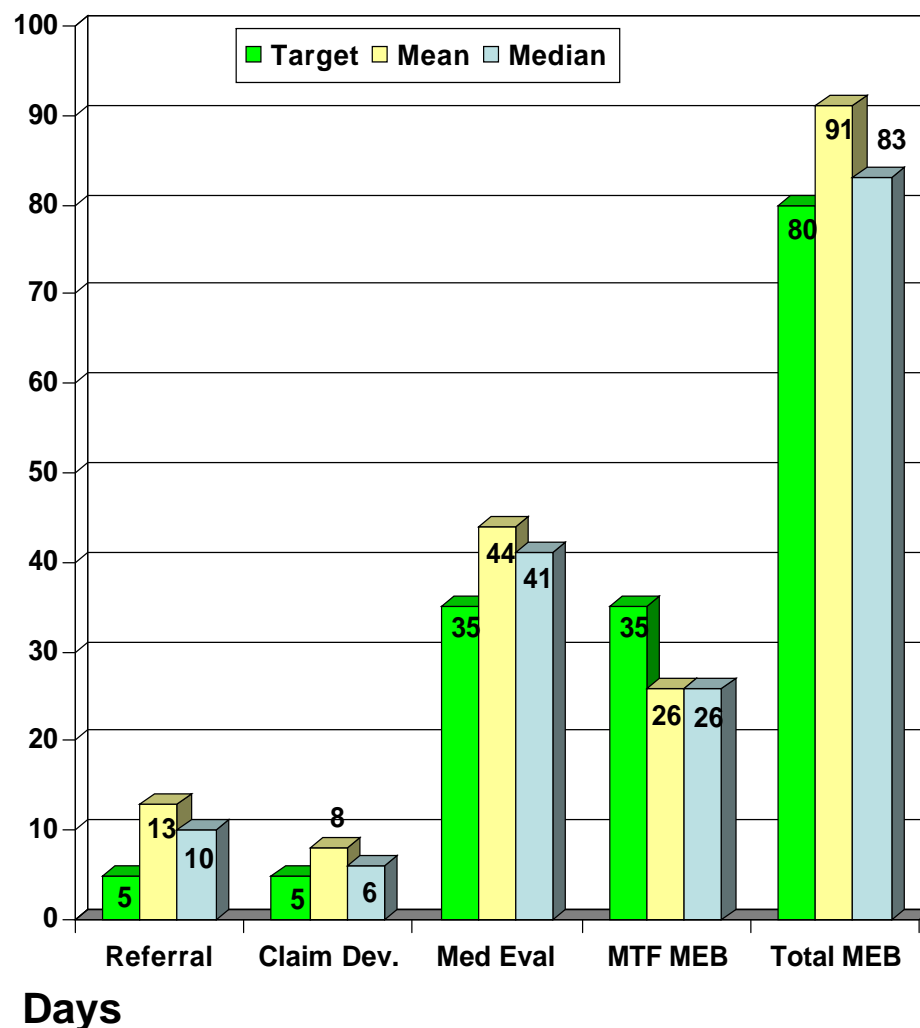




## Data Analysis

- **Source - DoD Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officers (PEBLOs) & VA Military Service Coordinators (MSCs)**
- **DES Stats**
  - **DoD - as of April 6, 2008**
    - 327 Service members in Pilot
      - ~17 enter program/week
      - 21 currently in PEB Phase
      - 2 currently in Transition Phase
      - 1 separating in May 08.
    - **VA - as of April 14, 2008**
      - 295 referrals from PEBLOs to MSCs
      - 14 ratings completed, returned to PEBs
      - 2 ratings being prepared
      - 3 found fit, returned to duty
      - 1 member set to receive first VA payment Jul 08, earliest allowed by law
  - **Insufficient data to analyze PEB, Appeals, Transition, Post Transition**

### DES Pilot as of April 6, 2008





## WAY AHEAD

- VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities training to Service Physical Evaluation Boards & Health Affairs reps by VA educators
- Evaluating outcomes of pilot to determine any redesign
- Developing joint expansion criteria for incremental expansion of pilot



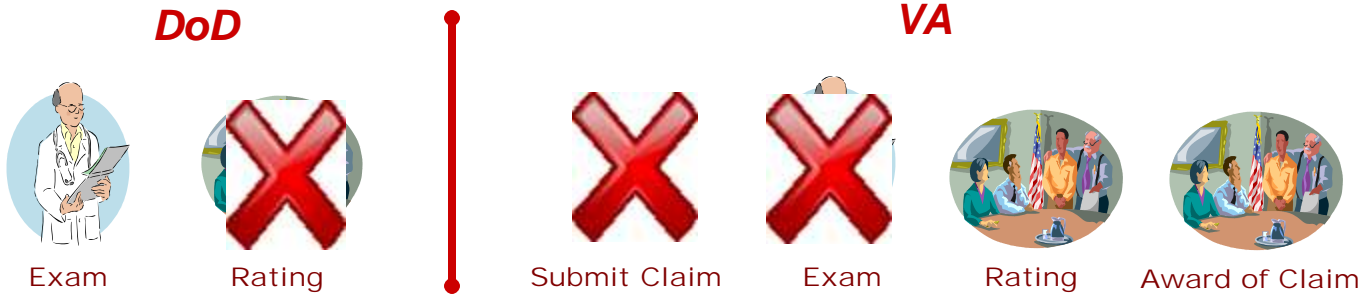
## Summary

- **KEY AREAS OF REFORM**

- Incorporates a single, standardized medical/disability evaluation
- Provides for a single-source disability rating
- Applies new case management practices
- Tests new automated systems to manage DES data
- Changes DES from entirely sequential process to concurrent process
- Decreases post separation processing time for VA award processing

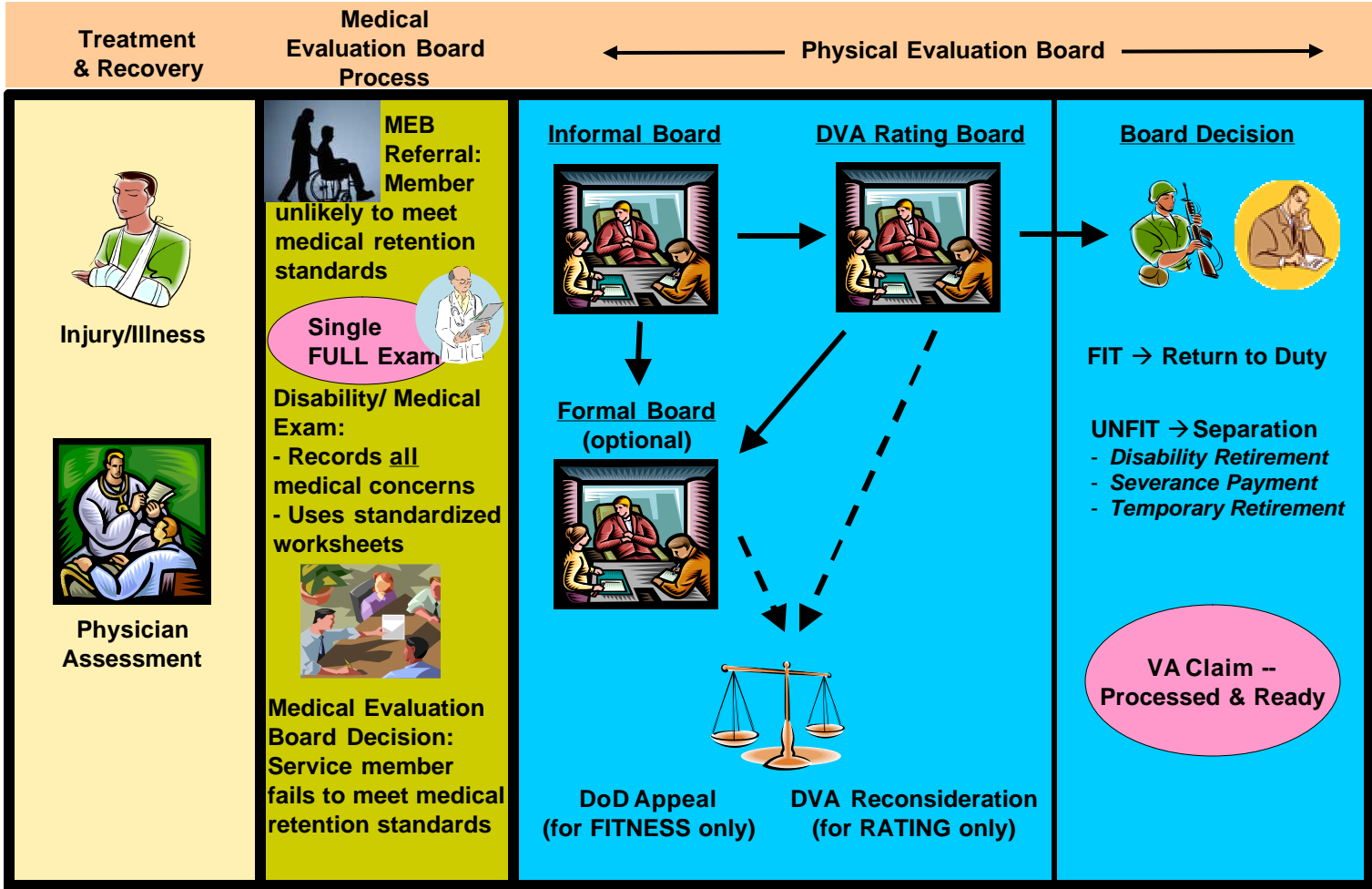


**Changing the current DISABILITY EVALUATION SYSTEM...**



**DES PILOT**

**FUTURE DISABILITY EVALUATION SYSTEM (?)**





# QUESTIONS ?