DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

RECOVERY ACT PROGRAM-SPECIFIC PLAN

INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT

MAY 2009

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1. Funding Table

A full funding description is provided in the Appendix.

2. Objectives

Chapter 33:
On June 30, 2008, Congress amended Title 38 by appending Chapter 33, Post-9/11 Veteran Education Assistance Act, (Chapter 33) which provides education assistance to Veterans, service members and members of the National Guard and Selected Reserve. The legislation further mandated that VA must begin to process the new benefit payments on August 1, 2009. VA's Office of Information and Technology was authorized to use $55 Million to begin the development process. VA will use $48.5 Million of the funds provided as part of the Recovery Act for Chapter 33 implementation.

These combined funds will be used to develop a "Long Term Solution" that automates and streamlines the application, adjudication and processing of Chapter 33 claims and directly supports the VA Strategic Goals 1 and 2 by providing increased capabilities for Veterans to obtain educational and vocational training.

The Recovery Act funding will be used to support the development of the automated decisions support system as well as the data, computing, storage, and network infrastructure required to deploy, support, and sustain this application in secure, reliable, and stable infrastructure.

Objective - Chapter 33 supports VA Strategic Goals 1 and 2; Providing increased capabilities for Veterans to obtain educational and vocational training enables the possibility to restore and improve quality of life and aid in a smooth transition from military service to civilian life.

Paperless Initiative:
The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) adjudicates VA claims seeking entitlement to various benefits for Veterans and eligible dependents of Veterans. VBA activities address the receipt, processing, tracking, and disposition of Veterans' applications for benefits, services, and requests for assistance. The five VBA business lines that process VA claims are:

- Compensation and Pension (C&P);
- Education;
- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment;
- Insurance; and
- Loan Guaranty.

The $1.5M Recovery Act funding allocated to the Paperless Initiative will provide partial funding for the network upgrades to stabilize the VBA Network. Total cost to complete these upgrades is $6M – remaining funding comes from the Chapter 33 Supplemental

appropriation since these upgrades affect both initiatives.

Objective - The Paperless Initiative supports VA Strategic Goals 1 (restoration and improved quality of life for disabled veterans), 2 (smooth transition to civilian life), and 3 (honoring, serving, and memorializing veterans). The Paperless Initiative also supports VA Enabling Objective E-3 (reliable and secure IT).

3. Activities

Developing, deploying, supporting and sustaining the Chapter 33 Long Term Solution will require integrating and configuring commercial off-the-shelf technologies with custom developed software and deploying the solution in a secure, reliable, and sustainable data center infrastructure that is accessed by Veterans and VA claims administrators. As such this project will require a diverse set of engineering, Information Assurance, training, testing, logistics, operations and Program Management support services and skill sets.

The Long Term Solution will be funded using a combination of supplemental and Recovery Act funding. Funding requirements for Chapter 33 and the Paperless Initiative are provided below. Funding for the Chapter 33 Long Term Solution provides for end-to-end system lifecycle support to include requirements development, program management support, design, development, Independent Verification & Validation, testing, training, and operations & maintenance.   Funding for the Paperless Initiative provides for network upgrades for the VBA infrastructure.

Chapter 33 – Post-9/11 GI Bill Q3 FY 2009		
Funding Requirement	**Cost**	**Description**
Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center –Atlantic (SSC-LANT) Chapter 33 Long Term Solution Program Management Support	$ 11,080,500	Space and Naval Warfare Command (SPAWAR) to provide the necessary resources and support infrastructure to manage the strategic, tactical, business and technical components of the Program execution. This task also includes providing the necessary reports and deliverables required to manage and oversee the cost and schedule performance of the program.
Engineering Management	$ 1,353,644	SPAWAR to provide overall Engineering Management support for the Chapter 33 Long Term Solution Program.
Infrastructure	$ 11,200,000	SPAWAR to design, procure, install, and configure the necessary hardware, operating systems, and network infrastructure required to deploy, maintain, sustain, and monitor the application securely and reliably in accordance with the VA's Service Level Agreements.

Funding Requirement	Cost	Description
Information Assurance	$ 746,356	SPAWAR to ensure that the application is designed, developed, deployed, and supported in accordance with the applicable Information Assurance policies and requirements as well as execute the necessary tasking to achieve an Authority To Operate for both the network infrastructure and application.
Configuration Management	$ 1,149,044	SPAWAR to implement and execute the necessary tools and processes to manage configuration control of a software repository, requirements repository, build repository, and repository for software and build documentation.
Requirements & Release Management	$ 1,929,500	SPAWAR to review, define, evaluate, and manage the solution's requirements, defects, issues, risks, change requests, new development requests, deployment, and packaging.
Data Integration	$ 2,329,574	SPAWAR to design, develop, implement, and maintain the necessary data integration infrastructure to retrieve, cleanse, and consolidate data from external systems and make it available as a data service.
Application Development	$ 10,263,000	SPAWAR to design, develop, implement, and maintain the necessary data integration infrastructure to retrieve, cleanse, and consolidate data from external systems and make it available as a data service.
Testing	$ 1,917,000	SPAWAR to develop and execute all testing efforts to support the end-to-end development, deployment, and maintenance of the system. This includes - but is not limited to - data set testing, unit testing, system testing, integration testing, user acceptance, regression testing, performance testing, load testing, and 508 testing.
Training	$ 441,882	SPAWAR to provide training support and integrated products to ensure optimal training experience for users, administrators, and stakeholders. Services include, but are not limited to: custom computer-based training software, electronic performance support systems, electronic testing and assessment system, and self-help web page design, classroom training materials and support.
Operations	$ 1,075,000	SPAWAR to provide on-going life cycle solution management and maintenance support for the solution.

Funding Requirement	Cost	Description
New Hires for VA	$ 500,000	Six additional IT FTE will be hired to support field station personnel where payments for Chapter 33 will be administered. Four additional FTE will be hired within the IT Chapter 33 Program Management Office to further support VA in the Interim and long-term planning and execution of the Chapter 33 program.
BDN Equipment	$ 3,000,000	Benefits Delivery Network Hyper Channel Replacement for Hines Production and Philadelphia Disaster Recovery Machines.
Infrastructure Enhancements	$ 1,514,500	VA Data Integration costs to integrate with SPAWAR solution.
Chapter 33 Subtotal	**$48,500,000**	

Paperless Processing of Veterans Benefits
Q4 FY 2009

Funding Requirement	Cost	Description
Network Upgrades for VBA infrastructure	$1,500,000	Partial funding for the required network upgrades to stabilize VBA Network. Redesign continues with the upgrade of digital system 3 circuits to all regional offices, and selected out-based sites. (Total Cost $6M - remaining funding reflected in Chapter 33 Supplemental since these upgrades affect both initiatives).
Paperless Subtotal	**$1,500,000**	

Grand Total	**$50,000,000**

4. Characteristics

VA has an interagency partnership with SPAWAR for contract services under the Chapter 33 program.

SPAWAR will provide the necessary Program Management and engineering integration support required for this effort using Government personnel. Additionally, SPAWAR will complement their existing Government staff with industry partners to provide the requisite support resources to execute all tasking to design, develop, deploy and sustain the Chapter 33 Long Term Solution. These industry partners will be selected based on SPAWAR's portfolio of competitively awarded, large Indefinite Delivery Order and

Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) Contract vehicles that have the required skills and scope required to support the Chapter 33 Program. SPAWAR will develop and award Delivery Orders to support the additional tasking required. Although it is not anticipated, SPAWAR may need to execute other contracting strategies including the initiation and award of new contracts to satisfy requirements that cannot be met using their portfolio of existing competitively awarded IDIQ contracts.

5. Delivery Schedule

The Chapter 33 final product and corresponding milestones outlined within this plan represent how SPAWAR will accomplish the Long Term Solution. This Long Term Solution will be developed and deployed incrementally to provide an increased level of automation and capabilities throughout the duration of the Chapter 33 project.

The deliverable schedule for the Chapter 33 Long Term Solution is:

- Deployment of the development and test environment. October 2009
- Deployment of the production infrastructure. December 2009
- Increment 1 - Provide a web based decision support system that allows VA claims to manually enter Chapter 33 claim data and determines Chapter 33 eligibly, entitlement and award based on the VA's defined Chapter 33 business rules. February 2010
- Increment 2 – Provide automated data feeds from the multiple existing VA systems into web based decision support system developed in increment 1 to eliminate manual entry of Chapter 33 claim data and automate the Chapter 33 eligibility, entitlement and award calculations. July 2010
- Increment 3 – Enhance the automated decision support system developed in Increment 2, to provide automated data feeds to the VA's existing systems to process payment of approved claims. September 2010
- Increment 4 – Further enhance the automated decision support system to allow the veteran the ability to view the claim status. December 2010.

The deliverable schedule for the Paperless Initiative is:

- As Planned – All VBA Wide Area Networks will be upgraded to DS-3 – February 10, 2010
- As Planned - All DS-3 Wide Area Networks will have redundant second line upgrades complete - September 10, 2010

6. Environmental Review Compliance

Not applicable

7. Measures

Chapter 33 Long Term Solution:
There will be multiple measures used to support the Chapter 33 Long Term Solution. The primary measurable will be based on cost performance. After award to SPAWAR, the VA and SPAWAR will develop and baseline the projected costs of the Chapter 33 Long Term Solution. This baseline will then be measured against actual and estimate costs to measure, report and analyze cost variance.

The second measure will be based on physical percent complete for each of the major incremental deliverables defined above. Physical percent complete will be calculated using a valued milestone approach.

Both cost and physical percent complete will provide visibility and facilitate early identification of program performance and progress. The targets associated with these measures will be finalized by first quarter of FY 2010. These measures will be assessed on a monthly basis.

Paperless Initiative:
The VBA Wide Area Network upgrade will be measured based on the improvement in Virtual VA end-user response time as measured at the VSR desktop. Measurement of the planned performance baseline will rely on direct field measurement at select field offices, taken at peak times, and will be collected on a weekly basis. Automated data collection tools will be implemented between January 2010 and June 2010 and upon implementation will end the need for manual data collection.

8. Monitoring/Evaluation

Execution of funding is closely tracked by the Office of Information and Technology's (OI&T) resource management organization through weekly execution meetings, monthly performance reviews, and bi-monthly governance board meetings.

Execution of Chapter 33 and Paperless is governed by a Joint Executive Board, Steering Committee, and Chapter 33 and Paperless Working Group. These governance bodies work in concert with Office of Business Process Reengineering (OBPI), Office of Resource Management (ORM), business and IT work stream leads, VBA designees, and subject matter advisors to monitor and evaluate the progress of Chapter 33 program execution.

As stated earlier in the measurements section, the primary project performance metrics that will be used to monitor and measure project performance will be cost performance and physical percent complete for the incremental deliverables. Both of these measurements will be calculated and analyzed during monthly program reviews by both VA and SPAWAR Program Management personnel.

9. Transparency

The Department of Veterans Affairs uses the web for transparency and reporting to meet compliance requirements of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. VA's Web site can be reached at www.va.gov/recovery.

As a Government partner of the VA, SPAWAR will be integrated with VA personnel to provide program transparency and reporting compliance. Specifically, SPAWAR will provide the VA with the data required to satisfy these requirements.

10. Accountability

VA will ensure accountability through mid-year and end-year reviews as part of individual performance plans with Program Management.

SPAWAR is accountable to the VA for the cost, schedule, and quality requirements for the Chapter 33 Long Term Solution. The SPAWAR Program Manager (PM) will be accountable to the SPAWAR Commanding Officer, and associated chain of command, for the execution of the Program. SPAWAR has identified and implemented the necessary executive governance structure to oversee the execution of the Program and support the Program Manager as required. Performance measure and incentives will be included for key assigned Government management personnel. Additionally, the SPAWAR PM will provide performance feedback to the respective Contracting Officer Technical Representative on the performance of industry partners. If applicable this feedback will be incorporated into the industry partners Contracting Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) annual evaluation.

11. Barriers to Effective Implementation

Chapter 33:

No barriers to implementation

Paperless Initiative:

No barriers to implementation

12. Federal Infrastructure Investments

Not applicable

Information Technology – Veterans Benefits Administration Support Funding Table

Table 1A – Account Summary

	TAFS (pick from dropdown)	Appropriated to TAFS ($000)	Program Allocations	Program Allocations
One account funding two programs	Information Technology – Veteran Benefits Administration Support (36-0168 2009/2010)	**50,000**	**48,500**	**Post 9/11 GI Bill**
One account funding two programs	Information Technology – Veteran Benefits Administration Support (36-0168 2009/2010)	**50,000**	**1,500**	**VA Paperless Delivery**

Table 1B – Obligations/Gross Outlays – January 2009 through December 2010 ($000

Program Allocations	Planned Obligations and Gross Outlays ($000s)

BA Allocation ($000s)	Program Name	Funding Type	Funding Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
48,500	Post 9/11 GI Bill	Obligation	2009						48,250			250			
48,500	Post 9/11 GI Bill	Gross Outlay	2009							3,040	3,040	3,360	3,360	3,360	3,360
48,500	Post 9/11 GI Bill	Obligation	2010												
48,500	Post 9/11 GI Bill	Gross Outlay	2010	2,540	2,540	2,540	2,540	2,540	2,540	2,540	2,540	2,540	2,540	2,540	2,540
1,500	VA Paperless Delivery	Obligation	2009												1,500
1,500	VA Paperless Delivery	Gross Outlay	2009												
1,500	VA Paperless Delivery	Obligation	2010												
1,500	VA Paperless Delivery	Gross Outlay	2010	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125