

Executive Summary

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to functioning as a unified department providing One-VA customer service to our nation's veterans and their beneficiaries. The primary purpose of the One-VA Enterprise Architecture (EA) is to *inform, guide* and *manage* the decisions of the enterprise, especially as they pertain to information technology (IT) investments.

The VA's EA mission is to develop and implement an evolutionary, high-performance, One-VA information technology architecture, aligned with our program and business goals that enable enterprise-wide function, process and data integration.

While the development of the One-VA EA is an evolutionary process that spans multiple years, the One-VA EA is the 'blueprint' for systematically defining and documenting the organization's desired (target) environment. The EA provides the overarching architectural guidance for this evolutionary process to move from the existing "as-is" architecture to the target "to-be" architecture.

The One-VA EA is the primary authoritative resource within VA for enterprise IT throughout the entire life cycle of planning, programming, budgeting, development, integration, test/certification, deployment, and in-service support. It details specifically *how* the One-VA EA will be used in key department processes, defines mandatory compliance requirements for all IT projects, and discusses the One-VA EA correlation to project management oversight and project milestones.

The vision of the One-VA EA approach is to create modern, highly interoperable information systems within VA that connect people, business processes and departments across the enterprise to present a One-VA face to veterans and their families. The One-VA EA supports the department's shift to a more customer-centric approach that enhances services for veterans from improved business processes, consistency of information, greater accessibility and efficiency.

Enterprise Architectures are mandated by the 1996 Clinger-Cohen Act. Federal agency Chief Information Officers are charged with developing, maintaining and facilitating the implementation of an integrated Enterprise Architecture across their Departments.

The Zachman Framework, a robust model used widely by large, complex organizations in industry and government, was adopted to create the One-VA EA. This framework approach ensures compliance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requirement that VA's enterprise architecture links our mission, goals, information, content, and information technology capabilities.

A fundamental principle of VA's approach to enterprise architecture is that it is top down and business focused. The One-VA EA is deeply rooted in the needs of the major Enterprise Business Functions (EBF) and Key Enabling Functions (KEF) that are

required to support those business functions. The One-VA EA is organized according to stakeholder views, specifically, the Business View, Planner's View, and the Designer's and Builder's view. This enables achievement of the VA goals of alignment, integration, change, reduced time-to-market, and eliminating redundancies.

The EA describes major business and enabling functions that are necessary to carry out the VA's primary mission. Classes of data are identified for each EBF and KEF along with internal and external business drivers, such as policies, law, regulations, performance measures, and location information. This classification process helps identify duplications of functions and data that establish the baseline or "as-is" state of the enterprise.

Based on the identification of redundant processes, functions or data, an integration effort was undertaken to eliminate the redundancies wherever appropriate and establish integrated target or "to-be" business processes and data.

In this initial version of the One-VA EA, priority was given to specific functional areas of strategic importance in the FY 2004 budget submission. These areas include both significant new initiatives and rebaselined existing efforts as follows:

- One-VA Registration and Eligibility (new initiative),
- Consolidated Contact Management (new initiative),
- Health Data Repository (new initiative).
- Finance and Accounting (rebaselined),
- Telecommunications Modernization (rebaselined),
- Cyber Security Infrastructure (rebaselined),
- Corporate Data Center Integration with Continuity of Operations (rebaselined).

Another major area of attention of the One-VA EA is devoted to the architecture designers' and builders' innovative and disciplined view of technological approaches to implement the architecture and the infrastructure. Cyber security and continuity of operations approaches are also well defined to ensure that risks to cyber and physical mission critical data and infrastructures are properly addressed. Sequencing plans to implement IT projects are addressed to prioritize implementation of the One-VA EA across the entire Department.

In parallel with the creation of the One-VA EA, a Technical Reference Model (TRM) and Standards Profile were also developed. The TRM and Standards Profile comprises a set of guidelines to achieve the goal of an evolutionary, high-performance One-VA information technology architecture aligned with program and business goals that enables enterprise-wide data integration. The TRM also considers interoperability across other government departments with which VA will routinely share information, to include the Department of Treasury, the Department of Defense, the Social Security Administration, and the Internal Revenue Service.

Execution of the EA will result in the achievement of a major Department goal – veterans will perceive VA and its services as one entity and the term “*One-VA*” will transition from being a slogan to becoming a reality.