

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

VA IQ Task number: N/A
(1 March 2012 / 5:00 pm)

UPDATE: Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) Support: This provides an update to an Executive Summary and Information Paper provided on 6 February 2012.

Executive Director (ED) VLER was originally tasked by Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs to develop a recommended way forward to decrease errors resulting from the manual transfer of monument inscription information from the ANC Interment Scheduling System (ISS) to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Burial Operations Support System (BOSS).

- Deputy Under Secretary for Field Programs and ED VLER have engaged in discussions with Executive Director ANC Programs (ANCP)
- On 29 February 2012, ED VLER and Deputy Under Secretary for Field Programs joined ED ANCP for a demonstration of ANC's Geospatial Information System

This information paper is therefore being provided to Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, COSVA, and DEPSECVA with a recommendation for ANC and NCA adopting a single system for cemetery management.

ACTION REQUIRED: None; information only

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INFORMATION PAPER

Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) and National Cemetery Administration (NCA) Collaboration

Executive Director (ED) VLER is tasked to develop a recommended way forward to decrease errors resulting from the manual transfer of monument inscription information from the ANC Interment Scheduling System (ISS) to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Burial Operations Support System (BOSS).

Background:

- 1) ANC is legally required to obtain headstones and markers from VA; ANC staff manually input interment records into BOSS to order monuments
- 2) Investigations revealed an unacceptably high number (~10% error rate) of inaccurate monument inscriptions at ANC; one source of errors appears to be manual transcription of interment records into BOSS by ANC staff
- 3) ANC owes Congress a report on its progress to reduce errors at the end of FY12 and wants to include a way forward for automating the transfer of monument inscription information to VA
- 4) Both ANC and VA have budgeted tens of millions of dollars in FY12-14 for the development of separate new systems to support cemetery operations
- 5) ANC has significant resources to support continued development of cemetery operations, including Geospatial Information System (GIS); GIS was developed with Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management (ACSIM) Installation Geographic Information & Services (IGI&S) to address problems with current data, structure, and mapping processes

Options:

- 1) ANC and VA move together to a single system
 - In near-term, ANC addresses errors by implementing improved quality control processes and providing interment information to VA via simple electronic means and VA will enter data
- 2) ANC and VA integrate their existing separate systems
 - Integration requires building and maintenance of interface between redundant systems and modifications going forward
 - Additional resources will be ultimately required for migration to single system

Recommendation:

VA develop Option 1 in collaboration with ANC and Department of the Army through the BEC and JEC in order to make a recommendation to DEPSECVA and DEPSECDEF.