

## WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED

This section of the report presents detailed information on the Department's program and financial performance during FY 2000. The discussion is structured around VA's four strategic goals, which were published in the new Strategic Plan at the end of September 2000. These goals reflect the combined effort of all organizational elements to deliver benefits and services to disabled veterans, veterans in transition from the military, the overall veteran population and their families, and the Nation at large. Each goal has a number of associated objectives that describe the actions or improvements necessary to achieve the goal. With specific performance measures, these goals and objectives form the basis for budget formulation, performance planning, and performance reporting.

In addition to our strategic goals, we have an enabling goal to create an environment that fosters world-class service. This goal and its corresponding objectives represent crosscutting activities that enable all organizational elements to carry out the Department's mission. These activities focus on improving communications,

enhancing workforce assets and internal processes, and furthering a *One VA* approach to providing seamless service to veterans and their families.

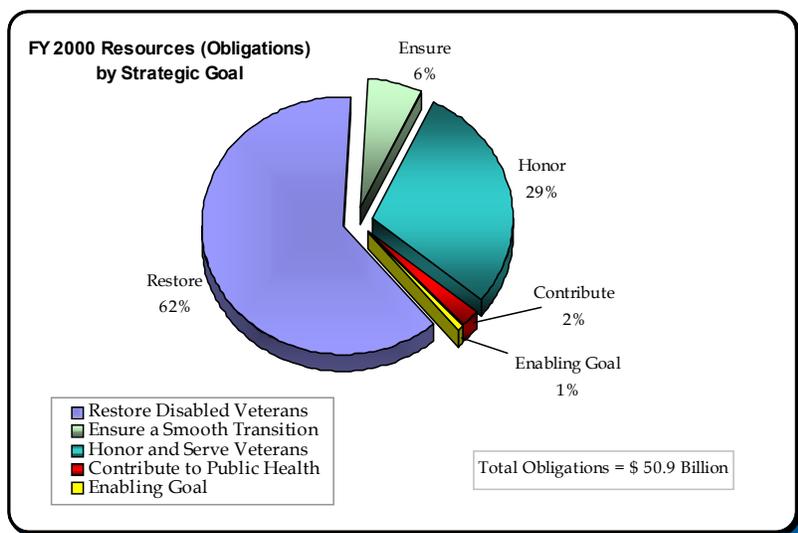
### VA's Key Performance Goals and Measures

VA's senior leadership identified 29 key performance goals as critical to the success of the Department. Some of these deal with program outcomes; others pertain to the manner in which we administer our programs.

The Department is committed to continuously improving the delivery of benefits and services to veterans and their families. Whether the focus is on enhancing the quality of health care, expanding access to care, reducing the time it takes to complete claims for benefits, improving the accuracy of claims processing, or providing more veterans with a burial option, our aim is to better our performance each year.

Each year, we evaluate performance for the previous year, and set new annual performance targets that demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement. In many instances, the performance improvements we project from one year to the next, as well as the performance advancements we actually achieve, are dramatic. In other cases, the improvement is necessarily more limited. Nevertheless, we continuously strive to improve our performance in all programs every year.

While the vast majority of our performance measures remain the same from one year to the next, our



list of measures does change in response to changing circumstances.

First, we modify our strategic goals and objectives in connection with our ever-improving strategic management process. When these long-term goals and objectives change, as they did in our new Strategic Plan in September 2000, we alter some of our performance goals and measures to ensure that they are consistent with the Strategic Plan. Second, we are constantly striving for better ways to measure performance. This is an ongoing process, and every year we will introduce new measures that reflect a more sophisticated and mature performance measurement process. Third, there are instances in which our actual performance has met or exceeded our original goals, and further performance improvements are unlikely or unreasonable. In these cases, we either drop the performance measure, or replace it with a different one.

While some of VA's key performance measures support achievement of more than one strategic goal or objective, we have aligned them with the

strategic goal and objective that they most closely support. Not all objectives are supported by key performance measures. For each of the key performance goals, we present:

- the performance measure or measures used to gauge progress toward achieving the goal and objective;
- historical data;
- means and strategies used to determine the actual level of performance;
- crosscutting activities with other federal and private organizations;
- descriptions of any relevant management challenges affecting goal achievement;
- the source of the performance information and how it was validated.

Other goals and measures deemed important by the program offices continue to be monitored and are presented in the data tables beginning on page 105.