



# Organizational Briefing Book

PREPARED BY:  
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
810 VERMONT AVENUE, NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20420

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## OVERVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), established as an independent agency under the President by Executive Order 5398 on July 21, 1930, was elevated to Cabinet level on March 15, 1989 (Public Law No. 100-527).

The Department's mission is to serve America's veterans and their families with dignity and compassion and to be their principal advocate in ensuring that they receive medical care, benefits, social support, and lasting memorials promoting the health, welfare, and dignity of all veterans in recognition of their service to this Nation.

VA is the second largest Federal Department and has over 235,000 employees. Among the many professions represented in the vast VA workforce are physicians, nurses, counselors, statisticians, architects, computer specialists, and attorneys. As advocates for veterans and their families, the VA community is committed to providing the very best services with an attitude of caring and courtesy.

VA comprises a Central Office (VACO), which is located in Washington, DC, and field facilities throughout the Nation administered by its three major line organizations: Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), and National Cemetery Administration (NCA).

Services and benefits are provided through a nationwide network of 163 hospitals, 906 outpatient clinics, 135 nursing homes, 43 domiciliaries, 206 readjustment counseling centers, 57 veterans benefits regional offices, and 120 national cemeteries.

The Secretary identified five broad strategic goals for VA to focus on as the means to improve services to veterans and their families and to improve management in the Department. These goals are the components of the VA Strategic Plan:

- Restore the Capability of Disabled Veterans to the Greatest Extent Possible and Improve Their Quality of Life and That of Their Families.
- Ensure a Smooth Transition for Veterans from Active Military Service to Civilian Life.
- Honor and Serve Veterans in Life and Memorialize Them in Death for Their Sacrifices on Behalf of the Nation.
- Contribute to the Public Health, Socioeconomic Well-Being and History of the Nation.
- Provide One-VA World-Class Service to Veterans and Their Families Through the Effective Management of People, Technology, Processes, and Financial Resources.

## THE VETERAN

**NUMBERS:** The estimated total veteran population was 25,179,000 as of September 30, 2003. This included 8,211,000 Vietnam era veterans, now the single largest period-of-service component of the veteran population, representing 33 percent of all veterans. World War II veterans comprised the second largest component, numbering 4,370,000 (17 percent of the total). Korean conflict participants totaled 3,580,000 (14 percent) and Gulf War era veterans 3,783,000 (15 percent). The number of World War I veterans is now too small to estimate. About 6,389,000 veterans (25 percent) served only during peacetime. [The sum of the numbers cited does not add to the total because 893,000 veterans (4 percent) served in two war periods and 130,000 veterans (0.5 percent) served in three.]

**AGE:** As of September 30, 2003, the median age of all veterans was 58.6 years. Veterans under age 45 constituted 21 percent of the total, while those aged 45 to 64 represented 41 percent, and those 65 or older were 38 percent of the total.

**SEX:** Female veterans numbered 1.7 million, representing 7 percent of the total veteran population. About 24 percent of all U.S. males 20 years of age or older were veterans.

**FUTURE POPULATION:** The veteran population (25.2 million in 2003) is projected to decline to 22.0 million by the year 2010, under currently expected armed forces strength. Veteran deaths are expected to rise from 636,500 in FY 2001 to a peak of 676,100 in FY 2008. The population of veterans aged 65 or older peaked at 10.0 million in 2000. It will decline but rise again to about 9.2 million in 2013 as the Vietnam era cohort ages. The number of veterans aged 85 or older is expected to increase between 2003 and 2012, from 764,000 to nearly 1.4 million.

**EDUCATION AND INCOME:** Data from the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey of March 2002 show that male veterans and nonveterans had nearly the same overall level of educational attainment (12.6 and 11.9 years, respectively). With respect to income, male veterans in general had higher income than male nonveterans. For example, the median personal income of male veterans aged 50 to 59 in 2001 was \$41,000 compared to \$37,000 for male non-veterans of the same age. The median personal income of all male veterans was about 20 percent higher than all male non-veterans; \$30,000 for veterans versus \$25,000 for non-veterans.

*(NOTE: Estimates are based on a preliminary revision of Veteran Population 2001 taking into account data available from Census 2000. The Census showed six World War I veterans as of April 1, 2000.)*

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Robert Klein, Office of Policy, Planning, and Preparedness, Office of the Actuary, (202) 273-5101

## BUDGET SUMMARY

The Department's budget for FY 2004 was enacted on January 23, 2004. For the period October 1, 2003 through January 23, 2004, VA was funded under four continuing resolutions prior to the enactment of Public Law 108-199, the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution Act for 2004. VA's funding for FY 2004 is \$3.3 billion above the FY 2003 enacted level. This increase includes the impact of an across-the-board rescission applied to all discretionary programs funded under Public Law 108-199. The following is a breakdown of the enacted FY 2004 appropriations as compared to the FY 2003 enacted level:

(\$ in Thousands)

Program	2003 Enacted	2004 Enacted
Medical *	\$25,835,650	\$28,867,693
Benefit	\$33,731,073	\$33,839,152
Cemetery	\$ 132,284	\$ 143,352
Construction	\$ 454,801	\$ 655,047
All Other	\$ 297,193	\$ 322,432
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$60,534,525</b>	<b>\$63,841,868</b>

*\* Includes Medical Care Collections*

As enacted in 2004, annual appropriations are funding the Veterans Health Administration through a new account structure comprised of four accounts: Medical Services, Medical Administration, Medical Facilities, and Medical and Prosthetic Research. This restructuring will provide better oversight and result in a more accurate accounting of funds.

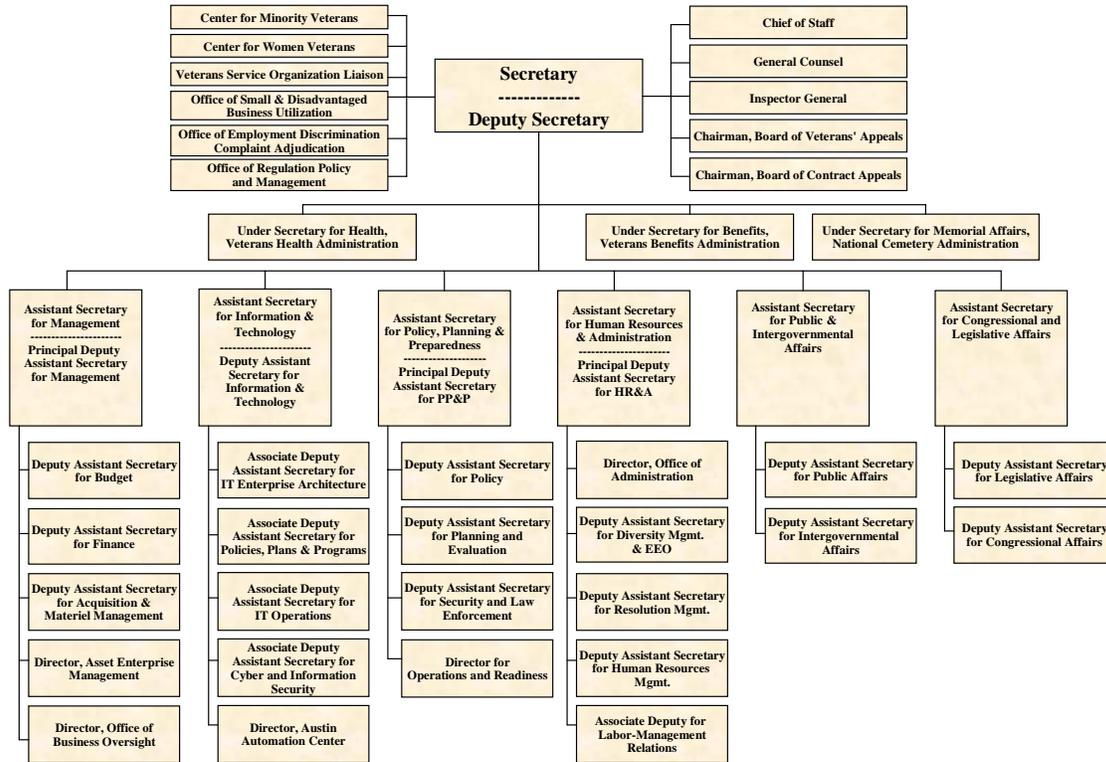
Monetary benefits, cemetery programs, and construction have separate appropriations. Remaining staff functions are funded out of the General Operating Expenses appropriation, with the exception of the Office of the Inspector General, which has its own appropriation.

Over half the VA budget, \$32.7 billion, goes out in the form of checks to veterans and their families (disability payments, income support, etc.).

The remaining \$31.1 billion is "discretionary"; VA is assumed to have control of this portion of the budget. However, most of the funds (\$28.9 billion out of \$31.1 billion) support the medical care system.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Marie Pringle, Office of Management, Office of Budget,  
(202) 273-5266

## ORGANIZATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



The **Secretary of Veterans Affairs** is a member of the President's cabinet, serving as the chief advisor to the President on veterans' affairs. As the head of the Federal government's second largest department, the Secretary is responsible for a \$63 billion budget used to provide a nationwide system of health care services, benefits programs, and national cemeteries for America's veterans. The Secretary sets policies governing the Department's operations, defines its basic organizational structure, and maintains favorable relations with organizations, groups, and individuals interested in veterans' affairs.

The **Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs** is second in command, serving as the Department's chief operating officer. The Deputy Secretary directs the policy and operations of the Department and provides broad direction to the Department's 235,000 employees through the administrations and staff offices, ensuring coordinated action and conformance with the Secretary's directives. The Deputy Secretary chairs the Department's governance process through the Strategic Management Council and leads the Business Oversight Board and Capital Investment Board.

**Administrations and Key Offices:** The Department includes 3 administrations that provide for the delivery of services and benefits, 6 Assistant Secretaries who advise and support the Secretary and the administrations, and 10 Departmental offices that provide specific assistance to the Secretary.

The three administrations are **Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration, and National Cemetery Administration**. The head of each administration reports to the Secretary through the Deputy Secretary.

These administrations give centralized program direction to field facilities that provide diverse program services to veterans and their families. Further, each administration has Central Office components that support the administration's operations. This organizational structure reflects a basic management approach of centralized policy direction, complemented by consistent decentralized execution.

Of the ten offices reporting directly to the Secretary or Deputy Secretary, eight are required by law to do so: **Office of Inspector General, Office of General Counsel, Board of Contract Appeals, Board of Veterans' Appeals, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, Center for Minority Veterans, Center for Women Veterans, and the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication.** The ninth, **Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) Liaison**, provides advice to the Office of the Secretary on matters affecting VSOs and is responsible for the Department's day-to-day liaison with those organizations. The tenth, **Office of Regulation Policy and Management**, provides centralized management and control for VA's rulemaking activities to improve the quality and timeliness of VA regulations.

**Assistant Secretaries:** The Assistant Secretaries serve as the principal staff advisors to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary and oversee or administer programs in their respective areas of responsibility.

The **Assistant Secretary for Management** serves as the Department's Chief Budget Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Senior Procurement Executive, and Senior Real Property Officer. The Assistant Secretary is responsible for financial management, budget administration, and resources planning, and serves as the Department's principal advisor for budget, fiscal, and capital policy. As the Department's Senior Procurement Executive, the Assistant Secretary is responsible for VA's acquisition system and materiel management activities. The Assistant Secretary also supports the Strategic Management Council with regard to implementing the capital asset planning process.

The **Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology** serves as the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the Department. As the CIO, the Assistant Secretary is the principal advisor to the Secretary on matters relating to information and technology management in the Department as delineated in Public Law No. 104-106, the Clinger-Cohen Act; the Paperwork Reduction Act, Chapter 35 of Title 44 United States Code; and any other associated legislated or regulatory media.

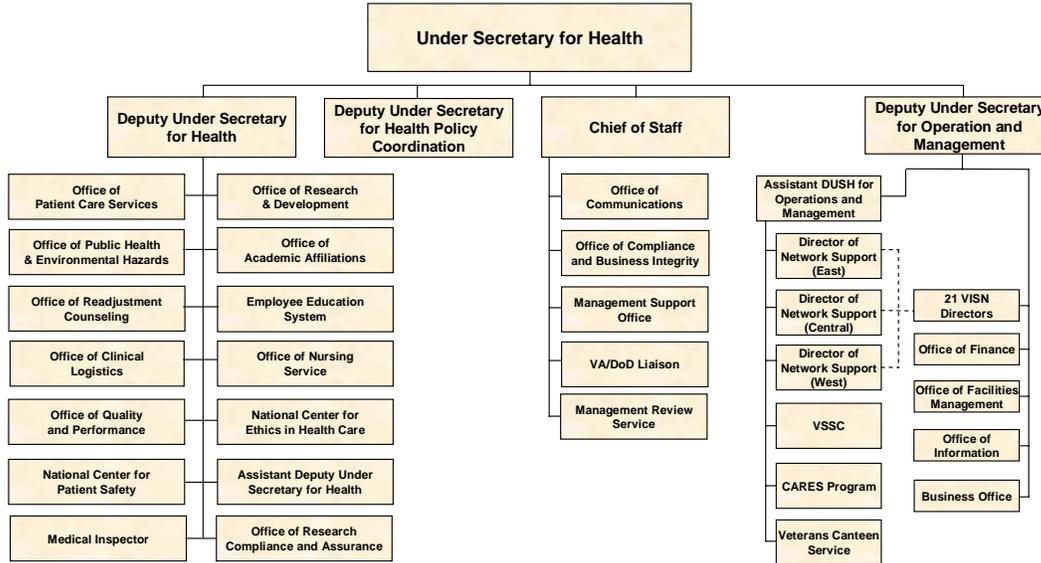
The **Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning and Preparedness** is responsible for the Secretary's policy analysis and planning processes and their integration into the Department's Strategic Management Process. The Assistant Secretary's functions entail responsibility for performing Department-level policy analyses and development, cost-benefit analyses, strategic planning, quality improvement, actuarial studies and assessments, veterans' demographics, and statistical analyses. The Assistant Secretary is responsible for the Nation's official estimates and projections of the veteran population and the only National Survey of Veterans; oversees the Department's Operations, Security, and Preparedness activities; and is the principal advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary on VA's capability and readiness to continue services to veterans and their families, respond to contingency support missions to the Department of Defense (DoD) and other Federal agencies engaged in emergency response activities and respond effectively during national emergencies.

The **Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration** is responsible for providing direction and oversight to a diverse group of programs and serves as the Department's principal advisor on related matters. These programs, all with VA-wide responsibilities, include human resources management, diversity management and equal employment opportunity, discrimination complaint resolution, labor-management relations, and general administrative support (primarily services to VACO). The Assistant Secretary serves as the Department's Designated Agency Safety and Health Official and is responsible for administration of the Occupational Safety and Health and Workers' Compensation Programs.

The **Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs** is responsible for the coordination and dissemination of VA-related information to various audiences, specifically veterans and associated service organizations, and to the general public through the news media. The Assistant Secretary manages and directs the Department's intergovernmental, consumer affairs, and homeless programs. The office supports veterans-specific interest groups, special events, and program activities to meet the needs of several audiences – first and foremost veterans.

The **Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs** serves as the principal advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary concerning all legislative and congressional liaison matters and has overall responsibility for the plans, policies, goals, and direction of the Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs. The Assistant Secretary is the principal coordinator of VA's legislative program development, ensures Departmental compliances with congressionally mandated reports and serves as the point-of-contact with the General Accounting Office.

## VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION



VA provides medical care to eligible beneficiaries as authorized by Title 38, U.S.C. the branch of VA that administers and operates this medical care system is the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). VHA operates the Nation's largest integrated health care system providing care to 4.8 million unique patients with 49.8 million outpatient visits in 2003.

To carry out its mission to provide medical care, VHA operated (as of September 30, 2003) 160 hospitals, 804 outpatient clinics, 133 nursing homes, 42 residential rehabilitation treatment programs, and 206 readjustment counseling centers including facilities in every state, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the American Virgin Islands, Washington, DC and Guam. VHA also finances health care for some veterans in other government or private facilities (including physician offices, hospitals, and nursing homes) and, under limited circumstances, finances care for dependents and survivors of veterans as well.

In addition to providing health care, VHA also has missions to provide training for health care professionals; to conduct medical research; to serve as a contingency backup to DoD medical services; and, during national emergencies, to support the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS).

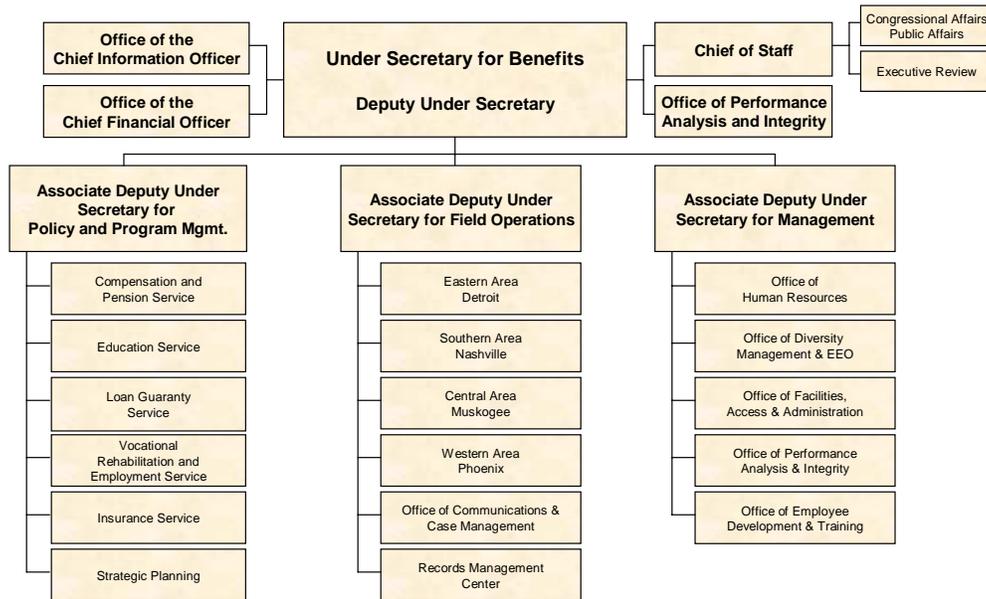
During the past 7 years, VHA has undergone a profound transformation. Replacing an older, top-down organization, VHA has made a profound shift in management philosophy and execution. Beginning in 1995, VHA restructured its management system from one in which a small number of regional directors remotely supervised numerous, complex field activities to one in which 21 Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN) provide close and continuing "hands on" supervision and leadership to local VA providers of care. The current, restructured veterans' health care system requires a data-driven, process focused customer education. Its goal is to deliver the right care at the right time in the right place. Moving from a hospital-based to a predominately outpatient system, that ratio of outpatient visits to inpatient admissions went from 29:1 in 1995 to 88:1 in 2003.

To assure this focus, VHA has redesigned systems including those for allocating resources, managing information and strategic planning. The new structure for planning, budgeting, and service delivery is the VHSN, a network of facilities with a collective responsibility to coordinate care and maximize the health potential of veterans inpatient geographic regions. This has enabled the realignment of responsibility and accountability closer to the point of care delivery. In addition, a performance measurement system, including contracts or performance agreements with VHA's top managers, assures the alignment of action with organizational goals and alignment of all levels of the organization toward achievement of the goals.

Along with these structural changes, VHA has fostered new strategic goals that will move it forward within its domains of value: quality, satisfaction, functional status, and cost. Based on these goals, VHA has emerged as a national leader in providing a coordinated continuum of care at an increasingly predictable and consistent level and characterized by the achievement of performance outcomes in terms of cost, access, customer satisfaction, and improved patient care. VHA has made substantial progress in establishing a patient-centered, community-based health care system delivering accessible quality care. Always striving for improvement, VHA is moving in these directions so that the veterans' health care system can continue to provide high quality health care to our nation's veterans.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *Diane Harvey, Veterans Health Administration, (202) 273-8290*

## VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION



The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) is responsible for administering the Department's programs that provide financial and other forms of assistance to veterans, their dependents, and survivors. Major benefits include veterans' compensation, veterans' pension, survivors' benefits, rehabilitation and employment assistance, education assistance, home loan guaranties, and life insurance coverage.

### VBA MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

As a result of restructuring in July 2002, VBA has five key leadership positions reporting through the Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits to the Under Secretary for Benefits. Together with the Deputy Under Secretary, the five incumbents in these positions serve as VBA's governance board. The following summarizes the organizational elements and functions aligned under VBA's five key leadership positions.

The Associate Deputy Under Secretary for Policy and Program Management (ADUSPPM) has oversight responsibility for the management of VBA's five core business lines: Compensation and Pension, Education, Loan Guaranty, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, and Insurance. (For program descriptions, see "VBA Benefit Programs" below). In addition to responsibility for managing VBA's five major program offices, the ADUSPPM has responsibility for strategic planning. The Office of Strategic Planning responsibilities include developing long-range strategic plans for VBA, analyzing strategic data, researching and identifying long-range risks and challenges for the organization, and conducting organizational assessments.

**The Associate Deputy Under Secretary for Field Operations (ADUSFO)** has oversight responsibility for the management of the field organization. Within the field, 57 regional offices administer VBA's benefit programs. These regional offices are aligned under four Area Office Directors that report to the ADUSFO.

**The Associate Deputy Under Secretary for Management (ADUSM)** is responsible for five staff offices that manage, coordinate and integrate programs that support both the business lines and regional office operations.

- The Office of Human Resources has responsibility for human resources functions within VBA Central Office. These include labor relations, employee relations, employee compensation and benefits, recruitment and classification, and human resources policy and planning. The office is also responsible for overall policy and directions governing human resources functions administered locally at the regional offices.
- The Office of Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity is responsible for EEO programs and functions, which include diversity management and affirmative employment, discrimination complaint processing, and minority veterans program coordination.
- The Office of Facilities, Access and Administration is responsible for access to VBA services by veterans and their families, physical facilities development and planning, emergency preparedness, VBA's administrative policies and procedures, and support services such as security, fire safety, and general logistics.
- The Office of Performance Analysis and Integrity has responsibility for data and information management, internal controls, and program integrity. It also provides consulting support and technical assistance to program and field facilities, and conducts site surveys in the field to ensure that data collection activities are properly administered.
- The Office of Employee Development and Training is responsible for all employee training activities in VBA Central Office and for coordinating training activities at VBA's field facilities. Functions include development of the VBA Strategic Training Plan, management of the strategic technical training delivery system (TPSS) in support of the business lines, and the administration of nationwide training via satellite, desk top delivery, and video teleconferencing.

**The Chief Financial Officer** has responsibility for formulating VBA's annual budget and for executing VBA's general operating expenses (GOE) budget. The incumbent is also responsible for financial management, program and fiscal integrity, project administration, and capital investment planning and budgeting.

**The Chief Information Officer** directs VBA's Office of Information Management. The incumbent is responsible for planning, developing, integrating, and implementing VBA's information management and technology investments, as well as VBA's information architecture and web service functions. (NOTE: The Secretary approved the centralization of VA IT functions under the Department's CIO. Under this reorganization, VBA's CIO became the VA Deputy CIO for Benefits.)

## VBA BENEFIT PROGRAMS

**Compensation and Pension Programs** provide direct payments to veterans, dependents, and survivors as a result of the veteran's service-connected disability or because of financial need.



Disability Compensation is a monetary benefit paid to veterans with disabilities, that are the result of a disease or injury incurred or aggravated during active military service. The benefit amount is graduated according to the degree of the veteran's disability on a scale from 10 percent to 100 percent (in increments of 10 percent).

- Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) benefits are generally payable to the survivors of service members who died while on active duty or survivors of veterans who died from their service-connected disabilities.
- Pension programs are designed to provide income support to veterans with wartime service and their families for a nonservice-connected disability or death. These programs for veterans and survivors experiencing financial hardship are means tested.
- Spina Bifida Monthly Allowance under 38 U.S.C. 1805 is provided for children born with spina bifida who are children of individuals who served in the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam Era or served in or near the demilitarization zone in Korea during the period September 1, 1967, through August 31, 1971. Payment is made at one of three levels and is based on degree of disability suffered by the child.
- Children of Women Vietnam Veterans Born with Certain Defects. This program provides a monetary allowance, healthcare, and vocational training benefits to eligible children born to women who served in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on February 28, 1961, and ending May 7, 1975, if they suffer from certain covered birth defects. VA identifies the birth defects as those that are associated with the service of the mother in Vietnam and result in permanent physical or mental disability.

**Education Programs** provide veterans, reservists, and certain veterans' dependents with educational resources to supplement opportunities missed because of military service and to assist in the readjustment to civilian life. Generally, a veteran has ten years from the last separation from active duty to use this benefit. Currently there are four education programs:

- Post-Vietnam Era Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) is available for eligible veterans who entered active duty between January 1, 1977 and June 30, 1985. Benefits and entitlement are determined by the contributions paid while on active duty.
- Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB) provides a program of education benefits that may be used while on active duty or after separation. There are several distinct eligibility categories. Generally a veteran will receive 36 months of entitlement.
- Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) is a program funded and managed by the Department of Defense (DoD) and is available to members of the Selected Reserve. VA Administers this program but DoD determines the member's eligibility. Generally a qualified member of the Reserve will receive 36 months of entitlement and will have 14 years in which to use the benefit.
- Dependents Educational Assistance Program (DEA) is designed to assist dependents of veterans who have been determined to be either 100 percent permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected condition, or who died of these disabilities or while on active duty. Dependents typically receive 45 months of eligibility. Generally a spouse will have ten years in which to use this benefit, while children have eight years.

**The Loan Guaranty Program** provides housing credit assistance to veterans and service members to enable them to buy homes. Assistance is provided through VA's partial guaranty of loans made by private lenders in lieu of the substantial down payment and other investment safeguards required in conventional mortgage transactions. The program also provides Specially Adapted Housing Grants to assist certain veterans with severe disabilities to make their homes wheelchair accessible.

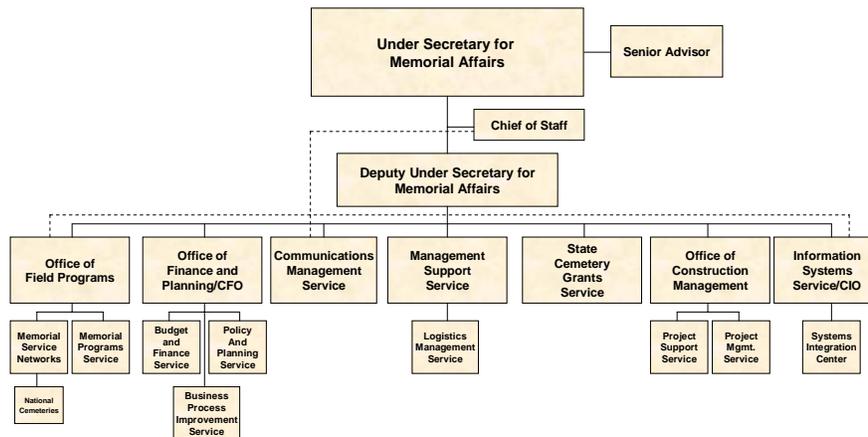
**The Insurance Programs** were created to provide life insurance at a "standard" premium rate to members of the armed forces who are exposed to the extra hazards of military service. Veterans are eligible to maintain their VA life insurance following discharge. In general, a new program was created for each wartime period after World War I. There are four programs that still issue coverage:

- Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (SDVI) – first issued in 1951
- Service Members Group Life Insurance (SGLI) – 1965
- Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) – 1971
- Veterans Group Life Insurance (VGLI) – 1974

**The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program** helps veterans with service-connected disabilities become employable in order to obtain and maintain suitable employment. When the severity of disability prohibits suitable employment as an immediate goal, the veteran is assisted to achieve independence in daily living. The program also provides educational and vocational counseling for eligible service-members, veterans, and dependents in selecting a program of training or an institution where the training is offered.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Bruce Grimes, Veterans Benefits Administration, (202) 273-7124

## NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

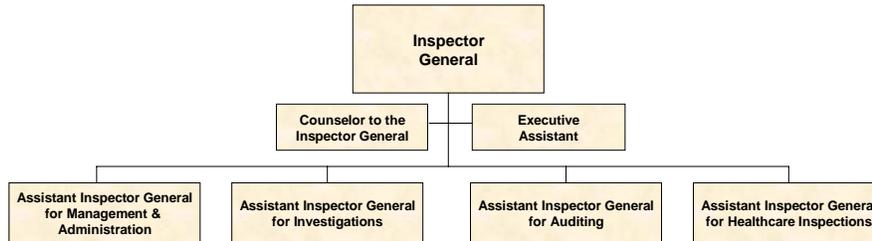


The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) operates 120 national cemeteries in the United States and territories, together with oversight/ management of 33 soldiers' lots, confederate cemeteries, and monument sites. The mission of NCA is to honor our Nation's veterans with a final resting place and commemorate their service to our Nation. This mission is accomplished through four major program areas:

- Providing for the interment of eligible service members, veterans, reservists, National Guard members and certain family members in national cemeteries. A total of 89,755 veterans and eligible family members were buried in national cemeteries in FY 2003. More than 3 million veterans, spouses, and dependents are buried in the system's 6,975 acres of developed land. NCA maintains these cemeteries and memorials as national shrines.
- Providing headstones and markers for the unmarked graves of veterans throughout the United States and the World. In FY 2003, NCA provided 344,845 headstones and markers at a cost of \$33 million. The Government does not provide for the cost of setting the headstone or marker in private cemeteries. In national cemeteries, a headstone or marker is provided, including the cost of placement.
- Administering the State Cemetery Grants Program, which provides financial assistance to States for establishing, expanding, and improving State veterans' cemeteries. Since the program was established in 1978, 132 grants have been made, totaling over \$175 million through FY 2003. The program provides Federal funding up to 100 percent of the cost of establishing, expanding, or improving State veterans cemeteries that complement NCA. There are currently 54 State Veterans Cemeteries in 28 states throughout the Nation. In FY 2003, 209,079 veterans and dependents were buried in these cemeteries.
- Providing Presidential Memorial Certificates to veterans' loved ones to honor the service of honorably discharged deceased service members or veterans. In FY 2003, NCA issued 245,632 Presidential Memorial Certificates on behalf of the President.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Thomas G. Balsanek, National Cemetery Administration, (202) 273-5628

## INSPECTOR GENERAL



The Office of Inspector General (OIG) was established in VA on January 1, 1978. The Inspector General Act of 1978 (Public Law No. 95-452), enacted in October 1978, formally established the OIG for the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Inspector General Amendments of 1988 (Public Law No. 100-504) established detailed reporting requirements on the resolution and implementation status of issued OIG reports. Public Law No. 100-322 expanded OIG activities to monitor and evaluate VHA Quality Assurance Programs and activities of the Medical Inspector.

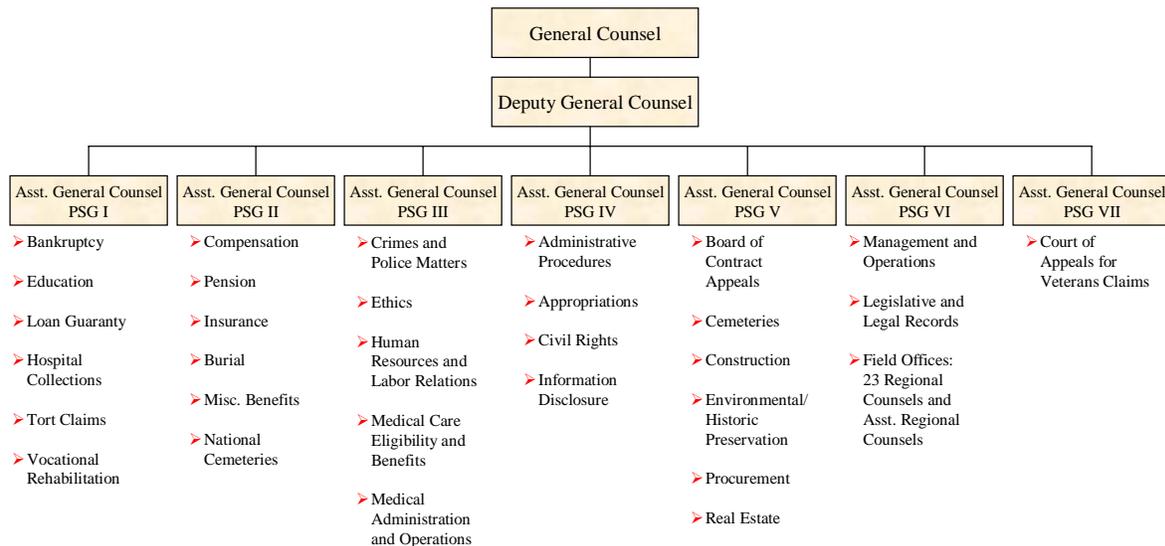
VA's OIG directs an independent and objective organization. The purpose of this organization is to conduct audits, investigations, and inspections of VA programs, operations, and other activities carried out or financed by VA; to recommend policies that promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness; and to prevent and detect criminal activity, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in VA.

Accomplishments of the office are described in semiannual reports required by the Inspector General Act. These reports are provided to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Congress, and the Office of Management and Budget.

Operations of the OIG are centrally managed in Washington, DC, and are divided among field offices established for audits, investigations, and health care inspections.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Joseph M. Vallowe, Office of the Inspector General, (202) 565-8939

## GENERAL COUNSEL



The Office of General Counsel (OGC) assists in the formulation of policy and provides legal advice and services to the Secretary and all organizational components in the Department. The General Counsel serves as the chief legal officer for the Department on all matters of law, litigation, and legislation. The OGC interprets all laws pertaining to the Department and serves as the final legal authority in issuing Departmental regulations that implement laws pertaining to the Department. The OGC represents the Secretary in litigation involving the Department and works in close cooperation with the Department of Justice and the United States Attorneys throughout the country in defending the Department in legal actions brought against it. Working in close cooperation with Department officials, OGC prepares for the Secretary's approval, legislative initiatives for submission to the Office of Management and Budget and the Congress.

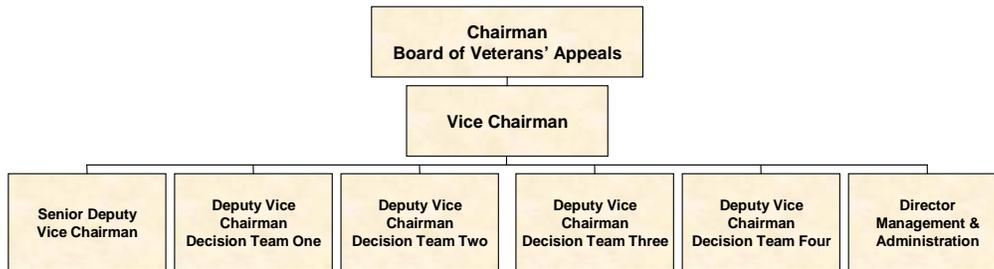
At VACO, the responsibility for the full range of legal, litigation, and legislative activities is distributed among seven Professional Staff Groups (PSG). Each PSG has expertise in specific subject matter areas, and is responsible for providing legal advice to program officials, reviewing proposed regulations and directives, and handling litigation involving VA programs. Each PSG also prepares any draft legislation that is needed in its assigned subject areas. In addition to the seven PSG, there is an OGC Office of Regulatory Law that works with OMB, the Federal Register, and VA program officials to ensure that regulatory documents meet legal requirements.

The OGC maintains 22 field offices, each under the supervision of a Regional Counsel. Each Regional Counsel is responsible for providing legal advice and assistance to Directors and other officials of regional offices, VISN Directors and other officials of medical facilities, and officials of readjustment counseling centers and national cemeteries located within the assigned region. The responsibilities of a Regional Counsel include: (1) performing necessary legal review in administrative tort claims and providing appropriate legal service and support to the local U.S. Attorneys' Offices in tort litigation cases; (2) recovering funds owed the United States by applying legal collection remedies to include conducting litigation in Federal and State courts to effect collection; (3) initiating required court actions in guardianship commitment matters by appearing in

State courts and furnishing legal assistance to appropriate elements of VBA; (4) providing necessary legal services in connection with the loan guaranty program; (5) advising and representing management of VA facilities located within the Regional Counsel's jurisdiction on issues relating to personnel and labor law; (6) providing training to employees of VA facilities within the assigned region; and (7) maintaining liaison with State agencies and legislatures and with State and local bar associations.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *Paul Hutter, Office of the General Counsel, (202) 273-8660*

## BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS



The Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA), a statutory Board created in 1933, makes final decisions on appeals to the Secretary under laws affecting the provision of benefits by the Department to veterans, their dependents, or their survivors. The BVA conducts hearings in Washington, DC, and at VA regional offices. Hearings by videoconference are available at most regional offices. The BVA also may review the reasonableness of fee agreements of attorneys or agents for representation of claimants and appellants before the Department, including the BVA. Final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. Appeals in insurance cases involving contracts may be taken into Federal courts after administrative remedies are exhausted.

The Board consists of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Senior Deputy Vice Chairman, four Deputy Vice Chairmen, and sufficient members to conduct hearings and decide appeals in a proper and timely manner. The Chairman serves at the Assistant Secretary level within the Department and is appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, for a term of six years. The other members of the Board, including the Vice Chairman, are appointed by the Secretary, with the approval of the President, based upon recommendations of the Chairman. The Secretary designates one member of the Board as Vice Chairman.

The Board is organized into an Appellate Group, four Decision Teams, and a Management and Administration section. The Appellate Group, headed by the Senior Deputy Vice Chairman, provides counsel to the Chairman and serves as BVA's liaison with VA's Office of the General Counsel and the Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration, and other elements of the agency. The Appellate Group is also responsible for the Board's professional training and quality assurance programs, BVA's research center, and one medical advisor.

Each of BVA's decision teams is headed by a Deputy Vice Chairman, and is comprised of approximately 11 Board members and 55 attorney advisors. Decisions of the Board are rendered by individual Board members or by panels of not less than three Board members. Board counsel assist Board members, review appeals, conduct research, and prepare tentative decisions. Each decision team decides cases from regional offices in one of four geographic regions.

BVA's Management and Administration section is responsible for case management and tracking, docket control, hearing scheduling, correspondence, secretarial and transcription services, information systems management, planning, budgeting, personnel, procurement, and liaison with parties outside BVA.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *Ronald W. Scholz, Board of Veterans' Appeals, (202) 565-4275*

## BOARD OF CONTRACT APPEALS

The Board of Contract Appeals is a statutory tribunal constituted under the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (CDA), that hears and decides appeals from decisions of Contracting Officers on claims relating to contracts awarded by VA, or by any other Agency when such Agency or the Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy has designated the Board to decide the appeal. The Board consists of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and four Administrative Judges appointed by the Secretary, who are assisted by a legal and administrative support staff. The Board also decides applications for attorney fees and expenses under the Equal Access to Justice Act (5 U.S.C. §504), which are submitted for appeals it hears or resolves.

Proceedings before the Board under the CDA are adversarial in nature, and are designed to provide due process to the parties. The Board's Rules provide for the right to discovery, to a hearing, to cross-examination of witnesses, and to a verbatim record of the proceedings upon which to base an appeal. Decisions of the Board are final unless appealed, either by the Government or by the Appellant, to the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

The Board's Chair is designated VA's Dispute Resolution Specialist pursuant to the *Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Act* (5 U.S.C. §571-584). Among other things, the Chair, Judges of the Board, and staff coordinate the Department's ADR effort; promote the appropriate use of ADR throughout the Department; provide training and assistance to various VA entities in the design and implementation of ADR programs in contracts, discrimination, and other personnel and labor arenas; and represent the Department in various interagency groups including the Interagency ADR Working Group and the Interagency Program for Sharing Neutrals. The Board also has in place an active contracts ADR program where Board Judges serve as Settlement Judges or Neutrals to assist in pre-trial resolution of both docketed appeals and contract disputes prior to the issuance of a Contracting Officer Final Decision.

The Board is also charged with resolving any disputes between drug manufacturers and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with regard to Pharmaceutical Pricing Agreements Provisions of the *Veterans Health Care Act of 1992* (Public Law No. 102-585). The Board is responsible for holding the administrative hearings under VA's pending Administrative Offset of Employees' Salaries regulation and for reviewing the determinations of the Office of General Counsel (OGC) to de-credential veterans representatives, and for reviewing and rendering fact finding determinations in OGC-referred tort claims under the *Federal Tort Claims Act* (5 U.S.C. §552a).

Finally, the Board acts as a trier of material facts in dispute in debarment or suspension proceedings.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Gloria Brown, Board of Contract Appeals, (202) 273-6743

## **SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY FOR VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS LIAISON**

The Special Assistant to the Secretary for Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) Liaison is the Secretary's primary advisor on matters affecting VSOs and is responsible for the Department's day-to-day liaison with those organizations.

Liaison responsibilities include communicating regularly with VSO officials to ensure VA's responsiveness to the needs of the organizations and their members; attending the VSO Midwinter conferences and National conventions; and communicating with veterans concerning issues they feel strongly about, including health care. The incumbent attends all National Commanders' testimony on veteran's issues to the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees. Other responsibilities include articulating the Department's points of view on issues affecting America's veterans; maintaining and publishing lists of VSOs and their representatives for use by VA and the public; advising the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of VSO policy statements or specific positions on veterans' issues; and assisting VSOs in their dealings with other Federal agencies.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *Allen "Gunner" Kent, Veterans Service Organizations Liaison,  
(202) 273-4835*

## SMALL AND DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS UTILIZATION

The Director of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, serves as the Department's advocate for the participation of small, small disadvantaged, veteran-owned, service-disabled veteran-owned, women-owned, and Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBZone) in VA contracts and subcontracts. This office plans, implements, and coordinates Department programs for small businesses as directed by statutes, Executive Orders, and applicable regulations.

The Director serves as the Department's principal liaison to the Small Business Administration. In matters relating to the Department's socioeconomic acquisition program, the Director is a liaison with the Department of Commerce, the General Services Administration, and the Office of Federal Procurement Policy.

Activities in the program include conducting contract bundling reviews, training acquisition officials, sharing acquisition information with service organizations, counseling entrepreneurs, participating as small business experts at conferences, and disseminating informational materials that describe how to do business with the Department. This office ascertains the effectiveness of current policy, procedures, and plans in promoting socioeconomic programs for application throughout VA. This office also negotiates, establishes, and maintains the Department-wide procurement goals, and reports on the progress toward accomplishing these goals.

In response to Public Law No. 106-50, *The Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999*, this office established the VA Center for Veterans Enterprise. Dedicated in February 2001, the Center provides assistance to veterans and service-disabled veterans who want to open or expand a business. The Center works extensively with the Small Business Administration, the Association of Small Business Development Centers, the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers in the Department of Defense, the Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Service, and government and corporate buying activities. Principal functions of the Center include case management, community education and outreach programs, policy and legislative initiatives, and research and information management. The Center also supports the Secretary of Veterans Affairs who is a member of the Board of Directors for the National Veterans Business Development Corporation. VA must, by law, annually provide a notice to every business owned by a veteran that assistance is available to help the company move into the Federal marketplace. Additionally, VA must annually provide to every Federal agency a listing of each service-disabled veteran-owned business and the products and services the company provides.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Scott Denniston, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, (202) 565-8124

## CENTER FOR MINORITY VETERANS

The Center for Minority Veterans (CMV) was established by Congress on November 2, 1994, to promote, evaluate and assess minority veterans' use of VA programs and recommend solutions to better serve minority veterans. Serving as a principal advisor to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the CMV is charged with identifying barriers to service and health care access as well as increasing local awareness of minority veteran related issues by developing strategies for improving minority participation in existing VA benefits programs.

Specifically, these veterans include the following minority groups: African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, and Native American, including American Indians, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiians. Oftentimes, cultural, economic, and ethnic differences may hinder access to VA services by veteran minority groups. Outreach activities, surveys, site visits, and direct contact with veterans are some of the channels through which the CMV gleans information to identify areas for improvement.

The Center utilizes three major outreach initiatives to assist in identifying and addressing minority veterans concerns:

- The Secretary's Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans are recognized authorities in fields pertinent to the needs of the minority group they represent. This diverse Committee advises the Secretary and Congress on VA's administration of benefits and provisions of health care, benefits, and services to minority veterans. Additionally, they provide an annual report to Congress outlining recommendations, concerns, and observations on VA's delivery of services to minority veterans.
- Another outreach initiative is through a team of over 280 Minority Veterans Program Coordinators (MVPC), who are assigned throughout VA and located in regional offices, medical centers, and national cemeteries. MVPCs focus on the needs of minority veterans in their respective local communities by educating them on VA benefits, services, programs, and advocate on behalf of these veterans by identifying gaps in services.
- Through the Veteran Business and Economic Development outreach, the Center has partnered with VA's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization to co-sponsor business outreach activities to target minority veterans, disabled minority veterans, and current minority business owners to address business related needs and provide access to business opportunities within the Federal government and private sector.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *Charles W. Nesby, Center for Minority Veterans, (202) 273-6708*

## CENTER FOR WOMEN VETERANS

The Center for Women Veterans is responsible for advising the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on VA health care services, benefit programs, legislation, and all VA policies that may affect women veterans.

The Center's mission is to ensure that: women veterans have access to VA benefits and services on par with male veterans; VA programs are responsive to gender-specific needs of women veterans; outreach is performed to improve women veterans' awareness of services, benefits and eligibility criteria; and women veterans are treated with dignity and respect.

The Center works closely with the three administrations – Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration, and National Cemetery Administration - to develop program initiatives and ensure that women veterans are afforded equal access to all VA benefits and health care programs. The Center's priorities are to ensure that women veterans' issues are included in the national VA agenda such as the Secretary's Annual Statement and the VA Strategic and Performance Plan, and ensure directives and policies are "gender neutral" so they are not inadvertently discriminatory or insensitive to women veterans. Outreach, a primary component of the Center's mission, enhances access for women veterans to information regarding health and benefits, and promotes educational activities to improve the sensitivity of VA staff to the specific needs of these veterans.

The Center collaborates with the Women Veterans Health Program Office, and the women veteran's program managers at local and regional levels to identify and resolve policy, programmatic and clinical issues that may impact on the care and services provided for women veterans. Through active partnerships with states, counties, veterans service organizations, various Federal agencies, and community-based program officials, the Center ensures that women veterans' issues and concerns are identified, discussed and included in program development and implementation in all arenas.

The Center provides consultation and support to the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans. This statutory Committee provides advice and consultation to the Secretary on programs for women veterans. The Committee is comprised of individuals who both reflect the diversity of the women veterans' population and possess the knowledge and skills necessary to assess the Department's responsiveness to the needs of this group.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Irene Trowell-Harris, Center for Women Veterans, (202) 273-6193

## CENTER FOR VETERANS ENTERPRISE (CVE)

The Center for Veterans Enterprise (CVE) maintains a free internet database of veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned business, the VetBiz Vendor Information Pages (VIP). The purpose of VIP is to help Federal and corporate officials to quickly locate veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses for contracting opportunities. Information on all services available at the CVE can be found at [www.vetbiz.gov](http://www.vetbiz.gov).

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *Gail Wegner, Center for Veterans Enterprise, (202) 254-0233*

## OFFICE OF REGULATION POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

The Office of Regulation Policy and Management (ORP&M) is responsible for the centralized management, control, and coordination of all VA regulations. ORP&M supervises VA's Regulation Rewrite Project, a comprehensive effort to review, reorganize, and rewrite VA regulations lacking clarity, consistency, or logical organization. ORP&M also is responsible for devising and implementing new procedures to centralize control and improve Secretarial oversight, management, drafting efficiency, policy resolution, impact analysis, and coordination of diverse VA regulations.

ORP&M supervises the work of special regulation analysis and drafting teams as part of the VA's Regulation Rewrite Project. The Project is staffed by subject matter experts and legal advisors detailed from their parent organizations, who have been tasked with identifying and rewriting confusing, ambiguous, and disorganized VA regulations. Initially, the Project is focusing on 275 Compensation and Pension Service (C&P) regulations (contained in Part 3 of 38 CFR). Project team members have included employees from the Board of Veterans' Appeals, Veterans Benefits Administration, and Office of General Counsel. The C&P portion of the Project requires at least two years of dedicated effort. All of the detailed employees return to their parent organizations once they have accomplished their assigned tasks. Once that effort is concluded, the Rewrite Project will focus on other VA regulations.

ORP&M also has a permanent office to remedy long-standing deficiencies in VA's rulemaking process. ORP&M provides centralized supervision and coordination of regulation development, tracking, control, policy integration, and economic impact analyses for proposed VA regulations. ORP&M has redressed the problems identified with the VA's decentralized process--the lack of strategic focus and direction--and worked to reduce unnecessary delays, internal inconsistencies, poor coordination, and lack of policy integration.

By efficiently managing and standardizing the rulemaking process in VA, ORP&M improves the Secretary's ability to articulate and implement his priorities, policies, and goals. The Regulatory Policy Council provides early, senior-level policy articulation. ORP&M sets goals for regulatory development and publication against which progress can be measured, serving as the basis for an improved regulatory tracking system that will be accessible, understandable, and useful to VA leaders and managers. Clear, understandable, and timely publication of VA regulations will enhance the delivery of services to our veterans.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *William A. Moorman, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, (202) 273-9515*

## EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT ADJUDICATION

The Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication (OEDCA) began operations on February 19, 1998, pursuant to The Veterans Benefits Act of 1997. The Director of OEDCA is required to:

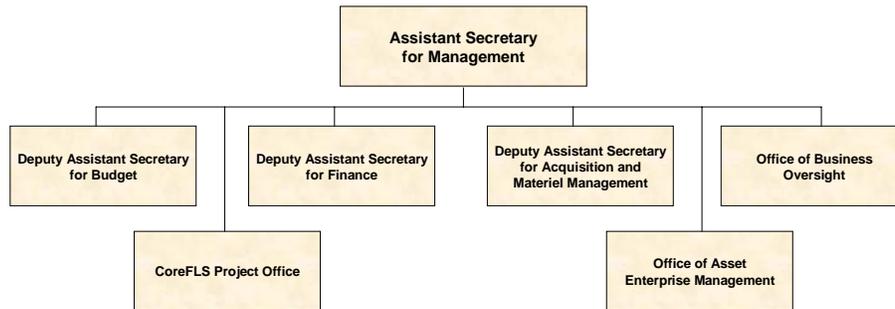
- Issue final agency decisions and orders on the merits of EEO complaints and on any relief that may be available.
- Report cases involving a finding of intentional discrimination or retaliation against employees asserting rights under an equal employment opportunity law to the Secretary or Deputy Secretary.

OEDCA is an independent office responsible for issuing final agency decisions and orders on the substantive merits of employment discrimination complaints filed by employees and applicants for employment. In order to avoid a conflict of interest, complaints alleging that the Secretary or Deputy Secretary personally made a decision directly related to the matters in dispute, or were otherwise personally involved in such matters, will be referred for decision-making to another Federal agency pursuant to a cost-reimbursable agreement. Such a referral will not be made, however, when the action complained of relates merely to routine, ministerial approval of selection recommendations submitted to the Secretary by the Under Secretary for Health, Under Secretary for Benefits, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, Assistant Secretaries, or Other Key Officials.

Final agency decisions and orders are rendered in a fair and impartial manner and are based on evidence contained in the investigation report and, if applicable, the hearing transcript and exhibits provided by an EEOC-appointed administrative judge. OEDCA is also responsible for determining equitable relief and issuing final agency decisions on a complainant's entitlement to compensatory damages, attorney's fees, and costs where the complainant is a prevailing party. The Director's decisions are not subject to further review or appeal by any official within the Department. Complainants who are dissatisfied with a final agency decision or order may either appeal to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) (or in some cases the Merit Systems Protection Board) or file a civil action in an appropriate United States District Court.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *Charles R. Delobe, Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication, (202) 254-0063*

## ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR MANAGEMENT



The Assistant Secretary for Management oversees all resource requirements, development and implementation of agency performance measures, and financial management activities relating to VA programs and operations. Responsibility also includes a Departmental accounting and financial management system that provides for management, cost, budgeting, and accounting information. In addition, the office oversees the Department's acquisition and materiel management activities as well as capital asset management activities, including development and implementation of policies and regulations.

### OFFICE OF BUDGET

The Office of Budget is responsible for overseeing VA budget formulation, analyzing resource requirements, preparing and justifying budget submissions, and representing VA in budget deliberations with Congress and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This office also monitors the financial execution of the budget, and the development and implementation of performance measurements as defined in the Chief Financial Officers Act as well as the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993. Budget execution includes examining actual expenditures and performance with the approved operating budget plan.

### OFFICE OF FINANCE

The Office of Finance is responsible for continually improving the quality of the Department's financial services. It maintains stewardship of Departmental resources and provides financial information on appropriations and general, revolving, special, and deposit funds for cost and obligation accounting. The Office of Finance establishes financial policy, systems and operating procedures for all Department financial entities, provides guidance on all aspects of financial management, and directs and manages the Department's financial operations and systems support.

The office is responsible for the continued maintenance and update of VA's central payroll and human resources system, PAID, and interfacing systems (On-Line Data Entry), and oversees requirements and implementation of legislative and other mandated changes into PAID, including those deferred changes from the late 1990s through 2001. The office leads VA efforts to implement high quality, cost-effective and operational improvements to PAID and related self-service applications, such as those completed in July 2003 to replace VA's legacy Web-based Employee Self-Service system by transitioning to use of Employee Express, a Web-based government off-the-shelf application utilized by over 50 Federal agencies, which is expected to yield VA \$2 million in savings annually. The office also analyzes and implements other operational systems efficiencies, such as Web-enabling online data entry screens and providing labor cost distribution capabilities in PAID.

The office is also leading VA's efforts in support of two of the administration's e-Government initiatives -- e-Payroll and e-Travel. The administration's e-Payroll initiative will consolidate the provision of Federal payroll services to four providers. As a result of the Office of Personnel Management's alignment of VA with the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS), the Office of Finance, as VA's primary liaison, is responsible for working jointly with DFAS on plans and requirements for accomplishing the planned migration of VA's payroll servicing. The office is also responsible for overseeing VA's implementation of a new Web-based electronic travel system in concert with the Federal government's e-Travel program.

The Office of Finance is responsible for developing VA's consolidated financial statements and providing external Departmental financial reports to the Department of the Treasury and OMB; establishing uniform standards, policies, classifications, and terminologies to be used throughout the Department in financial and cost reporting; and providing fiscal, accounting and reporting services for the Department.

The Office of Finance also directs and manages the Departmentwide travel program, and analyzes and oversees the Medical Care Cost Fund's performance, effectiveness, timeliness, accountability, and improvement efforts; financial operations at Central Office and the Financial Services Center in Austin, Texas; and debt collection services provided by the Debt Management Center in St. Paul, Minnesota.

The Office of Finance oversees the management and direction of VA's Franchise Fund. It is comprised of the following business lines (Enterprise Centers): Austin Automation Center; Debt Management Center; Financial Services Center; Law Enforcement Training Center; Security and Investigations Center; and VA Records Center and Vault. These centers are authorized to sell common administrative services to VA and other Government agencies. The Enterprise Centers are required to price products at full cost and compete for customers.

### **COREFLS PROJECT OFFICE**

The Core Financial and Logistics System (CoreFLS), which will begin implementation in FY 2004, will replace VA's existing core financial management and logistics systems and many of the interfacing legacy stovepipe systems with an integrated, commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) package. Replacement of the core financial system will strengthen the flow of financial information by replacing financial feeder systems which have limited or manual interfaces to the core financial system, improve data integrity by eliminating redundant financial data stored in a number of legacy financial and mixed applications, increase standardization of procedures by placing business processes in an integrated, state-of-the-art core financial and logistical system, indirectly enhance service to veterans and other customers, and decrease costs by eliminating redundant and inefficient legacy systems. CoreFLS will help VA address and correct management and financial weaknesses in the areas of effective integration of financial transactions from VA systems, provide necessary financial support for credit reform initiatives, and improve automated analytical and reconciliation tools.

## OFFICE OF ACQUISITION AND MATERIEL MANAGEMENT

The Office of Acquisition and Materiel Management (OA&MM) operates the largest Federal procurement and supply system outside DoD. VA's Supply Fund, a self-sustaining, revolving fund authorized by statute, funds all OA&MM activities, the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, and Veterans Health Administration's Logistics Office.

In support of VA's mission, OA&MM serves two fundamental roles:

- **Operations:** To provide acquisition and materiel management support and Supply Fund financial services for the Administrations and staff offices to help fulfill their missions.
- **Program Oversight and Stewardship:** To ensure VA compliance with acquisition and materiel management laws, regulations, and national policies governing Federal acquisition and property management.

Three major business lines exist within OA&MM - acquisitions, materiel management, and Supply Fund financial services.

The Office of Acquisitions procures goods and services for VA. They award and administer cost-effective national contracts to meet supply and equipment needs of VA facilities around the country. Contracts include medical-related Federal Supply Schedules (with authority delegated by the General Services Administration); blanket purchase agreements; direct delivery (for high-tech medical equipment and systems); centralized purchases; and prime vendor (PV) distribution contracts. VA facilities use PV contracts to purchase pharmaceuticals; medical, surgical, and dental equipment and supplies; information technology equipment and services; nonperishable food items; consulting services; and other health-care items needed to operate the largest health-care system in the Nation.

The Office of Acquisitions also develops Department-wide acquisition policy, manages VA's mandatory acquisition training program, and offers continuing education programs for VA procurement staff around the country. In addition, the office manages VA's Contracting Officer Certification Program and is responsible for warranting all VA contracting officers. To ensure the integrity of VA's acquisition program, the office conducts business reviews of all major contract actions and makes site visits to VA contracting offices.

The Office of Program Management and Operations is responsible for establishing policy and policy oversight of materiel management; warehousing; and supply, processing, and distribution at VA medical centers. The office distributes such items as hearing aids, prosthetic devices and interment flags to VA facilities nationwide, in addition to providing hearing aid repair services. The office designs, prints, and distributes VA forms and publications. Program management responsibility for VA's metric system, value engineering, and environmental programs resides within this organization. They also provide transportation services for supplies and household goods and coordinate a program to acquire and distribute clothing for veterans served by VA's Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program. Other program responsibilities include employee relocation, inspections of X-ray and laundry equipment, recovery and sale of precious metals, and materiel management training.

OA&MM operates VA's Supply Fund. The Fund offers innovative financial services to its customers. For example, VA organizations and facilities can use the One-VA+ Program to extend obligation authority of appropriated funds for up to 4 years beyond the current fiscal year for bona fide needs. In addition, the Fund's capital equipment leasing program allows VA and other government agency customers to acquire equipment on a lease-to-own basis on terms of 1 to 5 years.

OA&MM partners with other government agencies to achieve maximum cost avoidance and savings. For example, VA and DoD jointly negotiate purchases of pharmaceuticals, medical and surgical supplies, and high-tech, high-cost medical equipment. Additionally, other Federal agencies use VA national contracts to take advantage of lower prices and streamline their acquisition process. OA&MM will continue to expand its outreach efforts.

### **OFFICE OF ASSET ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT**

In July 2001, a corporate capital asset planning and management office was established – the Office of Asset Enterprise Management (OAEM). OAEM acts as one of the principal policy offices and business advisors to the Assistant Secretary for Management and Deputy Secretary regarding the acquisition, management, and disposal of all Department capital assets. OAEM provides oversight in the capital asset arena to ensure a consistent and cohesive Departmental approach by promoting and evaluating the effectiveness of capital asset management policies, principles, standards, and guidelines. This office is responsible for making recommendations and promulgating Departmental capital asset policies – approved by the Secretary and/or Senior Management Council – that govern the acquisition, management, and disposal of capital assets. OAEM also provides guidance, standards, and technical expertise with respect to individual investments, and develops the Department's long-term capital asset plan and associated financial plan. In appropriate cases, OAEM is responsible for Departmental asset initiatives that are precedent setting in the manner by which the Department acquires and manages its capital holdings, or are initiatives identified as high visibility or significance within the Department.

OAEM also leads and manages the Department's energy conservation initiatives and investments. In addition, OAEM is continuing its development of a Department-wide capital asset management system (CAMS). CAMS provides for life-cycle portfolio management across the enterprise and integrated business programs. CAMS extracts key capital asset-related data from several data sources within the Department; this data is then organized and analyzed for strategic use in monitoring VA's performance against capital asset goals within and across asset types and the Administrations. CAMS integrates asset management and governance at multiple levels of the Department, improves financial and analytical capabilities, and improves performance management. It facilitates improved service delivery to veterans and increased financial accountability to the general public.

### **OFFICE OF BUSINESS OVERSIGHT**

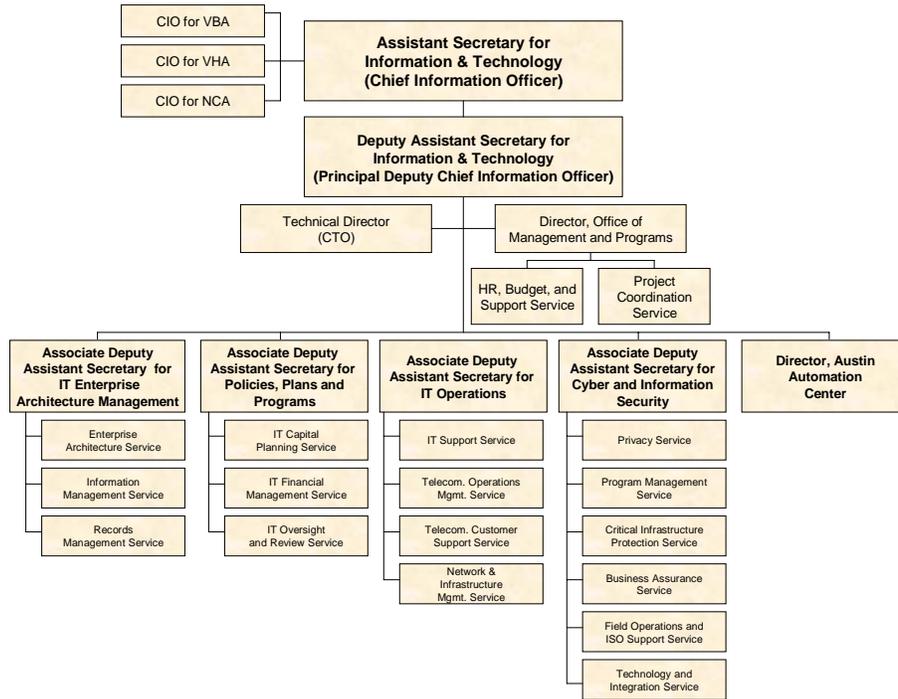
The Office of Business Oversight was created in March 2004 as part of the Department's finance, acquisition, and capital asset management activities realignment. The office has overall responsibility for oversight and compliance of the Department's business activities. The goals are to improve internal audit review coverage of field facilities, establish a clearer line of authority for oversight, and help standardize business practices throughout VA. The office includes a director's office, located in Washington, DC, and two supporting services, the Management Quality Assurance Service and the Systems Quality Assurance Service, both located in Austin, Texas.

The Management Quality Assurance Service performs internal audit reviews of the Department's financial, capital asset management, acquisition, and logistics activities and conducts financial analysis, monitoring, risk assessment and advisory services for VA's Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The Systems Quality Assurance Service manages and oversees independent verification and validation of internal control areas for financial and interfacing automated information systems. This service will also conduct financial system (A-127) reviews.

The Office of Business Oversight also established the VA CFO Council. This council consists of the VA CFO and Deputy CFO, Director of the Office of Asset Enterprise Management, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Acquisition and Materiel Management, the three Administration CFOs, VHA's Chief Business Officer, and a Chief Logistics Officer from each Administration. In addition to addressing general financial management, logistics, acquisition, capital asset management, and budget issues, the council will manage the oversight and field assistance activities of the Office of Business Oversight.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *Patti Costello, Office of Management, (202) 273-5583*

## ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY



The Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology (IT) is the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for VA and is the principal advisor to the Secretary on matters relating to IT management in the Department. The office provides technical direction, guidance, and policy to ensure that IT is acquired and resources are managed for the Department in a manner that implements the policies and procedures of the Clinger-Cohen Act and the priorities established by the Secretary. This office oversees the management of VA's enterprise architecture; cyber and information security program; IT capital planning, execution and financial management programs; IT project management oversight; the Department's data processing centers; wide area data and local area network management; telecommunications (voice, video and data) program management; records management and e-government; and office automation support services to the VACO campus.

The Office is composed of eight major organizational elements that report to the Assistant Secretary and Deputy Assistant Secretary for IT, VA's Principal Deputy CIO. The Deputy Assistant Secretary reports to the Assistant Secretary. The eight major organizational elements are: the Office of the Deputy CIO for Benefits; the Office of the Deputy CIO for Health; the Office of the Deputy CIO for Memorial Affairs; the Office of IT Enterprise Architecture Management; the Office of Policies, Plans, and Programs; the Office of Information Technology Operations; the Office of Cyber and Information Security; and the Austin Automation Center.

### OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

In coordination and collaboration with Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials, and as directed by the Assistant Secretary for IT, the Office of Information and Technology oversees and facilitates all of the IT activities of the Department to improve the effectiveness of program operations, and to assist line and staff organizations in the performance of their missions.

The office advises and assists the Assistant Secretary, as directed, on matters relating to Department-wide IT responsibilities and functions including policy/budget formulation, planning, acquisition, execution, and oversight; internal and external coordination; development and analysis of department level program data; and assessment of Department IT requirements. (IT is defined in OMB Circular A-130 which implements the Clinger-Cohen Act for the Federal Government)

The office oversees the acquisition, development, implementation and post implementation of all IT resources within the Department, and executes these responsibilities through the programs administered by the Deputy CIO's for Health, Benefits, and Memorial Affairs; and through programs which include: cyber and information security; telecommunications; IT enterprise architecture management; and IT policy, planning, and execution, project management, and financial management. This office also oversees the management of the VA's automation and data processing center.

The office oversees the formulation of VA policies pertaining to all IT which also includes e-Government, records management, directives management, forms, form letters, correspondence management, mail management, FOIA, Privacy Act, data confidentiality, computer matching, and the Data Integrity Board. In addition, this office advises and assists Departmental offices on the development of plans for and the acquisition of IT.

The office oversees the management and development of the annual Departmental IT planning process and IT Capital Plan; and modernization and integration of IT across the Department. In coordination with all affected IT program offices, the office establishes guidelines for the acquisition of IT.

The Office of Information and Technology is the steward of VA's IT assets and as such is responsible for ensuring the efficient and effective operation of VA's IT program to meet mission requirements of VA's Secretary, Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries and Other Key Officials. The office represents VA's IT program internally and externally to the Congress, OMB, GAO, other Federal agencies, and other elements.

### **OFFICE OF POLICIES, PLANS AND PROGRAMS**

The Office of Policies, Plans, and Programs advises and assists the Deputy Assistant Secretary and Assistant Secretary for IT by providing Departmental oversight in the program areas of IT investment planning and execution, IT financial management, and IT oversight and review. The office formulates and establishes Department-wide policies, plans, guidelines, and standards for IT capital planning, capital investment, acquisition review, program management and financial management to promote improvements in the effectiveness of IT in the Department and the efficiency of IT planned and operating budgets.

The office oversees and coordinates VA-wide implementation of IT legislation and guidance, including OMB Circular A-130, Circular A-11, Part 7 and the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996. It develops and manages the VA IT Integrated Management Process, which incorporates IT Capital Planning and Investment Control, in accordance with Clinger-Cohen Act and the OMB Circular A-11, Part 7, and participates on VA's Capital Investment Panel and supports VA's Capital Investment Board. The office tracks and evaluates VA IT budget submissions and budget executions for adherence to and support of VA corporate plans and develops and publishes data for Department use on IT budget trends, acquisition strategies, and return on investment projections, including Exhibit 53 data on IT spending for submission to the OMB.

The office manages the IT Integrated Management Process, including providing policies and support for Milestone Reviews. The office conducts or directs post implementation reviews on projects, once fully implemented and from a sampling of VA CIO-approved projects. The office manages the technical and performance aspects of the Procurement of Computer Hardware and Software (PCHS-2) contract, a mandatory Nationwide vehicle for buying IT resources. The office also develops VA's IT Strategic Plan and serves as an IT point of contact with the Inspector General (IG) and the General Accounting Office (GAO) for studies, audits, and reports concerning areas of responsibility. The office also coordinates Department-wide responses to GAO and IG report recommendations and monitors implementation of corrective actions as they pertain to areas of responsibility. The office provides expert consultant services to VA components and senior officials; ensuring adherence to legislative requirements and meeting the IT needs of the Department. In addition, the office participates on behalf of the Department in external working groups and partnerships with other Federal agencies and private industry to promote sharing above and beyond corporate boundaries.

### **OFFICE OF IT ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE MANAGEMENT**

The Office of IT Enterprise Architecture Management (OITEAM) is VA's Chief Architect. OITEAM is the principal advisor to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for IT on VA's enterprise architecture (EA), and oversees and manages the development, design, and implementation of the information technology, standards, and strategic planning policy of the Department's EA activities as required by the Clinger-Cohen Act and the information activities as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (amendment Section 508) and the Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA) of 1998. OITEAM defines and implements policy, procedures, and guidelines to ensure efficient and cost-effective EA planning, management and evaluation in support of VA's mission and objectives. The office is responsible for ensuring the EA architecture alignment and integration between IT and business processes, and for ensuring adequate funding and commitment to EA initiatives.

The office is responsible for leading the development of the EA work products and support environment. The office serves as the technology and business leader for the development organization, ensuring the integrity of the architectural development processes and the content of EA products. The office is responsible for ensuring that business unit processes are emphasized in the EA. Likewise, the office is responsible for ensuring that the EA provides the best possible policy and guidance to information technology projects and stakeholders, and that systems development efforts are properly aligned with business unit requirements and the EA.

The office serves as the program manager for the VA EA and as such has management responsibility with authority and accountability for the overall architecture. The office is responsible for veteran registration and eligibility; veteran contact management; repository management; modeling; technical standards; business alignment; gap analysis; and configuration, change, and oversight management as it pertains to VA's EA. The office is responsible for planning, staffing, and the ultimate success of the program, including acquisition of sustaining funding, negotiating schedules, timely and accurate delivery of EA products and evaluations and the establishment of a supporting environment to insure the proper application of these assets and processes. OITEAM participates on VA's IT Board (ITB) and chairs the EA Council.

The office manages, oversees, coordinates and implements Department-wide business policies for programs that support data collection and dissemination, records management and the sections of the PRA of 1980 that deals with controlling the reporting and record-keeping burden placed on the public; the Department's Electronic and IT Accessibility Program (Section 508); the Directives Management System; Web-administration (training, information posting and policies); information quality standards (Section 515, utility, objectivity, integrity and quality); the governance of electronic government and requirements of the GPEA of 1998.

The office serves as an IT point of contact with the IG and GAO for studies, audits, and reports concerning areas of responsibility. It also coordinates Department-wide responses to GAO and IG report recommendations and monitors implementation of corrective actions as they pertain to areas of responsibility. The office also provides expert consultant services to VA components and senior officials; ensuring adherence to legislative requirements and meeting the IT needs of the Department. In addition, the office participates on behalf of the Department in external working groups and partnerships with other Federal agencies and private industry to promote sharing above and beyond corporate boundaries.

### **OFFICE OF IT OPERATIONS**

The Office of IT Operations advises and assists the Deputy Assistant Secretary for IT on matters pertaining to Wide Area Network management, Local Area Network (LAN) management, facility telecommunications needs, national telecommunications policy, planning and oversight, the national delivery of telecommunications services, management and administration of VA's Federal Technology Service (FTS) programs and services, the nationwide implementation of VA and Federal telecommunications policies and directives, and management of the LAN and data center services supporting the VACO complex. The office manages and oversees these responsibilities to facilitate the effectiveness of Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration, National Cemetery Administration, and staff office operations.

The office is responsible for establishing telecommunications standards, leading the development and acquisition of effective and reliable telecommunications services to support VA goals to integrate technology and implement innovative management techniques to provide quality care and benefits. As such, the office oversees and manages the Department's voice, data and video services provisioned under the FTS contract; and provides systems management, office automation, IT day-to-day technical operations and customer desktop support for the VACO campus.

The office is responsible for establishing guidelines for Department-wide acquisition, installation, and management of telecommunications and LAN systems and services; overseeing technical support for design, engineering, and consultant services for telecommunications, LAN communications and related activities within the Department; analyzing and recommending action on proposals for the purchase or lease of telecommunications network and LAN communications equipment or systems in accordance with applicable internal and external guidance; maintaining liaison with industry and other Government agencies to keep abreast of the general policies, guidelines, procedures, and tariff regulations related to specific program areas; and developing plans, programs and budgets for the office that are properly aligned with and support VA business unit requirements.

The office serves as an IT point of contact with the IG and GAO, for studies, audits, and reports concerning the office's areas of responsibility. It also coordinates Department-wide responses to GAO and IG report recommendations and monitors implementation of corrective actions as they pertain to this office's areas of responsibility. The office also provides expert consultant services to VA components and senior officials; ensuring adherence to legislative requirements and meeting the IT needs of the Department in this program area. In addition, the office participates on behalf of the Department in external working groups and partnerships with other Federal agencies and private industry to promote sharing above and beyond corporate boundaries.

### **OFFICE OF CYBER AND INFORMATION SECURITY**

The Office of Cyber and Information Security (OCIS), VA's Chief Information Security Officer, is responsible to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for IT for all issues relating to information security in the Department. OCIS is the sole central authority in the Department for cyber security policy development and enforcement, oversight, reporting to internal and external customers, and operations of an enterprise-wide nature. OCIS is responsible for risk analysis, technology selection, acquisition, deployment and field operations, and ensures that information security policies, principles, standards, and guidelines are implemented appropriately throughout the Department. The office also provides a Central Incident Response Capability (VA-CIRC) and subordinate Network Security Operations Centers (NSOC) to manage cyber security operations.

Overall, OCIS is responsible for formulating and establishing policies and programs for VA's cyber security and privacy programs; cyber security architecture, engineering, and lab testing; cyber security operations centers and incident response; certification and accreditation; enterprise-wide acquisitions and deployments; field operations; and critical infrastructure protection. OCIS develops and coordinates Departmental policy for information security and cyber security, and manages overall planning for Department-wide security enhancement initiatives including implementation of firewalls, network intrusion detection, malicious code protection, incident response and reporting, public key infrastructure, and related technologies. It ensures compliance with the Computer Security Act of 1987 mandate to provide training in computer security awareness and accepted computer practices for all employees involved with Federal computer systems under the authority and jurisdiction of the Department.

OCIS chairs subcommittees and working groups chartered by VA's ITB to advance the Department's Information Security Program, and serves as a member of the ITB. The Office serves as the Department's single voice and liaison with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), National Security Agency (NSA), Office of Management and Budget (OMB), GAO, and VA's IG on information security.

In addition to an administrative support staff, the OCIS mission is accomplished through six services and offices that address distinct cyber security functional areas. They oversee and direct the VA cyber security privacy program that, at a minimum, ensures compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, Electronic Communications Privacy Act, COMSEC regulations, non-disclosure statutes, OMB guidance, and the GPEA; oversee and direct VA's enterprise cyber security infrastructure technology insertion program which includes planning for large-scale, enterprise cyber security infrastructure acquisitions; ensure that VA security policies, procedures, and standards are in compliance with regulatory requirements and legislated mandates governing information systems security; report for VA's annual and quarterly Federal

Information Security Management Act reports to OMB; conduct physical and electronic system and site reviews of VA information systems and facilities to ensure that remediation progress is made; promote strategies to incorporate Certification and Accreditation into the lifecycle plan of each VA system; oversee and direct the Department-wide cyber security training, education, and awareness program; ensure the development of Department-wide cyber security architecture, standards, technical procedures, and product configuration guidelines; and develop VA's cyber security critical infrastructure protection strategic plan.

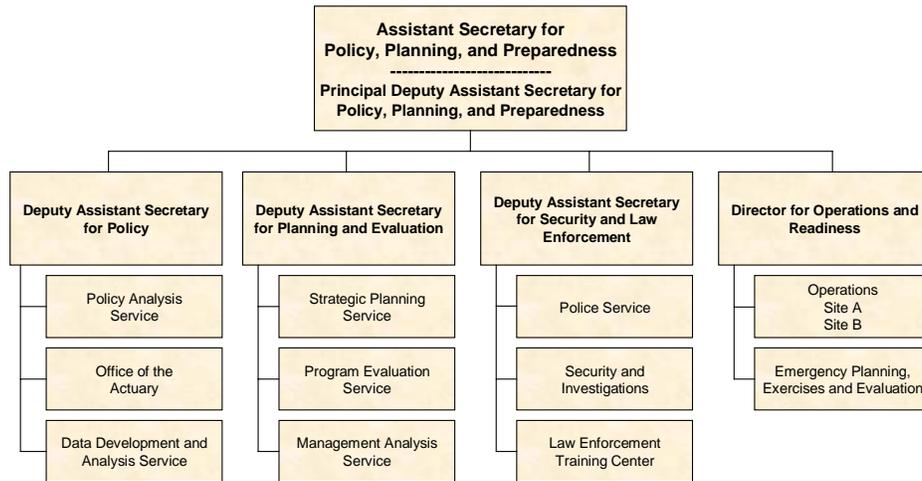
### AUSTIN AUTOMATION CENTER

Reporting to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for IT, the Austin Automation Center (AAC) supports One-VA world-class service to veterans and their families by delivering results-oriented, secure, highly-available, and cost-effective IT services. As a franchise fund entity, the AAC provides results-oriented IT services to VA and other Federal customers. AAC focuses on continuously improving service delivery, demonstrating measurable value, and providing a culture that fosters teamwork and innovation. As a corporate IT center for VA-wide general application systems, over 100 major information systems are supported for VA customers and for other Federal agency customers. The applications support mission-critical functions such as payroll, financial management, human resources, logistics, medical systems, and eligibility benefits. The AAC also offers a full complement of technical solutions to accommodate customers' varied IT e-government projects. These solutions include platform-hosting services, application management, information assurance, customer business continuity, data conversion and interfacing, configuration management, and acquisition services.

Additionally, the AAC serves as an information telecommunications hub for numerous VA facilities located Nationwide and overseas. The AAC also manages VA's Records Center and Vault (RC&V) as a Franchise Fund Enterprise Center. The RC&V operates a secure, subterranean climate-controlled facility in the Midwest, staffed by experienced archive technicians, that provides records storage, protection, and retrieval services. The RC&V also offers customized records storage solutions to other Federal agencies on a cost reimbursable basis.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *Laura McCamley, Office of Information and Technology, (202) 273-9526*

## ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POLICY, PLANNING, AND PREPAREDNESS



The Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning, and Preparedness (PP&P) oversees, on behalf of the Secretary, certain management activities and processes that require coordination across the Department or which call for the application of a broad perspective. PP&P facilitates the Department's strategic planning process and implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA); supports the development, analysis, and review of issues affecting veterans' programs; provides quantitative and actuarial analysis to the Department in support of major policy deliberations; serves as the Department's focal point for access to and availability of official data; coordinates the independent evaluation of program performance focusing on program outcomes, service quality, customer satisfaction, and management efficiencies; and fosters management improvement initiatives including competitive sourcing throughout VA.

### OFFICE OF POLICY

The Office of Policy is responsible for providing conceptual, analytical, and informational support throughout the Department. The office collaborates with program officials to identify and analyze strategic policy questions facing VA and the delivery of veterans' benefits and services. The office ensures that appropriate information and data are included in the decision-making process – providing actuarial, demographic, economic, statistical and other technical expertise to analyze policy issues for the Department. It develops data and assesses policy considerations of various proposals being considered by the Department, Administration Heads, or Staff Offices and provides recommendations to senior leadership in the decision-making process. The Office of the Actuary is responsible for developing information to address such things as long- and short-term trends in veteran population and workload. The office also provides actuarial and statistical consulting Department-wide.

### OFFICE OF PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The Office of Planning and Evaluation oversees implementation of VA's governance and strategic planning processes, which includes development of the VA's Strategic Plan and Secretary's Annual Statement. They provide conceptual, analytical, and information support to program officials, collaborating on the identification and analysis of environmental factors and strategic issues that may impact VA and its ability to deliver benefits and services to veterans and their families. They have responsibility for implementation of the Program Evaluation process required under GPRA, measuring the effectiveness of Federal programs against outcome goals and objectives. The office

also serves as the Department's internal coordinator and external liaison regarding strategic plans, management improvement initiatives, organizational assessment and transformation, quality awards, competitive sourcing, benchmarking, and best practices.

### **OFFICE OF SECURITY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT**

The Office of Security and Law Enforcement (S&LE) is responsible for making recommendations, developing policies and procedures to:

- Provide oversight to ensure that an effective level of security and protection for VA employees is maintained at VA-owned facilities through the development and implementation of relevant policies, site inspections, and guidance.
- Provide training of VA police officers.
- Provide protection for the Secretary and Deputy Secretary.
- Develop and implement an effective security program for VACO facilities, employees, and clients.
- Direct VA's firearm management program.
- Manage VA's personnel security and investigations program.
- Develop an effective working relationship with VA's Office of Inspector General, and other law enforcement entities.

S&LE executes these functions through three units: Police Service, Security & Investigations, and the Law Enforcement Training Academy. Security & Investigations and the Law Enforcement Training Academy (located in Little Rock, Arkansas) are enterprise activities. Their budget and staffing levels are based on the revenue generated by reimbursable services that they provide.

### **OFFICE OF OPERATIONS AND READINESS**

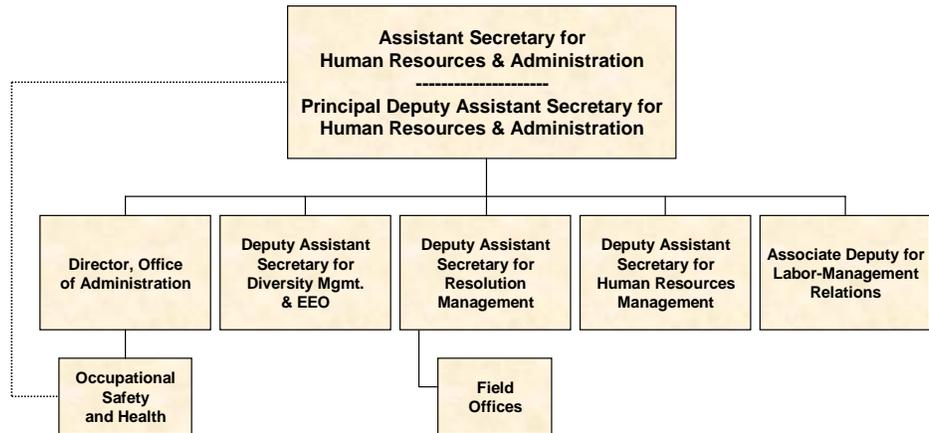
The Office of Operations and Readiness (O&R) is responsible for:

- Developing and managing VA policies and directives relating to emergency preparedness, Continuity of Operations Plan, Continuity of Government, homeland security, and related national security issues.
- Developing, implementing, and evaluating preparedness training, exercises, and program evaluations.
- Coordinating and developing VA's emergency preparedness and crisis response activities agency-wide, and in coordination with other Federal, State, local agencies, and relief organizations.
- Developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with DoD, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and other Federal agencies.

- Representing VA on DoD, DHS, FEMA, HHS, Centers for Disease Control, and other inter-agency committees and work groups.
- Ensuring VA's ability to execute emergency responses and DoD support contingencies with minimal disruption to on-going services to veterans and their families.
- Establishing a liaison with DoD to coordinate contingency and emergency planning.
- Coordinating the planning and execution of a comprehensive education, training, and exercise program to ensure all personnel are trained in emergency response plans and procedures.
- Exercising and evaluating emergency preparedness plans throughout VA.
- Managing, directing, and ensuring the immediate readiness and staffing of VA's Readiness Operations Centers.
- Developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) Emergency Management Strategic Healthcare Group in order to:
  - ✓ Expand contingency planning efforts to ensure the designated Primary Receiving Centers can provide the full range of tertiary care for military casualties, and, as necessary, meet civilian disaster contingencies.
  - ✓ Develop and monitor the implementation of procedures to ensure local VA medical facilities have the ability to detect and measure CBR agents and decontaminate, triage and treat patients and personnel who may be exposed.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *Christy Fick, Office of Policy, Planning, and Preparedness, (202) 273-5032*

## ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HUMAN RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION



The Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration (HR&A) provides direction and oversight to five major program areas headed by the Deputy Assistant Secretaries for Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity, Human Resources Management, Resolution Management, the Associate Deputy for Labor-Management Relations, and the Director, Office of Administration. With the assistance of these officials, the Assistant Secretary is responsible for directing both policy and operational functions in these program areas. The Assistant Secretary serves as the Department's Designated Agency Safety and Health Official and is responsible for administration of the Occupational Safety and Health and Workers' Compensation programs.

### OFFICE OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Office of Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity (DM&EEO) advises and supports the Assistant Secretary for HR&A in workforce diversity issues. The office also supports the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Under Secretaries, and Assistant Secretaries in their commitment to achieve and sustain a diverse workforce.

DM&EEO works proactively to enhance the employment of women, minorities, veterans, and persons with disabilities through the following:

- Leadership in diversity and affirmative employment policy.
- National Special Emphasis Programs.
- Diversity training and education.
- Workforce analysis and evaluation.
- Internship programs and partnerships.
- Electronic diversity tools and publications.

Our vision is an environment that fosters respect, fairness, and an opportunity for all employees.

## OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION

The Office of Administration provides a wide range of support services, primarily to VACO. Local services include VACO human resource (HR) functions of employment, compensation, employee relations, benefits, career transition, and career development; and the operation of the VACO building as well as administrative support to all VACO employees in satellite locations. Nationwide, the Office of Administration provides guidance and assistance to facilities in their audiovisual needs, the implementation of the transit benefit program, the processing of executive correspondence (White House bulk mail), protocol matters affecting the Department, and administration of the Occupational Safety and Health and Workers' Compensation programs.

The office serves as Departmental liaison with the National Audio Visual Center and with General Services Administration concerning space acquisition, telephone, and other support functions within the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. The office manages the VACO space inventory, and is responsible for alterations and renovation projects, and serves as the facility site manager for seven Washington area locations. It provides the full range of facilities management services to the U.S. Kids Child Development Center.

## OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The Office of Human Resources Management (HRM) is responsible for advising and assisting the Secretary and other top VACO and field officials to meet the established mission, goals, and objectives of the Department through a strategically aligned and customer-focused HRM program.

HRM meets the Department's strategic needs by focusing on policy development, workforce planning initiatives, human resources development, legislative changes, and civil service reform. This includes the fundamental human resources functions of staffing (recruitment and retention), classification, compensation, executive resources, workforce planning, employee relations, employee work life and benefits, career transition, and development within the human resources community.

The functions of HRM include liaison with the Office of Personnel Management as well as representing the Department before Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, and other Federal agencies on human resources issues.

## OFFICE OF RESOLUTION MANAGEMENT

The Office of Resolution Management (ORM) provides Equal Employment Opportunity discrimination complaint processing services to VA employees, applicants for employment, and former employees. Complaint processing services include counseling, mediation, investigation, and procedural final agency determinations. ORM also provides compliance oversight functions on the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication final agency decisions, appellate Equal Employment Opportunity Commission decisions, and matters relating to settlement agreements, including breaches. ORM accomplishes these responsibilities through a nationwide network of seven field offices.

To meet Departmental goals, ORM has successfully undertaken significant initiatives designed to resolve workplace disputes at the earliest possible stage. Resources are devoted to examining how VA is currently using Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) techniques, providing ADR awareness and mediation training programs, and assisting VA facilities with establishing effective ADR programs. This is accomplished by working with all elements of VA to promote the use of ADR in resolving conflicts in the workplace.

Since most complaints of discrimination do not result in findings of discrimination, ORM has developed *Root Cause Analyses* information to determine some of the underlying reasons complaints are made if discrimination is not a factor. These issues range from unequal or inconsistent application of rules and regulations to differences in value systems. This information is routinely made available to VA management as a resource for identifying and evaluating issues that can result in workplace disputes.

ORM has also deployed the Organizational Climate Assessment Program that analyses employee perspectives of the work environment. By identifying what employees say drives their job satisfaction and how VA facilities are doing in these areas, the program can provide VA leadership with a tool designed to address issues that dramatically impact employee satisfaction and ultimately, service to veterans.

In addition, ORM has oversight responsibility for the Department's external Civil Rights Program, which carries out compliance and enforcement activities in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

### OFFICE OF LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

The Office of Labor-Management Relations (LMR) is responsible for promoting labor-management cooperation throughout the Department to enable VA's unions and management officials to work together in improving the delivery of service to veterans and their families and in creating a positive work environment for employees.

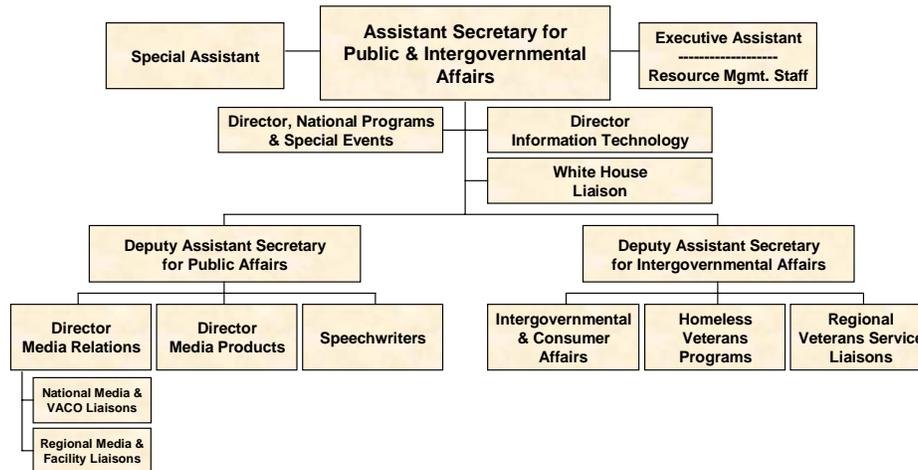
LMR is responsible for promulgating labor-management relations policy and programs for the Department. This includes providing leadership, involvement, and support for establishing and maintaining collaborative labor-management relationships at appropriate levels in the Department; providing guidance and support for conducting labor-management negotiations; providing contact interpretation guidance over national agreement provisions, and providing help in resolving contract disputes.

LMR also provides training to include contract interpretation and implementation, rights and responsibilities under the labor statute, pre-decisional involvement, joint problem solving, and dispute resolution.

Finally, LMR ensures that labor-management goals and objectives are linked to the Department's Strategic Plan and that measures are developed to evaluate the effectiveness of the labor relations program as it relates to the mission of improving services and creating a positive work environment for employees.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *Suzanne Campbell, Office of Human Resources and Administration,  
(202) 273-5355.*

## ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS



The Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs (P&IA) provides executive management of the Offices of P&IA. Such management comprises coordination of the information VA communicates to its various audiences, especially to the general public through the news media, and the provision of policy guidance in public affairs. The Assistant Secretary serves as the principal communications advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary as well as the spokesperson for the Department. The Assistant Secretary also manages and directs the Department's intergovernmental, international and consumer affairs, and homeless veterans programs. The office supports veteran-specific interest groups, memorial and commemorative special events, the national rehabilitative programs and other activities designed to meet the needs of several audiences – first and foremost, veterans.

### OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) serves as the Department's centralized communications organization, providing a range of public information products and public affairs counsel to VACO management and field facilities. OPA implements and encourages regular contact with news services, newspapers, and radio and television outlets. Routine public affairs activities include preparing news releases, broadcast announcements, and public service materials. Other services include providing the media with information on VA issues and programs, answering questions, clarifying VA policy, providing information on veterans benefits, developing VA news stories, keeping employees informed, and creating a better understanding of VA among the general public.

OPA produces information materials to help broaden understanding and awareness of the Department's broad range of activities among internal audiences, veterans, and other stakeholder groups. These include the employee magazine *Vanguard*; a weekly news program, *VA News*, broadcast to all VA facilities; the video news magazine *VA Report*; daily e-mail broadcasts to all employees; the annual publication *Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents*; and a series of topical background packages on VA issues of interest.

OPA staff located in VACO direct the preparation and dissemination of information on VA benefits, services, and accomplishments, as well as guidance for VA facilities on emerging issues, with the support of seven OPA regional offices that also serve as public affairs advisors to VA facilities.

## OFFICE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA) is the principal advisor to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary for P&IA, and other Department officials on developing and maintaining VA's relationship with governors, State legislators, mayors and other State officials; advising VA's senior leadership of State interest in VA policy, program development, and implementation; and ensuring that State and local governmental officials receive pertinent and timely information about VA programs and policy issues. IGA staff supports VA's mission through programs supporting intergovernmental, international, consumer affairs, and homeless veterans programs.

The Consumer Affairs Service serves as the Central Office advocate for veterans and their organizations; provides customer consultation services for patient representative and consumer affairs programs at VA field locations, resolves consumer complaints, both individual and organizational; provides recognition for customer compliments; and answers queries and comments from VA's internet Web page, e-mails, letters, phones and faxes.

The International Affairs Service develops, manages and coordinates department-wide programs involving foreign governments, organizations and citizens.

The Homeless Veterans Program Office (HVPO) is the principal advisor to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary for P&IA and other senior Department officials on homeless issues and coordinates all internal and external activities related to the care and service for homeless veterans. The office coordinates the more than decade long department-wide Homeless Working Group; serves as the Departmental liaison to the U.S. Interagency Council on the Homeless. Oversees the Faith-based and Community Initiatives Program, the Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans, VA's outreach through Stand Downs and the Multi-Family Housing Loan Guarantee for Homeless Veterans.

The Regional Veterans Service Liaison Office has the responsibility for presenting information and guidance to enhance relationships with State, county, municipalities, and veterans service organizations. They serve as the Secretary's representative with these organizations in order to provide a direct and open communication channel to grassroots organizations who serve veterans. They ensure that the intent of proposed and existing VA programs, policies, or other initiatives are fully understood. They provide timely feedback and assessments and projections of these groups' reactions.

## OFFICE OF NATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

This office was established to further VA's service to veterans through the management and enhancement of all of the Department's memorial, commemorative and rehabilitative national programs and special events. This office sets the standards and creates the strategic plan to coordinate events such as Veterans Day, Memorial Day, the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, the National Veterans Golden Age Games, and the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. The staff is charged with establishing, developing and strengthening partnerships with Federal, State and local agencies, veterans service organizations, and other veterans special interest groups concerned with serving and honoring veterans through these national special events.

### OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

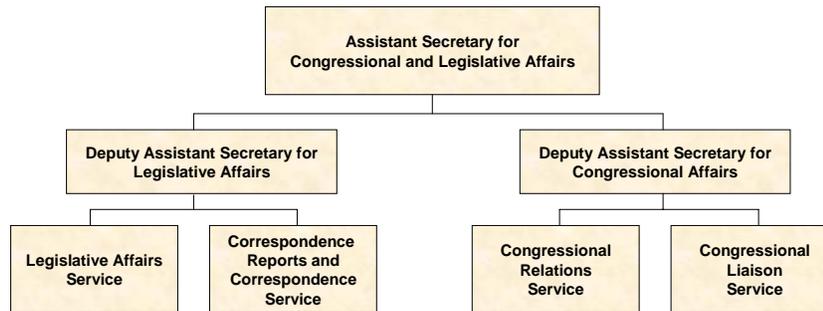
The Office of Information Technology serves as principal advisor to the Assistant Secretary for P&IA on matters pertaining to information technology and the organization's Website. The office develops and/or participates in the development, communication, implementation and evaluation of policies, plans, guidance and initiatives which directly affect efficient utilization of the organization's information resources.

### OFFICE OF WHITE HOUSE LIAISON

The White House Liaison is the principal advisor to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and the Assistant Secretary for P&IA on the placement of top-level non-career appointments in VA. This office serves as the Department's Committee Management Office for VA's advisory committees and is responsible for providing clear goals, standards, and uniform procedures with respect to the creation and operation of the advisory committees.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** *Karla Pringle, Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs,  
(202) 273-5754.*

## ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CONGRESSIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS



The Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs serves as the principal advisor to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and other Department officials concerning all legislative and congressional affairs matters. The Assistant Secretary develops positive, cooperative relationships with Members of Congress and congressional committees and staff in order to accomplish the Department's goal of serving America's veterans.

### OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

The Office of Legislative Affairs provides support and assistance to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and other Department officials with respect to specific legislative activity and is responsible for monitoring the status of pending legislation affecting VA; developing the annual legislative program; managing congressional legislative hearings; overseeing VA's compliance with issuing congressionally mandated reports; serving as a liaison with the General Accounting Office; coordinating congressional notifications on grants, regulations, awards, and other noteworthy issues; and managing the office's congressional correspondence review function.

### OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS

The Office of Congressional Affairs is responsible for advising the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and other Department officials on developing and maintaining VA's relationship with Members of Congress and congressional committees, advising VA's senior leadership of congressional interest in VA policy and program development and implementation, managing congressional oversight and confirmation hearings, and ensuring that Congress receives pertinent and timely information about VA programs and policy issues. In addition, two satellite offices located in the Hart Senate Office Building and the Rayburn House Office Building provide constituent casework and related services, allowing for direct, face-to-face contact with Members of Congress and their staffs.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Susan Theroux, Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, (202) 273-5628.