

8. BURIAL BENEFITS

VA's National Cemetery Administration's memorial-related programs honor veterans with a final resting place and lasting memorials that commemorate their service to our Nation. Veteran burial benefits include a gravesite in any of the national cemeteries that have space available, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care of the gravesite, a government headstone or marker, a grave liner for casketed remains, a burial flag¹, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate at no cost to the family.

As of September 30, 2002, the National Cemetery Administration maintained more than 2.5 million gravesites at 120 national cemeteries in 39 states and Puerto Rico as well as 33 soldier's lots and monument sites. In addition, more than 325,000 full-casket gravesites, 68,000 in-ground gravesites for cremated remains, and 35,900 columbarium niches are currently available. Approximately 13,900 acres of land lie within established National Cemetery Administration installations. Just over half are undeveloped and have the potential to provide more than 3.4 million gravesites.

In FY 2002, the National Cemetery Administration provided for more than 89,000 interments, and supplied more than 348,000 headstones and markers. In addition approximately 289,000 Presidential Memorial Certificates were delivered to the family members, friends, and loved ones of deceased veterans.

This chapter describes NSV results related to VA burial benefits. This module of the survey contained nine items. These nine items asked the veteran whether he or she had heard of specific burial benefit programs (VA headstones and markers, burial in a National or State Veterans' Cemetery, Presidential Memorial Certificates for next of kin), and collected information on veteran burial plans and preferences. These items also collected veteran reasons for wanting/not wanting to be buried in a veterans' cemetery, and asked whether the veteran intended to use a VA-provided headstone or marker. Similar to other survey modules the "Burial Benefits" module collected information on how well the veteran understood VA burial benefits and how difficult the veteran thought it would be to obtain information about these benefits.

¹ Burial flags are provided by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)

8.1 Veteran Awareness of Burial Benefit Entitlements

Table 8-1 summarizes veteran awareness of the three VA burial benefits. The program for which veterans indicate the most awareness is burial in a national or state Veterans' Cemetery, followed by VA headstones and burial markers in private cemeteries, and Presidential Memorial Certificates for next of kin of deceased veterans.

Table 8-1. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran awareness of veteran burial benefits

	Total
Burial in a national or state Veterans' Cemetery	58.8
VA headstones and burial markers in private cemeteries	44.2
Presidential Memorial Certificates for next of kin of deceased veterans	13.3
Number of veterans†	25,196,000

† Estimate of number of veterans is rounded to the nearest hundred; percent estimates will not sum to 100 because veterans could indicate more than one benefit.

Tables 8-2 through 8-4 provide data on veteran awareness of VA burial programs by gender, ethnicity and race. This ordering of awareness remains the same regardless of veteran gender, ethnicity, or race.

Table 8-2. Percent distribution of veterans by awareness of VA Memorial Affairs programs and gender

	Total	Males	Females
Burial in a national or state Veterans' Cemetery	58.8	58.5	63.4
VA headstones and burial markers in private cemeteries	44.2	44.1	46.0
Presidential Memorial Certificates for next-of-kin of deceased veterans	13.3	13.2	14.4
Number of veterans†	25,196,000	23,712,400	1,483,600

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred; percent estimates will not sum to 100 because veterans could indicate more than one benefit.

Table 8-3. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran awareness of veteran burial benefits and race

	Total	One race						Two or more races		Race unknown
		Total one race	White	Black or African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Total two or more races	American Indian or Alaska Native/White	
VA headstones and burial markers in private cemeteries	44.2	44.4	44.7	42.4	39.0	38.8	40.8*	44.5	43.5	38.8
Burial in a national or state Veterans Cemetery	58.8	58.8	59.2	56.7	45.7	55.0	58.1*	59.8	59.1	57.1
Presidential Memorial Certificates for next of kin of deceased veterans	13.3	13.2	12.8	16.3	16.2	17.9	14.1*	15.8	12.3	13.6
Number of veterans†	25,196,000	23,857,100	21,370,900	2,216,600	159,900	73,200	36,500	557,500	360,800	781,400

*Low precision and/or sample size for the denominator between 30 and 59.

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred; percent estimates will not sum to 100 because veterans could indicate more than one benefit.

Table 8-4. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran awareness of veteran burial benefits and ethnicity

	Total	Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino	Not Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino
Burial in a national or state Veterans Cemetery	58.8	56.8	58.8
VA headstones and burial markers in private cemeteries	44.2	36.1	44.6
Presidential Memorial Certificates for next-of-kin of deceased veterans	13.3	13.5	13.3
Number of veterans†	25,196,000	1,122,200	23,990,200

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred; the total estimate is larger than the sum of the groups because some veterans did not provide their Ethnicity; percent estimates will not sum to 100 because veterans could indicate more than one benefit.

Table 8-5 summarizes veteran awareness of VA burial programs by age. A greater percentage of older veterans than younger veterans indicate an awareness of burial in a national or state Veterans' Cemetery, and VA headstones and burial markers in private cemeteries.

Table 8-5. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran awareness of veteran burial benefits and age

	Total	Less than 35 years	35 - 44 years	45 - 54 years	55 - 64 years	65 - 74 years	75 years or older
Burial in a national or state Veterans' Cemetery	58.8	47.2	52.1	58.9	58.9	62.9	64.7
VA headstones and burial markers in private cemeteries	44.2	29.9	35.6	43.0	40.9	50.6	55.7
Presidential Memorial Certificates for next of kin of deceased veterans	13.3	13.2	13.4	12.5	11.4	14.6	15.0
Number of veterans†	25,196,000	2,288,600	3,030,300	5,415,100	4,946,000	5,256,400	4,116,100

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred; the total estimate is larger than the sum of the groups because some veterans did not provide their age; percent estimates will not sum to 100 because veterans could indicate more than one benefit.

8.2 Veteran Burial Plans

The survey also asked veterans about their burial plans in terms of the type of burial (i.e., in-ground casket burial, cremation, or some other plan). Table 8-6 summarizes veteran burial plans in terms of all veterans as well as by gender. In general, at a rate of approximately 2 to 1 over cremation, most veterans indicate plans for an in-ground casket burial. About 7 percent of veterans remain undecided about their burial plans, and nearly 3 percent indicated that they have made other plans.

Table 8-6. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran burial plans and gender

	Total	Males	Females
In-ground casket burial	59.8	60.2	53.0
Cremation	30.3	29.8	38.5
Undecided	6.6	6.7	5.1
Some other plan	2.7	2.7	2.7
Unknown	0.6	0.6	0.7*
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans†	25,196,000	23,712,400	1,483,600

* Low precision and/or sample size for the denominator between 30 and 59.

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred.

When comparing male veterans to female veterans, a slightly higher percentage of male veterans indicate plans for an in-ground casket burial than female veterans. A slightly higher percentage of female veterans indicate plans for cremation than male veterans.

Table 8-7 examines veteran burial plans by race. Except for Asian veterans, the general veteran preference is for an in-ground casket burial. Black/African American veterans indicated plans for an in-ground casket burial at a rate of approximately 5.6 to 1 over cremation. About an equal number of Asian veterans indicated an in-ground casket burial as indicated cremation. When compared to the other racial groups, a higher percentage of Asian veterans indicated that they are presently undecided about their burial plans.

Table 8-8 summarizes veteran burial plans by ethnicity. Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino veterans indicated plans for an in-ground casket burial at a rate of about 2.6 to 1 over cremation. This rate is slightly higher than that of non-Spanish, Hispanic or Latino veterans who indicated plans for an in-ground casket burial at a rate of about 2 to 1 over cremation

Veteran burial plans by age group are summarized in Table 8-9. Veteran age and burial plans do not appear to be strongly correlated.

Table 8-7. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran burial plans and race

	Total	One race						Two or more races		Race unknown
		Total one race	White	Black or African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Total two or more races	American Indian or Alaska Native/White	
In-ground casket burial	59.8	59.8	57.9	78.0	57.3	39.7	64.7*	52.5	48.7	65.4
Cremation	30.3	30.6	32.2	13.8	35.9	44.9	25.2*	35.3	38.9	19.9
Undecided	6.6	6.4	6.5	6.0	4.6*	13.3*	7.2*	6.6	7.4	9.9
Some other plan	2.7	2.6	2.8	1.6	2.2*	1.0*	2.9*	4.6	4.4	2.8
Unknown	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6*	0.0	1.1*	0.0*	1.0*	0.6*	2.0*
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans†	25,196,000	23,857,100	21,370,900	2,216,600	159,900	73,200	36,500	557,500	360,800	781,400

* Low precision and/or sample size for the denominator between 30 and 59.

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Table 8-8. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran burial plans and ethnicity

	Total	Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	Not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino
In-ground casket burial	59.8	63.3	59.6
Cremation	30.3	24.2	30.7
Undecided	6.6	9.1	6.4
Some other plan	2.7	2.7*	2.7
Unknown	0.6	0.7*	0.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans†	25,196,000	1,122,200	23,990,200

* Low precision and/or sample size for the denominator between 30 and 59.

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred; the total estimate is larger than the sum of the groups because some veterans did not provide their Ethnicity.

Table 8-9. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran burial plans and age group

	Total	Less than 35 years	35 - 44 years	45 - 54 years	55 - 64 years	65 - 74 years	75 years or older
In-ground casket burial	59.8	62.8	57.8	58.0	56.7	62.9	61.7
Cremation	30.3	26.7	31.2	32.6	33.4	27.6	28.8
Undecided	6.6	7.3	7.5	6.5	7.4	5.8	5.3
Some other plan	2.7	2.3	2.8	2.2	2.1	3.1	3.5
Unknown	0.6	0.9*	0.7	0.7	0.4*	0.6	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans†	25,196,000	2,288,600	3,030,300	5,415,100	4,946,000	5,256,400	4,116,100

* Low precision and/or sample size for the denominator between 30 and 59.

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred; the total estimate is larger than the sum of the groups because some veterans did not provide their age.

8.2.1 Disposition of Cremated Remains for Veterans Indicating Cremation as a Burial Plan

Those veterans who indicated cremation as a burial plan were also asked what they planned to have done with their cremated remains (i.e., placed in a columbarium, buried, scattered, or something else). Table 8-10 indicates that nearly two-thirds of these veterans said that they planned to have their cremated remains scattered. This finding is true of male veterans as well as female veterans.

Table 8-10. Percent distribution of veterans by disposition of cremated remains and gender for veterans indicating cremation as a burial plan

	Total	Males	Females
Placed in a Columbarium	7.4	7.7	5.7
Buried	18.8	18.9	18.4
Scattered	64.7	64.6	65.7
Some Other Arrangement	9.0	8.9	10.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans†	7,803,200	7,222,300	580,900

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Table 8-11 indicates that a greater percentage of younger veterans than older veterans plan to have cremation cremated remains scattered.

Table 8-11. Percent distribution of veterans by disposition of cremated remains and age for veterans indicating cremation as a burial plan

	Total	Less than 35 Years	35 - 44 Years	45 - 54 Years	55 - 64 Years	65 - 74 Years	75 Years or Older
Placed in a columbarium	7.5	2.5	7.0	6.5	6.0	10.0	11.3
Buried	18.8	6.0	10.5	13.0	18.4	23.4	36.7
Scattered	64.7	84.0	72.3	72.6	67.3	55.7	43.5
Some other arrangement	9.0	7.5	10.2	7.9	8.3	10.9	8.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans†	7,803,200	628,000	965,800	1,802,000	1,650,600	1,481,500	1,214,400

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred; the total estimate is larger than the sum of the groups because some veterans did not provide their age.

8.2.2 Burial in a National or State Veterans' Cemetery

The survey included the question, “Do you think you will be buried in either a national or state Veterans’ Cemetery?” Table 8-12 tabulates responses for all veterans and includes information in terms of those veterans who indicated that they were aware of this burial benefit and those who were not.

Table 8-12. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran plans for burial in a national or state Veterans' Cemetery and veteran awareness of burial benefit

	All veterans	Veterans aware of burial benefit	Veterans not aware of burial benefit
Yes	14.1	18.7	7.4
No	55.3	52.8	59.0
Undecided	10.0	8.5	12.0
N/A	20.6	20.0	21.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans†	25,196,000	14,812,500	10,272,300

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred.

NOTE: N/A are Veterans who have indicated cremation and that cremated remains will NOT be buried or placed in a columbarium

About 14 percent of all veterans reported that they plan to be buried in either a national or state Veterans' Cemetery. Veterans who are aware of this burial program are about 2.5 times more likely to indicate plans to be buried in either a national or state Veterans' Cemetery than are veterans who are not aware of this program. This may indicate the effectiveness of VA information and awareness programs on burial plans.

When veterans who are planning cremation and indicating plans to have their cremated remains scattered are removed from the analysis, the percentage of veterans planning burial in either a national or state Veterans' Cemetery increases to nearly 18 percent (Table 8-13).

Table 8-13. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran plans for burial in a national or state Veterans' Cemetery and veteran awareness of burial benefits for veterans not planning to have their cremated remains scattered

	All veterans	Veterans aware of burial benefits*	Veterans not aware of burial benefits
Yes	17.7	23.4	9.4
No	69.7	66.0	75.3
Undecided	12.6	10.6	15.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans†	20,001,200	11,852,700	8,056,500

* Veterans indicating an awareness of at least one of the three burial benefits

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred.

NOTE: This table only includes responses of those who indicated they were not planning to have their cremated remains scattered after cremation.

Reasons for Wanting/Not Wanting to be Buried in a National or State Veterans’ Cemetery. As a follow-up to the question, “Do you think you will be buried in either a national or state Veterans’ Cemetery,” veterans responding with a “Yes” or a “No” are asked to clarify their response by giving the main reasons for their answer. Veterans were able to provide an unprompted free response to this question, and multiple reasons were permitted. These responses were recorded in several pre-established categorical responses for each item.

Reasons for Wanting to be Buried in a National or State Veterans’ Cemetery. Table 8-14 provides the tabulations of reasons provided by veterans for wanting to be buried in either a national or state Veterans’ Cemetery. Table 8-14 also lists the pre-established categories for recording the veteran responses. The most mentioned reason given for wanting to be buried in either a national or state Veterans’ Cemetery was “honor of burial in a National Shrine.” It was mentioned by 47.2 percent of the veterans. “Cost” was the next most mentioned reason at 26.9 percent, followed by “friends or family buried there” (16.9 percent). “Quality of services” was only mentioned by 10 percent of the veterans.

Table 8-14. Percent distribution of veterans by main reasons given for wanting burial in a national or state Veterans’ Cemetery

	Total
The honor of burial in a national shrine	47.2
Cost	26.9
Friends or family buried there	16.9
Quality of services	10.0
Some other reason	23.4
Number of veterans†	3,545,600

† Estimate of number of veterans is rounded to the nearest hundred; percent estimates will not sum to 100 because veterans could indicate more than one reason.

NOTE: This table only includes responses of those who indicated they were planning to be buried in a national or state veterans cemetery.

Reasons for Not Wanting to be Buried in a National or State Veterans’ Cemetery. Table 8-15 summarizes veterans’ reasons for not wanting to be buried in either a national or state Veterans’ Cemetery. The most mentioned reason given for not wanting to be buried in either a national or state Veterans’ Cemetery was “wanted location close to other family members.” It was mentioned by 44.6 percent of the veterans. “Made other arrangements” was the next most mentioned reason at 41.2 percent. Remaining reasons were mentioned by less than 10 percent of the veterans.

Table 8-15. Percent distribution of veterans by main reasons given for not wanting burial in a national or state Veterans' Cemetery

	Total
Wanted location close to other family members	44.6
Made other arrangements	41.2
Didn't know eligibility criteria	8.6
Veterans' cemetery too far away	6.6
Didn't know how to make arrangements with VA	2.4
VA services don't accommodate religious preferences	0.7
Too difficult to make arrangements with VA	0.6
Wanted services that weren't available at Veterans' cemetery	0.3
Quality of service	0.2
Unable to make advance arrangements with VA	0.2
Some other reason	15.5
Number of veterans†	13,933,000

† Estimate of number of veterans is rounded to the nearest hundred; percent estimates will not sum to 100 because veterans could indicate more than one reason.

NOTE: This table only includes responses of those who indicated they were not planning to be buried in a national or state Veterans' Cemetery.

8.2.3 Veteran Plans for Use of a VA-provided Headstone or Marker

Table 8-16 tabulates responses to the item, "Do you think you will have your burial place marked by a headstone or marker provided by the VA?" These responses are tabulated first for all veterans and then in terms of those veterans who indicated that they were aware of this burial benefit and those who were not.

Table 8-16. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran plans for use of a VA-provided headstone or marker and veteran awareness of burial benefit

	All veterans	Veterans aware of burial benefit	Veterans not aware of burial benefit
Yes	33.5	44.9	24.5
No	29.7	24.8	33.6
Undecided	16.2	12.5	19.0
N/A	20.6	17.8	22.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans†	25,196,000	11,140,300	13,959,500

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred.

NOTE: N/A are Veterans who have indicated cremation and that cremated remains will NOT be buried.

As shown in Table 8-16, about 33 percent of all veterans indicate plans to have their burial place marked by a headstone or marker provided by VA. Veterans who are aware of this burial program are about 1.8 times more likely to indicate their intent to use it than are veterans who are not aware of this program; an indication perhaps of the effectiveness of VA information and awareness programs on burial plans.

When the data are tabulated just for the population of possible users (i.e., veterans not planning to have their cremated remains scattered), the percentage of veterans planning to have their burial place marked by a headstone or marker provided by the VA increases to 42.2 percent. About 20 percent of the veterans who could be considered possible users of this benefit indicate that they are undecided about whether or not they would use this benefit (Table 8-17).

Table 8-17. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran plans for use of a VA-provided headstone or marker and veteran awareness of burial benefits for veterans not planning to have their cremated remains scattered

	All veterans	Veterans aware of burial benefit	Veterans not aware of burial benefit
Yes	42.2	54.6	31.8
No	37.4	30.2	43.5
Undecided	20.4	15.2	24.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans†	20,001,200	9,153,200	10,763,200

† Estimate of number of veterans is rounded to the nearest hundred; the total estimate is larger than the sum of the groups because some veterans either refused or did not know the answer to the question about awareness of the benefit.

NOTE: This table only includes responses from those who indicated they were not planning to have their cremated remains scattered after cremation.

Reasons for Not Planning to Use a VA-provided Headstone or Marker

As a follow-up to the question “Do you think you will have your burial place marked by a headstone or marker provided by the VA?” veterans responding with a “No” were asked to clarify their response by giving their main reasons for not planning to use this particular benefit.

Table 8-18 indicates that approximately 42 percent of veterans who indicated that they would not use this benefit reported that they had “made other arrangements” as a reason for not planning to mark their burial place with a headstone or marker provided by VA.

Table 8-18. Percent distribution of veterans by main reasons given for not planning to use a VA-provided headstone or marker

	Total
Made other arrangements	42.3
Didn't know about markers and headstones for veterans	35.9
Want headstone similar to other family members	13.7
Doesn't like VA markers or headstones	4.0
Number of veterans†	7,486,100

† Estimate of number of veterans is rounded to the nearest hundred; percent estimates will not sum to 100 because veterans could indicate more than one reason.

NOTE: This table only includes responses from those who indicated they were not planning to use a VA-provided headstone or marker.

About 36 percent of these veterans indicated that they “didn’t know about markers and headstones for veterans” as a reason for not planning to mark their burial place with a VA-provided headstone or marker.

8.3 Understanding Veteran Burial Benefits

As a measure of their understanding of their burial benefits, veterans were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement, “I thoroughly understand the veteran benefits available to me.” The response scale is a 5-point “Strongly agree” through “Strongly disagree” scale with a mid-point of “Neither agree nor disagree.”

Table 8-19 summarizes responses to the item measuring veteran understanding of burial benefits. This table includes data for veterans who indicated that they were aware of their burial benefits (i.e., aware of at least one of the three programs), as well as data for veterans who did not indicate an awareness of any VA burial benefits.

Table 8-19. Percent distribution of veterans by veteran understanding of veteran burial benefits and veteran awareness of burial benefits

	All veterans	Veterans aware of burial benefits*	Veterans not aware of burial benefits
Strongly agree	6.3	8.4	1.9
Agree	26.7	34.8	10.6
Neither agree nor disagree	17.2	18.4	14.9
Disagree	26.9	24.3	32.1
Strongly disagree	18.3	10.3	34.4
Did not answer or did not know	4.6	3.8	6.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans†	25,196,000	16,820,700	8,375,400

* Veterans indicating an awareness of at least one of the three burial benefits.

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred.

About 33 percent of veterans reported that they thoroughly understand (“strongly agree” or “agree”) the veteran burial benefits available to them, while 45 percent indicated that they do not thoroughly understand (“disagree” or “strongly disagree”) the veteran burial benefits available to them. As would be expected, veterans aware of these programs are more likely to understand them. This is a possible indication that VA burial benefit awareness programs are also informative.

8.3.1 Ease or Difficulty in Obtaining Information about Veteran Burial Benefits

As a measure of the veteran’s perception about how easy or difficult it would be to obtain information about veteran burial benefits, the veteran is asked, “If your family needed to get information about veteran burial benefits, how easy or difficult do you think it would be for them to find it?” The response scale is a 5-point “very easy” through “very difficult” scale with a mid-point of “neither easy nor difficult.”

Table 8-20 provides the responses to the item measuring a veteran’s perception of the ease or difficulty of obtaining burial benefits information. In addition to tabulations for all veterans, Table 8-20 includes data for veterans who indicated that they were aware of their burial benefits (i.e., aware of at least one of the three programs), and data for veterans who did not indicate an awareness of any VA burial benefits.

Table 8-20. Percent distribution of veterans by ability to obtain information about veteran burial benefits and veteran awareness of burial benefits

	All veterans	Veterans aware of burial benefits*	Veterans not aware of burial benefits
Very easy	11.6	14.8	5.3
Easy	33.7	38.8	23.4
Neither easy nor difficult	11.8	11.8	11.9
Difficult	27.2	23.2	35.2
Very difficult	11.7	8.0	19.0
Did not answer or did not know	4.0	3.4	5.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans†	25,196,000	16,820,700	8,375,400

* Veterans indicating an awareness of at least one of the three burial benefits.

† Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred

About 45 percent of all veterans indicated that they thought it would be easy or very easy to obtain information about veteran burial programs, while approximately 39 percent indicated that they thought it would be difficult to very difficult to obtain information about veteran burial benefits. This finding does not seem to be influenced by veteran awareness of VA burial programs. Slightly more than one half (53.6 percent) of the veterans who indicated an awareness of veteran burial programs also reported that they thought it would be easy or very easy to obtain information about veteran burial benefits. About an equal proportion (54.2 percent) of the veterans who did not indicate an awareness of veteran burial programs also indicated that they thought it would be difficult to very difficult to obtain information about veteran burial benefits. The finding regarding the ease of difficulty in obtaining VA burial information is probably more influenced by the fact that older veterans seem to be more confident that it would be easy to very easy to obtain information about burial benefits than younger veterans (Table 8-21), and older veterans represent a greater proportion of the veteran population.

Table 8-21. Percent distribution of veterans by ability to obtain information about veteran burial benefits and age group

	All veterans	Less than 35 years	35 - 44 years	45 - 54 years	55 - 64 years	65 - 74 years	75 years or older
Very easy	11.6	7.8	9.5	10.5	11.0	14.3	14.3
Easy	33.7	26.2	26.3	31.6	32.9	38.1	41.7
Neither easy nor difficult	11.8	18.4	15.3	13.8	12.4	8.4	6.8
Difficult	27.2	31.2	30.4	29.2	27.0	25.3	22.5
Very difficult	11.7	15.2	16.5	12.9	13.4	8.5	6.2
Did not answer or did not know	4.0	1.2	2.0	2.2	3.3	5.4	8.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of veterans [†]	25,196,000	2,288,600	3,030,300	5,415,100	4,946,000	5,256,400	4,116,100

[†] Estimates of number of veterans are rounded to the nearest hundred.