DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
CHARTER OF THE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR

1. OFFICIAL DESIGNATION: Advisory Committee on Former Prisoners of War

2. AUTHORITY: The Committee is authorized by statute, 38 United States Code (U.S.C) § 541, and operates under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. 2.

3. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITY: The Committee advises the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the administration of benefits under title 38, U.S.C., for Veterans who are former prisoners of war, their survivors, and the needs of these Veterans and their families in the areas of service-connected compensation, dependency and indemnity compensation, health care, and rehabilitation.

4. DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES: The Committee assesses the needs of former prisoners of war in the areas of compensation, health care, and rehabilitation; reviews those Departmental programs and activities designed to meet such needs; and develops such recommendations as it considers appropriate including recommendations for administrative and legislative action.

5. OFFICIAL TO WHOM THE COMMITTEE REPORTS: The Committee reports to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

6. OFFICE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING NECESSARY SUPPORT TO THE COMMITTEE: The Veterans Benefits Administration is responsible for providing support to the Committee.

7. ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS IN DOLLARS AND STAFF-YEARS: Annual operating costs for the Committee are estimated at $90,000 and 0.5 staff years. All members will receive travel expenses and a per diem allowance in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulations for any travel made in connection with their duties as members of the Committee.

8. DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER: The Designated Federal Officer (DFO), a full-time Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employee, will approve the schedule of Committee meetings. The DFO or a designee will be present at all meetings, and each meeting will be conducted in accordance with an agenda approved by the DFO. The DFO is authorized to adjourn any meeting when he or she determines it is in the public interest to do so.

9. ESTIMATED NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS: The Committee is expected to meet two times annually.

10. DURATION: There is a continuing need for the Committee to assist the Secretary in carrying out the responsibilities described in 38 U.S.C. § 541.

11. COMMITTEE TERMINATION DATE: None

12. MEMBERSHI P AND DESIGNATION: The Committee shall be comprised of approximately ten (10) members and shall include representatives of Veterans who are former prisoners of war; representatives of disabled Veterans; and authorities in fields pertaining to disabilities prevalent among former prisoners of war, including epidemiology, mental health, nutrition, geriatrics, and internal medicine. The Committee shall also include, as ex officio members, the Under Secretary for Health and the Under Secretary for Benefits, or their designees. Several members may be Regular Government Employees, but the majority of the Committee's membership will be Special Government Employees.

13. SUBCOMMITTEES: The Committee is authorized to establish subcommittees, with the DFO's approval, to perform specific projects or assignments as necessary and consistent with its mission. The Committee Chair will notify the Secretary, through the DFO, of the establishment of any subcommittee including its function, membership, and estimated duration. Subcommittees will report back to the Committee and must not provide advice or work products directly to VA.

14. RECORDKEEPING: Records of the Committee must be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 6.2 or other approved agency records disposition schedules. Those records must be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

15. DATE CHARTER IS FILED:

Approved: _____ Date: 4/18/16

Robert A. McDonald
Secretary of Veterans Affairs