DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
CHARTER OF THE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE READJUSTMENT OF VETERANS

A. OFFICIAL DESIGNATION: Advisory Committee on the Readjustment of Veterans

B. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES: The Committee's general purpose is to advise the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regarding policies, organizational structures, and the provision and coordination of services relative to Veterans' post-war readjustment to civilian life. Specific areas of concern include Veterans' military-related social and psychological readjustment problems to include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), alcoholism, other substance abuse, PTSD compensation and pension issues, and post-war employment and family adjustment, particularly involving Veterans who served in combat theaters of operation. The Committee's specific objectives are:

- To advise VA regarding the nature and character of service-related psychological difficulties that manifest in the Veteran population;
- To advise VA regarding preparedness for delivering effective post-war services to new and future generations of war Veterans;
- To assess the effectiveness of VA readjustment services available to high-risk Veteran groups (women, minorities, the physically disabled, those exposed to combat or related stressors) with particular attention to geographical, economic and cultural barriers to gaining access to VA care;
- To assess the level and quality of VA services and benefits devoted to the readjustment of Veterans manifesting post-military trauma related to sexual harassment and assault while in active military service;
- To assess the coordination of VA readjustment services by reviewing measures of client satisfaction, standards of care and program outcomes.

C. PERIOD OF TIME NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT ITS PURPOSE(S): There is a continuing need for the Committee to assist the Secretary in carrying out the responsibilities described in Section 545 of Title 38. Authorized by law for an indefinite period, the Committee has no termination date.

D. OFFICIAL TO WHOM THE COMMITTEE REPORTS: The Committee reports to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs through the Under Secretary for Health.

E. OFFICE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING NECESSARY SUPPORT TO THE COMMITTEE: The Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs provides administrative and logistical support for Committee activities.

F. DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE: The Committee's specific duties include review and evaluation of documents covering policy and program issues that affect the post-war readjustment of Veterans, review and evaluation of scientific research relevant to PTSD and other war-related readjustment problems, direct observation of relevant VA services during field visits to VA facilities, and reports of Committee proceedings, findings, conclusions and recommendations.

As required by law, not later than March 31 of each year, the Committee shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs its report on the programs and activities of VA that relate to the readjustment of Veterans to civilian life. The governing statute also calls for members to be selected on the basis of significant civic or professional achievement, and experience with the provisions of VA benefits and services. The Secretary shall seek to ensure that members appointed to the committee include individuals from a wide variety of geographic areas and ethnic backgrounds, individuals from Veterans service organizations, individuals with combat experience, and women. A member's term of service may not exceed three years, but the Secretary may reappoint any member for additional terms.

The Committee will be comprised of not more than 12 members. Several members may be Regular Government Employees, but the majority of the Committee's membership will be Special Government Employees.

The Committee may establish subcommittees to carry out specific projects or assignments. The Committee chair shall notify the Secretary, through the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Committee, of the establishment of any subcommittee, including its function, membership and estimated duration. Subcommittees will report back to the Committee.

Records of the Committee shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 26 or other approved agency records disposition schedules. Those records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

G. ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS IN DOLLARS AND STAFF-YEARS: The estimated annual cost for operating the Committee is $50,000 and .3 staff-years. All members will receive travel expenses and a per diem allowance in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation for any travel made in connection with their duties as members of the Committee.

H. ESTIMATED NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS: The Committee will meet not less than twice annually. The DFO, a full time VA employee, will approve the schedule of Committee and subcommittee meetings. The DFO or designee will be present at all Committee and subcommittee 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, and to chair any meeting when directed to do so by the Secretary.

I. COMMITTEE TERMINATION DATE: None

J. DATE CHARTER IS FILED:

Approved: Eric K. Shinseki 8/28/09
Eric K. Shinseki
Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Date