DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
CHARTER OF THE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON STRUCTURAL SAFETY OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES

1. OFFICIAL DESIGNATION: Advisory Committee on Structural Safety of Department of Veterans Affairs Facilities.

2. AUTHORITY: The Committee is authorized by statute, 38 U.S.C. § 8105, and operates under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. 2.

3. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES: The Committee provides advice to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on all matters of structural safety in the construction and remodeling of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities and recommends standards for use by VA in the construction and alteration of facilities.

4. DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES: The Committee reviews appropriate State and local laws, ordinances, building codes, climatic and seismic conditions, relevant existing information, and current research. It recommends changes to the current Department of Veterans Affairs standards for structural safety, on a State or regional basis. The Committee, when appropriate, recommends the engagement of the services of other experts or consultants to assist in preparing reports on present knowledge in specific technical areas. The Committee reviews questions regarding the application of codes and standards and makes recommendations regarding new and existing facilities when requested to do so by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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

6. OFFICE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING THE NECESSARY SUPPORT TO THE COMMITTEE: The Office of Construction and Facilities Management within VA provides administrative and logistical support for all Committee activities.

7. ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS IN DOLLARS AND STAFF-YEARS: VA financial support for the work of the Committee is estimated at $50,000 per year and 0.2 full-time equivalent 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.

8. DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER: The Designated Federal Officer (DFO), a full time 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 will meet at least once 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. § 8105.

11. COMMITTEE TERMINATION DATE: None.

12. MEMBERSHIP AND DESIGNATION: As required by statute, membership includes at least one architect and one structural engineer who are experts in structural resistance to fire, earthquake, and other natural disasters and who are not employees of the Federal Government. Ex officio members include a designee of the Under Secretary for Health and the Director, Office of Construction & Facilities Management.

The Committee will be composed of approximately five members. Several members may be Regular Government Employees (RGE), but the majority of the Committee's membership will be Special Government Employees (SGE).

13. SUBCOMMITTEES: The Committee is authorized to establish subcommittees, with the Designated Federal Officer's (DFO) approval, to perform specific projects or assignments as necessary and consistent with its mission. The Committee chair shall 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.

14. RECORDKEEPING: 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.

15. DATE CHARTER IS FILED:

Approved: _____ Date: 5/1/2010

Eric K. Shinseki
Secretary of Veterans Affairs