Veterans Benefits Administration

Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans

Keith Pedigo – Associate Deputy Undersecretary for Policy and Program Management

June 18, 2008
VBA Programs

- Compensation & Pension
- Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment
- Loan Guaranty
- Insurance
Compensation and Pension
Compensation & Pension Benefits

- Disability Compensation
- Disability Pension
- Dependency and Indemnity Compensation
- Death Pension
Veterans Receiving Compensation by Period of Service
Growth in Claims Receipts

Factors contributing to growth
- Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom
- Aging of veteran population
- More veterans on rolls results in more reopened disability claims
- Combat Related Special Comp/Concurrent Disability Retired Pay
- Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD)
- Improved and expanded outreach
- Diabetes presumptive for Vietnam veterans
- More claims decisions result in more appeals
Growth in Pending Claims Inventory

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Veterans Benefits Administration
Disability Claim Timeline

Current Claim 182 Days

1. Claim submitted by veteran
2. 12 Days
   - Development Initiation
   - Claim file established or requested from storage
   - Control established

3. 32 Days
   - Evidence Gathering
   - Service Treatment Records requested
   - Medical examination requested
   - Private medical records requested
   - 60-day VCAA notice to veteran

4. 114 Days
   - Rating Decision
   - Requested evidence received
   - 60-day VCAA notice period ends
   - If evidence outstanding, follow-up request and additional 30-day VCAA notice sent

5. 13 Days
   - Award processing
   - VSO review
   - Award prepared
   - Decision notification

6. 11 Days
   - Award processing
   - Rating decision prepared

Strategic Goal 125 Days

1. 7 Days
   - Development Initiation
   - Claim file established or requested from storage
   - Control established

2. 21 Days
   - Evidence Gathering
   - Service Treatment Records requested
   - Medical examination requested
   - Private medical records requested
   - 60-day VCAA notice to veteran

3. 81 Days
   - Rating Decision
   - Requested evidence received
   - 60-day VCAA notice period ends
   - If evidence outstanding, follow-up request and additional 30-day VCAA notice sent

4. 9 Days
   - Award processing
   - VSO review
   - Award prepared
   - Decision notification

5. 7 Days
   - Award processing
   - Rating decision prepared

Veterans Benefits Administration
External Influences on VBA Compensation Workload

1988 - 2007

- Soft Tissue Sarcoma (AO)
- Extra Skeletal Ewing’s Sarcoma, Fibro Sarcoma, Malig, and Ganglioneuroma (AO)
- Multiple Gulf War Symptoms
- Spina Bifida
- Readjudication of Gulf War Syndrome Cases
- Diabetes (AO)
- Nehmer Case Readjudications
- Nehmer Readjudications
- Tobacco Claims Review
- Duty to Assist Enacted
- Nehmer Claims Review
- PVA vs. Secretary
- CRDP
- DIC Restoration
- POW Outreach
- Liesegang - Diabetes Readjudication
- Guard/Reserve Outreach
- Six State Outreach
- Dingess Hartman
- Haas
- Attorney Representation
- Hartness
- Surge in Troop Strength
- Sanders v Nicholson
- Surge in Troop Strength
- Sanders vs Nicholson
- Gulf War Syndrome
- Recognized
- Military Downsizing Begins
- Review of Nehmer Claims
- Nehmer Rejudication
- New Radiation Related Presumptives
- Gulf War Syndrome
- Recognized
- Military Downsizing Begins
- Review of Nehmer Claims
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AO: Related to Agent Orange presumptive for Vietnam Veterans
CRSC: Combat Related Special Compensation
CRDP: Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay
Compensation and Pension

Number of S/C Disabilities per Veteran

- WWII
- Korea
- Peacetime
- Vietnam
- Gulf War
Compensation
- 2.8 million veterans in receipt
- $29 billion paid

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)
- 332,837 survivors in receipt
- $4.5 billion paid

Pension
- 325,378 veterans in receipt
- $2.8 billion paid

Death Pension
- 198,047 survivors in receipt
- $828 million paid
Education
VA Education Programs

- Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (Chapter 30)
- Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606)
- Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) (Chapter 1607)
- Dependents’ Educational Assistance (DEA) (Chapter 35)
Education By the Numbers

- 21 million veterans and dependents have received GI bill benefits since 1944
- $3 billion - Education Benefits Paid in FY 2007
- 523,000 - Veterans, Reservists, and Family Members Receiving Benefits in FY 2007
Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment
Mission:
- Achieve and maintain suitable employment
- Independent Living

By the Numbers - Fiscal Year 2007:
- 91,000 - Veterans Received Vocational Rehabilitation Assistance
- $802 Million - Benefits Paid
Home Loan Guaranty
Home Loan Guaranty

- Zero downpayment loans made by mortgage lenders
- VA guarantees up to $104,250
- Maximum no downpayment loan: $417,000
- Since 1944 VA has guaranteed $935 billion
  - $209 billion currently outstanding

By the Numbers - Fiscal Year 2007:
- 133,000 Loans
- $25 billion in loans
Insurance
Insurance

Five Life Insurance Programs Currently Open

- Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance
- Traumatic Injury Protection Under Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance
- Veterans’ Group Life Insurance
- Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance
- Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance
Insurance By the Numbers

- $1.3 Trillion Face Amount of Coverage
- 7.1 Million Individuals Insured
- $3.3 Billion Disbursed in FY 2007