

## REPORTS MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

**1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** This handbook establishes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reports management procedures that implement policies contained in VA Directive 6310, Forms, Collections of Information, and Reports Management.

**2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:**

a. This handbook describes procedures necessary to process reports needed for the efficient and effective operation of VA's Reports Management Program.

b. The term used to identify internal recurring and nonrecurring VA reports has been changed to "Reports Control Number (RCN)" rather than "Reports Control Symbol (RCS)" to avoid confusion with the term "Records Control Schedule" that is abbreviated "RCS" and used in the Records Management Program.

c. A new form, VA Form 2279, Justification for Proposed Directive and/or Report, replaces the following forms previously used to establish directives and/or reports:

(1) VA Form 4-5207, Routing Sheet for Proposed Administrative Issue.

(2) VA Form 30-30, Request for Publication.

(3) VA Form 40-0236, Justification for Proposed National Cemetery Administration Issue.

(4) VA Form 70-3440, Notice of Report and Report Identifier.

d. The Approved Recurring Reports Bulletin is no longer published in hard copy. An electronic inventory of approved recurring reports will be made available and procedures will be issued once the system is on-line.

**3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** Information Management Service (045A4), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology.

**4. RELATED DIRECTIVE.** VA Directive 6310, Forms, Collections of Information, and Reports Management.

**5. RESCISSIONS:** MP-1, part II, chapter 26, dated October 27, 1983; MP-1, part II, chapter 28, dated September 24, 1985; and OI-1, part VI, Chapter 3, dated September 11, 1985.

**CERTIFIED BY:**

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY  
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

/s/  
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Assistant Secretary for  
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**REPORTS MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

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## REPORTS MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

1. **PURPOSE.** This handbook supplements policies and responsibilities of the Reports Management Program prescribed in VA Directive 6310, Forms, Collections of Information, and Reports Management and contains procedures for processing report requirement directives within the Department. The handbook and directive establish the necessary tools to accomplish an effective VA Reports Management Program.

### 2. **GENERAL**

a. The General Services Administration (GSA) publishes a handbook titled "Reports Management" for Government-wide application. The GSA handbook (Stock Number PB95250163/LP) and its supplement, "Management of Automated Reports," provide procedures and guidance for identifying information needs, analyzing and designing reporting systems, and analyzing individual reports. VA officials who originate reporting requirements must ensure that each report and reporting system for which they are responsible meets standards and conforms to the guidelines and procedures of the GSA handbook. Copies of the handbook may be obtained through normal ordering procedures by your Publications Control Officer (PCO).

b. Central Office organizational reports coordinators shall possess a general knowledge of Federal and Departmental policies, regulations, and instructions relating to VA's Reports Management Program and maintain current reference material.

#### c. **Publications Control Officers (PCOs) shall:**

(1) Ensure that all directives and handbooks requiring recurring and nonrecurring reports contain reference to the assigned report identifier:

(a) In the title of the directive or handbook when it is being issued primarily for reporting purposes;

(b) In the contents or index when the directive's or handbook's structure requires it and addresses more than one report requirement; and

(c) In sections of the directive or handbook making reference to the report.

(2) Ensure that a copy of each printed form or requiring directive or handbook initiated by the organization that concerns an internal or external recurring or nonrecurring report is distributed to the organization's Reports Coordinator.

(3) Ensure that a copy of each printed form or directive or handbook initiated by the organization that concerns an internal or external recurring report is distributed to the VA Reports Coordinator (Director, Information Management Service).

d. **Field Facility Directors** shall designate an individual to serve as the Facility Reports Officer who will be responsible for:

(1) Coordinating and controlling all reporting requirements imposed on the field facility (VA Form 4225, Recurring Report Control Record, may be used for this purpose).

(2) Advising the VA Reports Coordinator, through appropriate management channels, of any reporting requirement imposed on a field facility that has no report identifier or exemption statement or otherwise does not meet the requirements of the reports management program.

(3) Advising facility respondents of reporting requirements that are automatically canceled upon the expiration or rescission of the written directive or handbook.

3. **REPORTING PRINCIPLES.** A reporting requirement must be contained in a directive or handbook. The following principles must be applied when planning to initiate a new report or revise an existing one:

a. **Report Need.** Reports are instituted or continued as a means of obtaining essential information or data, rather than information or data that are merely interesting or informative. A recurring report should be discontinued when the original purpose for acquiring the information ceases. If a user of a report has a continuing need for the information, but the originating office no longer needs the information, the responsibility should be transferred to the user's office.

b. **Establishing or Continuing Reporting Requirements**

(1) Permanent Report Directive or Handbook. A recurring report must be prescribed in a current and permanent VA directive or handbook that assigns responsibility for the report's preparation, processing, and use; prescribes procedures, information sources, and forms; provides instructions and necessary definitions; and gives the assigned reports control identifier (see VA Handbook 6330, Directives Management Procedures).

(2) Temporary Report Directive or Handbook. A nonrecurring report, a recurring report that will be in effect for only a limited time, or for information needs that cannot be immediately incorporated into a permanent directive or handbook should be incorporated in a temporary directive (see VA Handbook 6330).

(3) Expired Report Directive or Handbook. A reporting requirement is automatically canceled upon the expiration or rescission of the related directive or handbook.

(4) Extension of Report Directive or Handbook. The expiration date of a temporary directive or handbook may be extended in accordance with Department-wide directives management policy (see VA Handbook 6330). When extending the rescission date of a directive or handbook that contains a recurring report, the reports control identifier (see par. 4) should be listed within the directive or handbook.

c. **Contents of a Report Directive or Handbook.** A directive or handbook containing a reporting requirement should include the following:

(1) Report Title. The title of the report must be concise and reflect the data to be found therein. The frequency of the report should not normally be made part of the report title because a change in frequency would affect other documents that refer to the title, such as forms, directives, and records.

(2) Clear and concise specifications of the information to be reported and the process or source to be used in obtaining the data.

(3) Form number(s) and title(s) required for report submission.

(4) Organization, official, or individual who is to report.

(5) Period of time or event to be covered in the report.

(6) Report Frequency. A report should be required only as frequently as the reported information will be used or as dictated by the rate of change in the activity being reported. Information and data used to evaluate and control current operations normally will be required at more frequent intervals than data used for planning and historical purposes.

(7) Due Date. The due date and "as of" or "period ending" date for a report must allow ample time for preparation and submission of the required information and be consistent with the use to be made of the report. To the extent possible, the due date will be a workday, not a weekend day or holiday. For a recurring report, the due date should be specified in terms of workdays, not calendar days. Due dates for manual reports will be set with sufficient lead time for any manual processing or compiling information or data. The need for a new or revised report to be computer-generated must be anticipated and the due date(s) set with sufficient lead-time for necessary programming. When possible, the time span to be covered by a report or the due date should not be set for known peak workload periods, such as the end of a fiscal year. Computer-generated reports of data obtained as a by-product of operational processing will be geared to processing cycles.

(8) Number of copies of the report that are to be prepared and submitted.

(9) Name(s), office title(s), mail routing symbol(s), and address(es) where the report is to be submitted.

(10) A statement as to whether negative reports are to be submitted.

(11) Name of the person and/or office responsible for the report to whom inquiries may be directed.

**d. Effective Report Responses**

- (1) Reporting by exception should be employed whenever possible.
- (2) The requiring directive or handbook should explicitly state whether negative reports are to be submitted; including any of the following responses: that something did not occur, there is nothing to report, or no change occurred since a previous report.
- (3) When a report requires updating previous information, furnish respondents with their previously reported data for verification, correction, update, and return.
- (4) Coding and collecting data for a report should be integrated into operating procedures rather than requiring a separate action.
- (5) The originating office should ensure that the report form or format is designed to facilitate compilation, classification, and analysis of the reported information and should conform to the requirements of this handbook.
- (6) Reports reflecting the opinions of the respondent should be structured as multiple choice questions to be answered by a check mark, or in a manner that will be conducive to coding and tabulating the responses. Unstructured narrative reports should be employed only when few respondents are involved, the area of subject matter is limited, and adequate provision is made in the report plan for summarizing the responses.
- (7) Statistical sampling should be employed whenever possible when identical data are required from a large number of respondents.

**e. Automated Reporting Techniques**

- (1) Source data automation that captures information in machine-usable form should be used at the earliest possible time when reported information is to be machine processed.
- (2) Automated techniques will be used for generating regularly recurring reports of numerical data whenever practical, as determined by the originator and the organization's Reports Coordinator, and in consultation with the appropriate automated system manager. Report originators should review their reporting needs to determine the feasibility of using automated methods in collecting, compiling, and transmitting the required information, in lieu of time-consuming manual processes.

**4. REPORTS CONTROL IDENTIFIERS**

- a. A reports control identifier must be included in all documents relating to the report, including the report directive, all forms, responses, feeder reports, and issues that extend the expiration date of the requiring directive or handbook. Organizational reports coordinators shall assign reports control identifiers to reports promulgated by their organizations, and maintain an accounting log for such assignments. Organizational systems managers or offices designated to



perform this function will assign reports control identifiers to automated reports generated from systems or applications under their jurisdiction, and maintain an accounting log of such assignments.

b. Report identifiers used in VA are as follows:

(1) RCN (Reports Control Number). A numeric identifier assigned to an internal VA report that requires the submission of manual or machine-readable data for the purpose of producing the report. Formats for RCNs are as follows:

(a) For recurring reports the RCN consists of the organizational mail routing symbol (prefix) that identifies the requiring or responsible office, followed by a hyphen and a unique four-digit number. If a change in organization or function results in a change in the requiring or responsible office, the organizational symbol will be changed to reflect the correct office, but the unique number will remain the same. The office now responsible for the report will notify the respondents of the changes to the report number and where to submit the report. If the report is canceled, the unique number will not be reassigned to any subsequent report, except in the case of reactivating the report to which it was originally assigned.

Examples:

RCN 05-1234

RCN 10-3456 -- Same report, different requiring office: RCN 20-3456

(b) For nonrecurring reports the RCN consists of the organizational mail routing symbol of the requiring office, the calendar year, and a sequentially assigned number within that year for each office, separated by hyphens.

Examples:

RCN 10-91-1

RCN 20-91-1

(2) COIN (Computer Output Identification Number) is an alphanumeric identifier assigned to an internal VA report generated by an automated system from existing operation data in the system. When operational data are used for generating an automated output report and specific input to the system is not required, a COIN is assigned. When specific information or data are required as input to the automated system in order to generate the report, the required information is assigned an RCN and the generated report (output) is assigned a COIN. A COIN consists of an alphabetic notation that identifies the system, followed by a sequence number for reports generated by that system. The automated systems manager may assign COINs that are all alpha or numeric characters. In all instances, the acronym of the system must appear after "COIN" on the report.

Examples:

COIN EDU 15 (Report from Education file, sequential numbers)

COIN FMS RACTXHL (Report from Financial Management System, alpha characters)

(3) IRCN (Interagency Reports Control Number). A numeric and alphabetic identifier assigned by GSA to an authorized interagency report. An IRCN consists of a four-digit number, an alphabetic representation or abbreviation of the requiring agency, and an abbreviation denoting the frequency, separated by hyphens. All feeder reports for a specific interagency report will be identified by the IRCN.

Example:

1234-GSA-AN (Annual report required by GSA)

2345-DOC-QU (Quarterly report required by the Department of Commerce)

3456-NAR-AR (As required by the National Archives and Records Administration)

(4) Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Approval Number is a numeric identifier assigned by OMB to a collection of information. The OMB Approval Number consists of the number "2900" that represents VA, followed by a hyphen and a unique four-digit number (see VA Handbook 6310.2, Collections of Information Procedures).

Example:

OMB No. 2900-1234

## 5. REPORTS CRITERIA, EXCLUSIONS, AND EXEMPTIONS

### a. Criteria

(1) Information required by a VA directive or handbook is subject to the requirements of the Reports Management Program if it meets the definition of a report (see par. 13i) and is used in support of:

- (a) Establishing and maintaining policies, plans, goals, objectives;
- (b) Evaluating programs, operations, and accomplishments;
- (c) Allocating and keeping track of resources;
- (d) Monitoring performance against plans;
- (e) Conducting special studies;
- (f) Satisfying externally imposed requirements; or
- (g) Collecting public information.

- (2) A report is subject to the reports control processes if it is requested by:
- (a) An element of Central Office for response from two or more VA field facilities;
  - (b) An Administration Head, Assistant Secretary, or Other Key Official for response by two or more other Administration Heads, Assistant Secretaries, or Other Key Officials;
  - (c) Field facility for response by another field facility;
  - (d) Another Federal department or agency, organization, or individual outside VA for response by an element of VA; or
  - (e) Any element of VA for response by the public or a non-governmental body.

**b. Exclusions**

The following are excluded from the requirements of the Reports Management Program:

- (1) Orders, instructions, or authorizations, including travel authorizations, mailing instructions, shipping instructions, and notices of acceptance;
- (2) All types of applications, for example, benefits and grants;
- (3) Requests or requisitions for funds, personnel, equipment, supplies, facilities, and services;
- (4) Fiscal, financial, accounting, or disbursing documents;
- (5) Medical and dental documents on individuals, including mental, physical, or dental examination records, diagnoses, findings of medical boards, and birth or death certificates;
- (6) Legal documents, including agreements, leases, permits, claims, licenses, depositions, testimony, and trial records;
- (7) Personnel documents, including but not limited to, applications for employment or advancement, job descriptions, or performance appraisals;
- (8) Publications and public releases, including catalogs, manuals, bulletins, regulations, telephone directories, newsletters, magazines, news releases, broadcast scripts, magazine articles, speeches, and pictures;
- (9) Reports of inspections, investigations, surveys, audits, inquiries, and observations or conditions prepared by personnel functioning as inspectors, investigators, auditors, evaluators, and survey specialists. However, information or data required as a part of the audit, evaluation, or review process may be considered a report and subject to the requirements of the Reports Management Program if it meets the definition of a report; and

(10) Individual documents that are part of standard operating procedures involving requisitions, vouchers, authorizations, personnel actions, accounting, budgeting and fiscal auditing records and reports, legal briefs and veterans' applications.

**c. Exemptions**

(1) The following categories of recurring information and data collections are exempt from reports control unless more than one VA office is required to provide information:

- (a) Legislative branch requirements in statutes or congressional committee requests;
- (b) Judicial branch requirements in court orders or other judicial determinations;
- (c) Presidential requirements in Presidential directives;
- (d) OMB budgetary, program review and coordination, and legislative clearance requirements;
- (e) Reports on a particular situation that directly and immediately involve and affect the public relations of VA; and
- (f) Ad hoc reports or studies prepared by individuals or task groups to whom a special project has been assigned.

(2) Nonrecurring reports to Congress, OMB, or other executive departments and agencies including nonrecurring information and data collection from more than one organizational source as a part of the process. This does not include nonrecurring reports to Congress included in legislation.

(3) An Administration Head, Assistant Secretary, or Other Key Official of the requiring office may exempt a nonrecurring report from the reports clearance process if time constraints and the purpose of a proposed report would interfere with the operations of their programs. In such instances, a copy of a document signed by an Administration Head, Assistant Secretary, or Other Key Official describing the conditions that justify the decision to exempt the report from the requirements of this handbook, and copies of all pertinent material relating to the exempt report, will be provided to the VA Reports Coordinator and to the organization's Reports Coordinator. This includes the formal or informal requiring directive, request, or other instruction, and any form(s) or format(s) used or prescribed. If the report will continue as a recurring report, all required documentation will be provided as soon as possible, in the manner prescribed by this handbook.

6. **ESTIMATING REPORT COSTS.** Cost estimates for development, operation, and use of a report or reporting system are required to determine if the cost(s) of gathering and processing the information exceeds its management value. The GSA Reports Management Handbook provides procedures and guidance for developing report costs.

7. **PROCESSING INTERNAL VA REPORTS.** Originating offices must comply with the appropriate instructions below for clearing, approving, and canceling internal VA reports, whether manual or automated.

a. **New Recurring and Nonrecurring Reports.** A Central Office proposed directive or handbook that initiates a new reporting requirement must be reviewed, approved, and assigned an RCN by the originating organization's Reports Coordinator (see pars. 4b(1)(a) and 4b(1)(b)). The Reports Coordinator must ensure that the proposed report complies with the reporting principles and other applicable procedures of this handbook. A completed VA Form 2279, Justification for Proposed Directive and/or Report; (see Appendix A) or appropriate justification form, a copy or draft of each new or revised form used in the submission of the required information or data; and all supporting documents, including approved VA and non-VA regulations and directives, Public Laws, and any other written authority that initiates the proposed reporting requirement(s) must be furnished, by the originating office, with the proposed report directive. All concurrence actions must be completed and comments incorporated into the proposed directive prior to submission to the organization's Reports Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the originating organization to provide copies of the approved directive and justification form to both the organization's and VA Reports Coordinators.

b. **Established Recurring Reports.** The originating or requiring organization is responsible for preparing and coordinating proposed revisions to Central Office directives concerning established recurring reports. For example, a report or report requirement is being changed or the expiration date of the directive is being extended. It is the responsibility of the originating organization to provide copies of the final directive and justification form to both the organization's and VA Reports Coordinators.

c. **Automated Reports.** An original and a duplicate copy of VA Form 2279 that includes the concurrence of the organization's Reports Coordinator, must be processed through the system manager for review and assignment of a COIN in accordance with instructions provided in paragraph 4b(2). The COIN must be shown on the justification form and all documents used in processing and producing the report.

d. **Report Cancellation.** A notice of cancellation, in the form of an approved directive, handbook or notice is the responsibility of the originating office. The notice must be issued to respondents within 30 days after a determination is made that the report is no longer required. The notice must be reviewed and concurred in by the organization's Reports Coordinator who must update their records and forward copies of the notice to the VA Reports Coordinator.

## 8. PROCESSING INTERAGENCY REPORTS

### a. Reporting Imposed on VA by Another Agency

(1) If a new or revised reporting requirement is received from another agency, copies of all documentation and a completed VA Form 2279 or appropriate justification form must be submitted, through the organization's Reports Coordinator, to VA's Interagency Reports Coordinator (Director, Information Management Service). If the interagency report requires collecting information from multiple sources within any VA organization, a formal requiring directive or handbook must be developed and submitted with VA Form 2279. If the interagency report requires collecting information from only one source within any organization, a memorandum from the head of the organization responsible for compiling the report may be used in lieu of a formal requiring directive or handbook.

(2) If the reporting requirement meets the definition of an interagency report, but does not have a current IRCN, and is not excluded from reports control (see par. 5b), the office receiving the request will, through their Reports Coordinator, inform the Interagency Reports Coordinator of the unauthorized report.

(3) If a written request for cost estimates for a current or proposed interagency reporting requirement is received from another agency, the responsible office must develop the costs and provide them, through the organization's Reports Coordinator, to the Interagency Reports Coordinator in a timely manner. A response must be made to the requesting agency within 30 calendar days. Optional Form (OF) 101, Summary Worksheet for Estimating Reporting Costs, may be used for reporting cost estimates to requesting agencies.

**b. Interagency Report Imposed by VA.** The process for submitting a proposed VA-imposed interagency report to GSA for clearance and approval includes the following:

(1) Preliminary Review. The requiring organization will prepare drafts of a proposed interagency report, its requiring directive, and any proposed form(s) and other correspondence, and will contact the Interagency Reports Coordinator to arrange a preliminary review by GSA. The purpose of the preliminary review is to verify management need, review for duplicate reporting, determine potential availability of information, recommend sampling and costing procedures, and assess impact on respondents.

(2) Comments and Cost Estimates from Responding Agencies. The requiring office will coordinate the proposed reporting requirement with responding agencies for comments and cost estimates, in accordance with guidance resulting from GSA's preliminary review.

(3) Submission Preparation. Upon receipt of cost estimates and incorporation of any comments from the involved agencies, the requiring office will finalize the requiring directive and any necessary form(s), except for printing. Copies of the proposed report, the requiring directive and form(s), along with a completed Standard Form (SF) 360, Request for Clearance of an Interagency Reporting Requirement (original and two copies), and a Justification Statement, will be submitted to the Interagency Reports Coordinator for submission to GSA.

(4) Justification Statement. The Justification Statement will be signed by the same official who signs the report directive and will include the following information:

(a) Why the information is needed, how it will be used, the frequency of reporting, and how the program will be affected if the information is not obtained;

(b) Description of benefits expected from the information, including dollar value, if known, and assessment of the probability that the benefits will be achieved;

(c) Estimate of report costs and how the estimate was derived;

(d) List of responding agencies and those that took part in designing, testing, and estimating the cost of the proposed report;

(e) Summary of comments from responding agencies that agree or do not agree with the proposed report;

(f) Obligation of respondents to comply with the report request, amount of detail expected, and format and method of transmission of responses;

(g) Description of other reporting plans that were considered, such as use of exception reporting or use of sampling techniques, and reasons why they were not used.

(5) Estimating Costs. Cost estimates for proposed interagency reports are required by GSA to determine if the expected value of the information is worth the cost of obtaining it. The OF 101 may be used to determine the estimated VA cost and to request cost estimates from other agencies when a reporting requirement is imposed by VA. The OF 101 should be retained as supporting documentation for cost estimates if requested for review by GSA. Refer to the GSA Reports Management Handbook for costing criteria guidance and for a description of cost alternatives.

(6) Waiver of Cost Estimating or Justification. If it is determined that a waiver from cost estimating or justifying a report is necessary, a written explanation of the need for the report and request for waiver must be submitted with the SF 360. Waiver requests must include a summary cost estimate in item 9 of the SF 360.

(7) Standard or Optional Forms. If a new or revised standard or optional form is planned for use for a proposed interagency report, SF 152, Request for Clearance, Procurement, or Cancellation of Standard and Optional Forms, must be coordinated in accordance with VA Handbook 6310.1, Forms Management Procedures.

(8) Information Collection. If an interagency reporting requirement collects information from the public as well as from other Federal agencies, the approval of OMB must be obtained in accordance with VA Handbook 6310.2. A copy of the OMB 83-I, Paperwork Reduction Act Submission, should accompany the SF 360.

(9) GSA Approval or Disapproval. If GSA approves the interagency reporting requirement, an expiration date and IRCN will be assigned and the approved SF 360 will be returned to the requesting office through the Interagency Reports Coordinator. If the reporting requirement is disapproved or GSA recommends a modification, the requiring office will receive written notice from GSA, through the Interagency Reports Coordinator, of the reason for rejection or a description of the recommended modification.

c. **Expiration of Interagency Report.** An expired interagency report is an unauthorized report, and respondents are not required to comply with the reporting requirements.

(1) If any element of VA is asked to respond to an expired interagency report, it will advise the Interagency Reports Coordinator, through the organization's Reports Coordinator.

(2) If a VA-imposed interagency report has expired or will expire within 60 days, and there is continuing need for the report, initiate the preparation of appropriate documentation and justification, through the organization's Reports Coordinator, to the Interagency Reports Coordinator to request GSA's approval of an extension.

d. **Discontinuance of Interagency Report.** To avoid unnecessary reporting burdens on respondents, it is important to discontinue a report promptly once it is no longer required. The requiring office is responsible for notifying all respondents in writing that the report is discontinued, usually in the same type of directive that initiated the requirement.

(1) If a notice is received that an interagency report imposed by another agency is discontinued, the responsible VA office will notify all VA respondents of the discontinuance. The notice will be in the form of the same type of directive that initiated the requirement in VA, and it will be coordinated for the concurrence of the Interagency Reports Coordinator prior to issuance.

(2) If a VA-imposed interagency report is no longer required, the responsible VA office will provide appropriate notification to all respondents. The notice will be coordinated for the concurrence of the Interagency Reports Coordinator who will notify GSA that the report is discontinued.

e. **Interagency Reports Coordinators in Other Agencies.** VA's Interagency Reports Coordinator maintains a list of Interagency Reports Coordinators of all other Federal agencies. Any VA office may obtain the name of an individual to contact concerning a specific interagency report.



## **9. MONITORING AND CONTROLLING CONGRESSIONAL AND WHITE HOUSE REPORTS**

a. The responsible action office will monitor the status of the Congressional or White House reporting requirement and advise the Executive Secretariat of any significant developments.

b. If the report is to be released at an organizational level below the Secretary's Office, the action office will be notified of the new requirement by the Executive Secretariat, Office of the General Counsel, or Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management. The action office will provide the Executive Secretariat with the necessary information, status reports, and transmittal dates.

c. The action office will advise the Executive Secretariat of all reporting requirements not already included in the Department's control and tracking system. This includes requirements imposed directly on the organization such as letter or telephone requests, requirements levied by oversight committees and subcommittees, and any other requirements not specifically required by legislation.

d. The Executive Secretariat will periodically provide each Administration Head, Assistant Secretary, and Other Key Official with a listing of reporting requirements from the Department's control and tracking system.

e. The action office is responsible for ensuring that all necessary concurrences are obtained prior to release of the Department's response to the Congressional or White House report. The action office must exercise sound judgment in timing the release of reports for concurrence to ensure that requested or required due dates are met. In those cases where the concurrence of OMB is required, the action office should anticipate at least a 30-day review period for OMB.

## **10. GUIDELINES FOR REPORT ORIGINATORS AND ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS COORDINATORS**

a. Staffs responsible for the functions of reports management must work closely with the PCOs to ensure integration of the related functions and workflow processes of the Reports Management and Directives Management Programs.

b. Report originators must ensure completion of all documentation required in initiating, revising, extending, or canceling a report requiring review and control under the provisions of this handbook. They must also respond to inquiries from field and Central Office officials, and assist in the completion of reports inventories and reviews.

## **11. REPORTS INVENTORY**

a. VA is required to maintain a reports inventory of all external and internal recurring reports and to periodically review approved reports for need, adequacy, design, and cost effectiveness. To meet this requirement, each Administration Head, Assistant Secretary, and Other Key Officials will submit RCN 72-0192, Annual Inventory of Reports, by memorandum to the VA

Reports Coordinator by the first workday of March each year. The VA Reports Coordinator's office will provide each organization's Reports Coordinator with a list of the approved recurring reports for use in the inventory. **NOTE:** COIN (automated) reports are not subject to the annual inventory.

b. The Annual Inventory of Reports will identify additions, deletions, and other changes that are required for all reports for which the organization is the responsible or sponsoring office. Changes may be neatly annotated on copies of appropriate pages of the inventory, or may be listed in the transmittal memorandum or its attachment.

c. The following information is required:

(1) Report Identifier, title, and description of change (addition, deletion, or change to the Approved Recurring Reports Inventory).

(2) For additions or changes, also provide:

(a) Frequency of report submissions;

(b) Requiring or controlling office;

(c) Input media (form numbers, automated system titles, etc.);

(d) Requiring directive and its expiration date;

(e) Identification of respondent(s), for example, all Central Office (CO) elements, selected CO elements (by symbol), all field facilities, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) field facilities, selected field facilities (by name or category); and

(f) Anticipated expiration date (month and year) of the report.

(3) Name, office title, mail symbol, and telephone number of person responsible for responding to questions.

## 12. REPORT FILES

a. A complete file for each report required, controlled, or sponsored by the organization, including Congressional and White House reports, will be maintained by the organization's Reports Coordinator.

b. The VA Reports Coordinator will maintain copies of VA Form 2279 and the directive or handbook containing the current reporting requirements.

c. The VA Interagency Reports Coordinator will maintain files of all interagency reports.

d. Report files will be retained and disposed of in accordance with approved VA Records Control Schedules and the General Records Schedules published by the National Archives and Records Administration.

### 13. DEFINITIONS

a. **Automated Report.** A report designed to extract and format data from one or more established automated systems or applications that were not designed specifically or originally for the subject automated report.

b. **Collections of Information.** A recurring or nonrecurring report required from 10 or more individuals, organizations, or groups outside of the Federal Government. Collections of Information are subject to OMB review and clearance (see VA Handbook 6310.2).

c. **Interagency Report.** Any reporting requirement imposed by a Federal agency on one or more other Federal agencies. Interagency reports require GSA review and clearance and are subject to the provisions of the 41 CFR Part 101-11.204. Interagency reports that are also Collections of Information require OMB clearance (see VA Handbook 6310.2).

d. **Internal Report.** A recurring or nonrecurring report imposed and used only within the Department and controlled by the assignment of a reports control number (RCN) or a computer output identification number (COIN).

e. **Manual Report.** A report for which information or data is initially collected manually, usually from hard copy sources, and/or requires specific report input to an automated system or application from hard copy sources as determined by written directive(s). The information or data may be electronically transmitted in text, tabular, graphic, or other form, and electronically stored.

f. **Nonrecurring Report.** A report that is submitted one time.

g. **Other External Reports.** Reports initiated and imposed on the Department by the legislative, judicial, or executive branch and not controlled by VA except in those instances where a VA office or official must develop an internal report to collect the data.

h. **Recurring Report.** A report that provides the same type of information at prescribed regular intervals, by occurrence of a specific event, or has multiple reporting frequencies.

i. **Report.** Data or information collected from two or more sources and transmitted in response to a current directive for use in determining policy, planning, controlling and evaluating operations and performance; making administrative determinations; or preparing other reports. The data or information may be in narrative, statistical, graphic, or other form, and may be on paper, magnetic tape, or other media.

j. **Reports Control Identifier.** A symbol consisting of letters and numbers used to identify a report that has been reviewed and approved for use within the agency by a reports control office.

k. **Reports Control Number.** A numeric identifier assigned to internal VA reports that require the submission of machine-readable data for the purpose of producing the report.

l. **Reporting.** The process by which data or information for a report is collected, organized, transmitted, and retained.

m. **Reporting System.** Any organized, systematic method, either manual or automated, used to collect, organize, transmit, and retain data or information.

n. **Requiring Directive or Handbook.** A directive or handbook that contains a reporting requirement.

o. **Unauthorized Report.** A report that has not been reviewed and approved by a reports control office (internal, GSA or OMB) and has not been assigned a reports control identifier or has expired.

#### 14. REFERENCES

a. GSA Handbook Reports Management, and its Supplement Management of Automated Reports (Stock Number PB95250163/LP).

b. VA Handbook 6310.1, Forms Management Procedures.

c. VA Handbook 6310.2, Collections of Information Procedures.

d. VA Handbook 6330, Directives Management Procedures.