

**Management of Institute of Medicine Reports**

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE.** This directive establishes Departmental policy which delineates responsibilities for addressing National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Institute of Medicine (IOM) reports.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES.** This directive sets forth policies, roles, and responsibilities for managing VA's IOM Task Force, Strategic Work Group, and Technical Work Groups (TWGs).
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE.** Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy (008A), Office of Policy and Planning (008).
- 4. RELATED HANDBOOK.** None.
- 5. RESCISSION.** None.

**CERTIFIED BY:**

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

/s/

LaVerne H. Council  
Assistant Secretary for  
Information and Technology

/s/

Linda Schwartz  
Assistant Secretary for  
Policy and Planning

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## Management of Institute of Medicine Reports

**1. PURPOSE.** This directive establishes Departmental policy that delineates responsibilities for addressing National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Institute of Medicine (IOM) reports.

**2. BACKGROUND.** Over recent years, legislation, such as the Agent Orange Act of 1991, Pub. L. 102-4, 105 Stat. 11 (codified in part at 38 U.S.C. § 1116) and the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-277, 112 Stat. 2681, Title XVI—Service Connection for Persian Gulf War Illnesses (codified in part at 38 U.S.C. § 1118), has been enacted that directs VA to contract with NAS to evaluate available scientific evidence concerning Veterans' issues and publish related reports. These scientific reviews are typically conducted by NAS's Institute of Medicine.

**3. POLICY.** It is VA policy that IOM reports prepared as a result of legislative mandate are managed by the VA IOM Task Force (IOMTF) to facilitate coordination and collaboration across the Department and ensure that mandated requirements are met.

**a.** The IOMTF reviews and evaluates IOM reports and develops and presents related findings, recommendations, and/or responses to SECVA. See Appendix A for IOMTF membership. This body meets or is briefed quarterly.

**b.** The executive agent for IOMTF is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Office of Policy and Planning (OPP). The executive agent is responsible for managing IOMTF activities; managing communications within the IOMTF and the IOM Strategic Work Group (SWG); coordinating meetings and briefings; and coordinating Department review and concurrence of recommendations and responses.

**c.** Under the direction of the IOMTF, the IOM SWG serves as the permanent body to monitor VA's review of, and responses to, IOM reports; provides advice and guidance to the Technical Work Groups (TWGs); and provides updates to IOMTF as needed. SWG will consist of members from across the Department, and will be assigned by their respective offices. This body meets monthly. See Appendix A for IOM SWG membership.

**d.** Under the direction of SWG, TWGs are formed to review IOM reports and develop any related findings, recommendations, and/or responses for IOMTF review, consideration, and approval. Members of TWGs will be determined based on the subject matter of the relevant IOM report. TWGs meet as needed.

#### 4. RESPONSIBILITIES.

##### a. VA's IOM Task Force (IOMTF):

(1) Reviews and approves/disapproves TWG findings and recommendations that have been developed in response to IOM reports;

(2) Meets quarterly or is briefed quarterly on the status of, and issues related to, IOM studies;

(3) Provides direction and guidance to SWG and TWGs;

(4) Presents IOMTF findings, recommendations, and responses to IOM reports for SECVA approval/disapproval;

(5) Establishes the policies and processes for IOMTF and its sub-groups.

##### b. The IOM Strategic Work Group (SWG):

(1) Reviews TWGs' findings, recommendations, and responses for IOMTF approval;

(2) Provides advice and guidance to, and facilitates kick-off meetings of TWGs;

(3) Provides updates to IOMTF on IOM study status and issues.

##### c. IOM Technical Work Groups (TWGs):

(1) Review and evaluate IOM reports and develop related findings, recommendations, and/or responses;

(2) Participate in IOMTF and SWG meetings to provide status updates;

(3) Brief IOMTF on findings, recommendations, and/or responses to IOM reports;

(4) Assist IOMTF in presenting findings, recommendations, and/or responses to IOM reports to SECVA.

##### d. Executive Agent:

(1) Manages IOMTF activities;

(2) Manages communications between IOMTF and SWG;

(3) Coordinates IOMTF meetings and briefings;

(4) Coordinates Department review and concurrence of IOMTF recommendations and responses;

(5) Implements IOMTF administrative policies and processes

## 5. REFERENCES.

- a. 38 USC Chapter 11
- b. VA Framework for IOM Engagement and Reporting (OPP/VHA 2014)
- c. VA's IOM Engagement and Reporting Process (OPP/VHA 2014)
- d. VA IOM Process Roles and Responsibilities (OPP/VHA 2014)

Please contact OPP or the Veterans Health Administration for a copy of the above-referenced documents.

## 6. DEFINITIONS.

a. **Department, VA.** Generic references to the entire Department of Veterans Affairs, which includes VA Central Office and all field facilities.

b. **SECVA.** The Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

**Membership**

**VA's IOM Task Force:**

Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning (Chair);

Under Secretary for Health;

Under Secretary for Benefits;

General Counsel;

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy (Executive Agent).

**VA's IOM Task Force's Strategic Work Group:**

Veterans Health Administration (Chair);

Veterans Benefits Administration;

Office of Policy and Planning;

Office of General Counsel;

Office of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;

Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs;

Office of Public Affairs.