

U.S. Department of Labor

Office of the Assistant Secretary for
Veteran's Employment and Training
Washington, D.C. 20210



April 21, 1995

Ms. Molly Brostrom
Old Executive Office Building
Room 207
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Molly:

Per our phone conversation yesterday, I am sending you copies of the following in this packet.

- 1.) Notice of Establishment of the Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment and Training (ACVET)
- 2.) Advisory Committee Charter
- 3.) A list of the members of the ACVET
- 4.) Minutes of the first ACVET meeting on December 15, 1994

I have also included for your information a listing of grantees of the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Projects (HVRP) that VETS funded this past year.

If there is any way I can be of further assistance, please contact me on (202) 219-9116.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Thomas S. Keefe", is written over a horizontal line.

Thomas S. Keefe
Special Assistant

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Office of the Secretary
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

NOTICE OF ESTABLISHMENT

In accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act and Office of Management and Budget Circular A-63 of March 1974, the Secretary of Labor has established the Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment and Training.

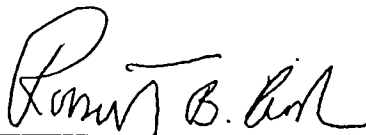
The Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment and Training shall: assess the employment and training needs of veterans; determine the extent to which the programs and activities of the Department of Labor are meeting such needs; carry out such other activities that are necessary to make the reports and recommendations required by law; and, not later than July 1 of each year, the Advisory Committee shall submit to the Secretary of Labor a report on the employment and training needs of veterans.

The Committee shall consist of at least 12, but not more than 18, individuals appointed by the Secretary of Labor to serve as members of the Advisory Committee, consisting of: representatives nominated by veterans' organizations that are chartered by Federal law and have a national employment program; and not more than 6 individuals who are recognized authorities in the fields of business, employment, training, rehabilitation, or labor and who are not employees of the Department of Labor.

The Advisory Committee will report to the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training. It will function solely as an advisory body and in compliance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, and its charter will be filed under the Act.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments regarding the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment and Training. Such comments should be addressed to: Mr. Thomas S. Keefe, Special Assistant, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210, telephone (202) 219-9116.

Signed at Washington, D.C., this 4th day of August 1994.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robert B. Kohl", is written over a horizontal line.

SECRETARY OF LABOR

ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHARTER

COMMITTEE'S OFFICIAL DESIGNATION

Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment and Training (ACVET).

COMMITTEE'S OBJECTIVES AND THE SCOPE OF ITS ACTIVITY

The Committee's objectives are to: assess the employment and training needs of veterans; determine the extent to which the programs and activities of the Department of Labor are meeting such needs; carry out such other activities that are necessary to make the reports and recommendations required by law; and, not later than July 1 of each year, the Committee shall submit to the Secretary of Labor a report on the employment and training needs of veterans. In addition, the Committee may make recommendations to the Secretary of Labor with respect to the employment and training needs of veterans at such times and in such manner as the Committee determines appropriate.

PERIOD OF TIME NECESSARY FOR THE COMMITTEE TO CARRY OUT ITS PURPOSES

The Committee has continuing responsibilities.

DEPARTMENT TO WHOM THE COMMITTEE REPORTS

U.S. Department of Labor.

AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING THE NECESSARY SUPPORT FOR THIS COMMITTEE

The Veterans' Employment and Training Service.

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES FOR WHICH THE COMMITTEE IS RESPONSIBLE

The Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment and Training is responsible for assessing the employment and training needs of the Nation's veterans. Such needs may include education, training, employment, re-employment, and rehabilitation, among others. The Committee is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness with which existing Department of Labor programs deliver required services to our Nation's veterans and, where deficiencies are detected, to recommend appropriate remedial action.

Not later than July 1 of each year, the Advisory Committee shall submit to the Secretary of Labor a report on the employment and training needs of veterans. In addition to the annual reports required by law, the Advisory Committee may make recommendations to the Secretary of Labor with respect to the employment and training needs of veterans at such time and in

such manner as the Advisory Committee determines appropriate.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Advisory Committee shall consist of at least 12, but no more than 18, individuals appointed by the Secretary of Labor to serve as members of the Advisory Committee, consisting of: representatives nominated by veterans' organizations that are chartered by Federal law and have a national employment program; and not more than 6 individuals who are recognized authorities in the fields of business, employment, training, rehabilitation, or labor and who are not employees of the Department of Labor.

The following, or their representatives, shall be ex-officio, nonvoting members of the Advisory Committee: the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; the Secretary of Defense; the Secretary of Health and Human Services; the Secretary of Education; the Director of the Office of Personnel Management; the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training; the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training; the Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; the Administrator of the Small Business Administration; the Postmaster General; the Director of the United States Employment Service; representatives of other Federal departments and agencies requesting a representative on the advisory committee; and representatives of nationally based organizations with a significant involvement in veterans' employment and training programs, as determined necessary and appropriate by the Secretary of Labor.

The Secretary of Labor shall appoint the Chairman of the Advisory Committee who shall serve in that position for no more than two (2) consecutive years.

ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS IN DOLLARS AND STAFF YEARS

Annual Cost: \$40,000.00

Staff Years: One (1)

ESTIMATED NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

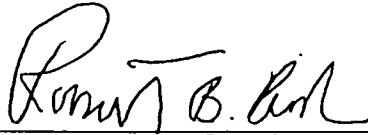
Four (4) times, at least quarterly.

COMMITTEE TERMINATION DATE

The Advisory Committee shall continue until terminated by law. The charter will expire two (2) years from the date below.

FILING DATE

This charter is filed on the date indicated below.



Secretary of Labor

AUG 4 1994

Date

Memorandum For Interagency Veterans Policy Group
Agenda Questions November 17, 1994

Question 9: Minority Veterans Employment Needs:

DOL and the VA should meet prior to the IVPG meeting. They should be prepared to present to the group a report on the current employment situation for minority veterans and to recommend specific next steps to address the issue.

Response:

The Veterans Benefits Administration continues to work very closely with the Veterans Employment and Training Service, DOL in conducting an aggressive outreach program to assist veterans in gaining employment following release from active duty.

The Veterans Benefits Administration will continue its outreach to minority veterans through participation in conferences and meetings sponsored by organizations concerned with minority veterans issues and employment.

The Department of Veterans Affairs plans to establish field based minority affairs officer positions to strengthen, support and enhance the department's minority affairs programs. In the Veterans Benefits Administration, a network of minority affairs representatives will be established to enhance outreach to minority veterans in an attempt to ensure that minority veterans take full advantage of the benefits to which they are entitled, which should enhance their opportunity for gainful employment.

A

Ans: This happened?

#2294G

19

"Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act"
Public Law 103-353
Enacted October 13, 1994

VA's Views

VA supported this legislation which amends chapter 43 of title 38, United States Code, to improve and clarify veterans' employment rights and their rights to reemployment after a break in employment for the performance of service in the uniformed services. VA is concerned that veterans not be penalized as a result of their military service and to ensure that veterans are given the job opportunities they deserve, VA provides job counseling, training and placement services. It is our view that this legislation will facilitate these efforts and generally enhance veterans' employment prospects by strengthening their protection from discrimination in obtaining work and their ability to return to a position which they have temporarily vacated to serve their country.

Purposes of the Act

- To encourage noncareer service in the military by eliminating or minimizing the disadvantages to civilian careers and employment which can result from such service.
- To minimize the disruption to the lives of persons performing such service, as well as to their employers and the communities, by providing for prompt reemployment of such persons upon completion of military service under honorable conditions.
- To prohibit discrimination against persons because of military service.

Summary of the Act's Provisions

- Prohibits denial of initial employment, reemployment, retention in employment, promotion or any other benefit against a person who applies to be a member or performs service in the uniformed services and prohibits acts of reprisal against witnesses in reemployment rights cases. 38 U.S.C. § 4311.

"Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act"

- Provides persons who have been absent from employment for periods of up to 5 years, and in some cases more, because of military service, reemployment rights and other employment benefits, as described in chapter 43 of title 38, United States Code, to the extent that such reemployment: is not impossible or unreasonable given the employer's circumstances; or does not create an undue hardship on the employer in the case of certain disabled persons. These rights, with certain exceptions, are subject to the employee providing advance notice of his leaving to perform military service and of his return from same, unless notice is precluded by military necessity. Where such service is more than 31 days in duration, the employee must file a reemployment application. A person will not be entitled to rights under this section over any person with a superior veteran's preference under title 5, United States Code. 38 U.S.C. § 4312.
- Provides that a person entitled to reemployment be returned to the position of employment in which the person would have been employed but for the military service, or after reasonable efforts by the employer to qualify the person, to the position the person was in at the commencement of the military service, or after longer periods of service, like positions. 38 U.S.C. § 4313.
- Provides the provisions of section 4313 shall also be applicable for reemployment by the Federal Government, and provides reemployment rights specific to the Federal Government, such as placement in another agency when the previous employing agency or its functions no longer exist, or it is impossible or unreasonable for the agency to reemploy the person. 38 U.S.C. §§ 4314, 4315.
- Describes the rights, pension and health benefit options and obligations of persons absent from employment for military service. 38 U.S.C. §§ 4316-4318.
- Describes procedures for assistance, enforcement and investigation, including subpoena power, with respect to the employment and reemployment rights persons are entitled to under this chapter. 38 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4326.
- Authorizes the promulgation of regulations to carry out this chapter and puts forth requirement for annual reports to Congress. 38 U.S.C. §§ 4331-4332.

"Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act"

- Requires the Secretaries of Labor, Defense and Veterans Affairs to take appropriate action to inform persons of the rights, benefits and obligations under this chapter. 38 U.S.C. § 4333.
- Sets forth conforming and technical amendments including an increase in the maximum VA home loan guaranty from \$46,000 to \$50,750.

E X E C U T I V E O F F I C E O F T H E P R E S I D E N T

23-May-1995 11:49am

TO: Molly Brostrom
FROM: David M. Zavada
Office of Mgmt and Budget, VAPD
CC: Toni S. Hustead
CC: Christopher J. Mustain
SUBJECT: Urgent Re: Your Report Due Today

We agree with you that the "uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act" is something that should be highlighted. This becaome law in the fall of 1994. It is a significant enhancement of veterans emplyment and reemployment rights. Here is a short summary from the bill's signing memo:

This law continues to prohibit discrimination against an employee or job applicant because of a past, current, or future military obligation. It reaffirms a veteran's right to be reemployed in a position he or she would have attained if continuously employed.

URGENT

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
Washington, D.C. 20503-0001

6/27/95

LRM NO: 1824

FILE NO: 485

LEGISLATIVE REFERRAL MEMORANDUM

Total Page(s): ~~20~~ 21

TO: Legislative Liaison Officer - See Distribution below:
FROM: Janel FORSGREN (for) *Janet L. Forsgren*
Assistant Director for Legislative Reference
OMB CONTACT: Connie BOWERS 395-3803
Legislative Assistant's line (for simple responses): 395-7362
SUBJECT: LABOR Proposed Testimony on Veterans' Employment Issues

DEADLINE: 1:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 28, 1995

In accordance with OMB Circular A-19, OMB requests the views of your agency on the above subject before advising on its relationship to the program of the President.

Please advise us if this item will affect direct spending or receipts for purposes of the "Pay-As-You-Go" provisions of Title XIII of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990.

COMMENTS:

file: vets EIT

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Janet Forsgren
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LRM NO: 1824
FILE NO: 485

STATEMENT OF PRESTON M. TAYLOR JR.
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR
FOR VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING
BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, TRAINING,
EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
JUNE 29, 1993

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to tell the positive story of what the Veterans' Employment and Training Service has been doing to reorganize itself, how it has implemented the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, and how it is working to ensure continued priority of employment services for veterans within the Department of Labor's one-stop career centers.

The Veterans' Employment and Training Service, known as VETS, was established in 1983. Like at other Federal agencies, we have recently expanded our reinvention efforts in VETS based on the recommendations of the National Performance Review and the President's September 11, 1993, Memorandum regarding "Streamlining the Bureaucracy". The expectations were that Federal agencies would increase their efficiency and maintain or increase services with reduced staff levels.

At the outset, we identified our customers. First and foremost among VETS' customers are our veterans. In VETS' context, the term "veteran" includes not only those individuals who have been discharged or separated from the military, but also

Reserve and National Guard members who are eligible to receive veterans' reemployment rights services. Additionally, we include in that general category of "veteran", those servicemembers still on active duty who are within 180 days of discharge and eligible for transition assistance.

Second, we recognized that employers are also our customers. As everyone knows, business growth depends on an industrious, well trained workforce. VETS must constantly seek efficient ways of creating conditions that bring together the needs of employers with the talents and discipline of our veterans for the mutual benefit of both parties, as well as the economic vitality of the Nation.

Finally, VETS recognized that its own employees -- as internal customers -- must be comfortable with Agency restructuring and the re-engineering of work processes. We all fully understood from the outset that unless a climate is created that would foster competency, initiative, and teamwork, the Agency would not be able to provide quality service.

We understood, too, that one of VETS' greatest assets is its network of partners and service providers, such as veterans' service organizations and State Employment Security Agencies. It was imperative, then, that we include everyone in our efforts to streamline and improve customer services.

It has been important to me that the process be highly visible, open and inviting, with frequent opportunities for VETS' staff to have a voice in the evolution of changes being considered. I have always believed in the open-process concept. Our partners and the staff of this Committee have been kept fully informed of our progress at every step of the way.

One of VETS' first steps, taken in October 1993, -- two months before I took office -- was to form four ad hoc committees. In March 1994, a fifth committee was established. All were to address goals that had been developed through broad agency participation. Each ad hoc committee was largely comprised of field staff. I will describe each Committee's goal in a moment but, collectively, the number participating on these committees approximated fifteen percent of VETS' entire work force. Each committee also had a State Employment Security Agency representative assigned for liaison.

In April 1994, VETS established what we called our "Reinvention Team", developed in accordance with the Department of Labor's Partnership Agreements with its unions. The primary purpose of the Reinvention Team was to review the products and proposals created by the five ad hoc committees and act in an advising capacity for each ad hoc committee prior to its delivery of its product or proposal to me for decision and implementation by the Agency.

Let me briefly describe each ad hoc committee's objectives and products. The first ad hoc committee was charged with proposing improvements in the services provided to veterans through the disabled veterans' outreach program and the local veterans' employment representative program. As you know, in referring to these programs we generally use the acronyms DVOP and LVER.

Products created by this committee included a detailed proposal for redesign of the current service delivery system which would use dedicated veterans' staff concentrated in three functional areas -- case management, outreach services, and employment and training oversight -- to provide labor exchange and placement services to veterans instead of the two current positions -- the DVOP specialist and the LVER. These three proposed functions would target concentrated employment and training services provided under a case management structure to veterans who have exceptional difficulty in accessing the labor market.

Other products of the DVOP/LVER Committee included a series of policy and program papers that proposed new features for the service delivery system, a draft for the fiscal year 1995 DVOP/LVER Solicitation for Grant Applications, a Veterans' Bill of Rights, an Employers' Bill of Rights, and a Partners' Bill of Rights.

VETS' second ad hoc committee -- the JTPA IV-C Committee -- focused on grants awarded under title IV, part C, of the Job Training Partnership Act. The committee was to streamline the grants into fewer, larger-valued grants awarded competitively over multi-year periods. As a result of the JTPA IV-C Committee's efforts, formula-grant regulations have been rescinded and a new, streamlined and simpler Solicitation for Grant Applications was used to make awards for program year 1994. This new streamlined solicitation procedure has made it easier for applicants to apply for funding and has improved the VETS' grant process by targeting services to veterans in the most needed service areas.

A third ad hoc committee was charged with surveying customer satisfaction and increasing employer participation in VETS programs. Products from this committee included customer satisfaction surveys of veterans and employers.

The customer survey instruments measured the level of satisfaction found among customers and the areas in which VETS would need to improve in order to raise that level of satisfaction. Notable survey results among employers showed that over half of the employer respondents seeking unskilled or semi-skilled workers filled openings of those types through the Job Service, while 18 percent of employers filling professional, managerial, or technical positions hired through Job Service

referrals. About half of the veterans surveyed rated the Job Service overall as very helpful or helpful, and 79 percent stated they would recommend the Job Service to other veterans.

The fourth VETS' ad hoc committee developed proposals for the future structure and operation of the Transition Assistance Program -- which we simply refer to as TAP. This ad hoc committee produced a plan that would increase the delivery of TAP services to 70 percent of separatass in fiacal year 1996. It is anticipated that this goal can be achieved by expanding the scope and awareness of the program and by improving the efficiency of the delivery system for TAP workshops.

The fifth VETS' ad hoc committee focused on improving the Agency's internal structures and operations. The "Internal Review Committee" produced a report that included a series of recommendations for operational improvements, calling for comprehensive restructuring and realignment of functions within the VETS organization. The committee developed proposals to ameliorate the impact of projected staffing reductions. This was to be largely through improvements in operational efficiency, effectiveness, and in the equitable distribution of the Agency's responsibilities and workload among its staff. Front-line employees would be empowered with more real authority to carry out VETS' mission. The committee also proposed to reduce the number of VETS' Regional Offices from the currently mandated ten.

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Planning for implementation of VETS' reorganization remains an on-going process, as staffing and budget allotments shift for upcoming fiscal years. At the beginning of the process, VETS developed a long-range downsizing plan that would stage a 12 percent reduction in strength by fiscal year 1999, bringing us to a staffing level of 250 full-time equivalents. Through the careful management of vacancies created by normal attrition and Agency buyouts, I can report that we are on the glide path to meeting our long-range goal.

Mr. Chairman, I also would like to note that last July I created a special VETS' office for Plans and Programs and assigned to that advisory position a senior staff member, Richard Larson, who is with me today.

In the development of our plans, I am committed to the principles of total quality management. I have seen first hand the positive results of this decision-making system. To ensure the maximum effectiveness of the TQM tools and techniques, the National Veterans' Training Institute, with input from VETS' employees, has developed TQM courses for all Federal staff.

Implementation of many of the committees' recommendations would be contingent upon legislative action to change current statutory mandates. At this time, my staff is preparing a legislative package of proposed statutory changes.

Speaking of legislation brings me to the second topic of the day -- VETS' implementation of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994, referred to as USERRA.

USERRA was enacted on October 13, 1994, and was designed to clarify and strengthen the existing veterans' reemployment rights law first passed in 1940 and amended several times thereafter. Although certain USERRA provisions took effect when the bill was signed, others became effective ninety days later, on December 12, 1994.

USERRA, like the veterans' reemployment rights law it replaced, provides job security to employees who leave their civilian jobs to enter active military service, voluntarily or involuntarily. Within certain limits, the law generally entitles an individual who serves in the military to return to his or her former civilian job after being discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions. For purposes of seniority, status, and pay, the employee is entitled to be treated as though he or she never left.

The law applies to servicemembers who have performed and are performing both active-duty service, and to training periods served by Reserve and National Guard members. Its scope of impact is significant. Approximately 1.8 million Americans are now in the Guard and Reserve. Additionally, over 100,000 non-

career servicemembers leave active duty military service annually. Veterans' reemployment rights attract the most attention during times of national emergency and large call-ups of Reserve components, such as during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. In our experience, however, employers willingly support their employees called to active duty on those occasions, especially if the military action is short and popular. In practice, the importance of USERRA as an employment protection lies in its constant support of those Reserve and Guard members who attend regular and special training activities. Because USERRA enhances the Department of Defense's ability to recruit and retain qualified servicemembers, it is important to our national defense.

Under USERRA, new responsibilities are assigned to the Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service, as well as other Federal agencies, including the Departments of Defense, Treasury, and Justice, the Office of Special Counsel, the Office of Personnel Management, the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, and the intelligence community agencies. For the first time, Federal executive branch employees are provided with both assistance from the Department of Labor and an effective enforcement mechanism. Improved levels of coverage also are given to employees in the legislative and judicial branches, and to National Guard employees of State Adjutants General.

The Department of Labor takes very seriously its responsibility as the lead agency on USERRA implementation. Secretary Robert Reich selected USERRA training of VETS employees, the development of a USERRA outreach program, and the development of USERRA operational guidance as elements of his performance agreement with the President of the United States. Needless to say, as his assistant secretary, USERRA has my full attention.

To accomplish a timely, smooth, and effective implementation, VETS developed a plan in November 1994 that laid out an action framework in the following four areas: interagency coordination, outreach, operational guidance, and staff training. With the support of the Department's Office of the Solicitor, VETS' plan for implementation is currently on track. This morning I briefly will outline the actions that VETS has taken in line with its plan.

The first area of the USERRA plan was that of interagency coordination. On November 18, VETS hosted an interagency workgroup consisting of all Federal organizations with USERRA responsibilities. Agency roles and responsibilities were identified and discussed. Agencies agreed to cooperate in the development of USERRA policy and other implementing activities. It was agreed that subgroups of agencies would meet on specific implementation issues, and that periodically the entire

interagency workgroup would met. On December 12, VETS provided a day-long briefing on the USERRA law to interagency workgroup participants.

On January 6, 1995, VETS met with the Department of Defense's National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve to coordinate employer and claimant outreach efforts.

On January 24, VETS met with the Office of Special Counsel and the Department of Justice to discuss standards for referral of cases, standards for litigation of cases, and coordination of information for inclusion in the annual report to Congress on USERRA.

On February 8, VETS hosted an interagency workgroup meeting to discuss methods of electronic communications on USERRA implementation between the agencies, including the sharing of resource information. VETS is currently canvassing the agencies on their specific electronic capabilities.

On February 22, VETS, along with the Department of Labor's Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration, met with the Department of Treasury -- including the Internal Revenue Service -- to discuss USERRA's two year compliance period for employee pension benefit plans, and necessary amendments to the Internal

Revenue Code that would accommodate USERRA. Treasury agreed to take the lead in developing proposed Code amendments.

In April, VETS provided comments to the Office of Personnel Management on proposed USERRA interim regulations regarding Federal employees who leave their employment to perform duty with the uniformed services.

At the request of Representative G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery for technical assistance, VETS worked with Departments of Defense and Transportation, the Office of Personnel Management, and the Office of Management and Budget on proposed technical amendments to USERRA. These amendments were provided to Mr. Montgomery on May 25, 1995.

I have been meeting on a quarterly basis with the leadership of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve to review USERRA implementation progress and other matters.

The second area of consideration in VETS' USERRA implementation plan was that of outreach. Sending forth the word has been a major emphasis for us. Upon enactment, VETS distributed a fact sheet, press releases, and briefing packages. Over the past seven months, VETS staff at the national, regional, and state levels have conducted numerous interviews on USERRA.

We have updated the information being provided through our 800 number to include information on USERRA, provided input on other agencies' USERRA outreach documents, briefed the veterans' organizations, and addressed a number of gatherings.

Our third area was operational guidance. Within days of the bill signing, VETS issued detailed information on how to implement USERRA. Recently we completed a new USERRA Operations Manual and -- with the assistance of the Department of Defense -- a draft of a new USERRA Handbook. After clearance through the USERRA interagency workgroup, VETS intends to publish the USERRA Handbook in the Federal Register for public comment. The USERRA Handbook, then, may be used for clarification of USERRA issues, just as the Veterans' Reemployment Rights Handbook had been used before enactment of USERRA.

VETS' fourth area of consideration in its implementation plan was that of staff training, something in which we believe deeply. VETS, with the strong support and assistance of the Solicitor's Office and the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, conducted a series of USERRA briefings for 120 staff at the National Veterans' Training Institute in November 1994. The briefings were videotaped and all VETS staff were provided access to copies.

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A USERRA Basic Course, which teaches the procedures according to the new USERRA Operations Manual, has been piloted and will be provided by the National Veterans' Training Institute to 168 VETS staff prior to the end of September. A VETS Investigators Course is being developed by the National Veterans' Training Institute and will be provided to a minimum of 48 VETS staff in 1995.

Even before the enactment of USERRA, VETS obligated a considerable amount of its Federal resources to the administration of veterans' reemployment rights law. We estimate that of our 251 Federal staff throughout the country, as many as 113 equivalents -- or 45 percent of our workforce time -- are devoted to this program. VETS' personnel are engaged in investigations, case handling, case administrative support, and quality assurance. I am proud to report that, working with local ombudsman volunteers from the National Committee on Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, VETS is able to resolve over 95 percent of the 12 to 15 hundred complaints it receives annually.

At this point in the year, we have had too little experience with USERRA to predict the impact of our new responsibilities on our workload and resource demand. However, we believe that there will be a significant increase in workload, due particularly to USERRA's clarity in providing for the rights and enforcement capabilities available to Federal employees through VETS.

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The third topic on today's oversight agenda is that of the one-stop career centers -- one of the more dynamic initiatives taken on by the Clinton Administration. The move toward consolidating services through the development of one-stop career center systems marks a direction that I welcome in terms of interagency program cooperation and delivery system integrations. It reinforces the concept of Federal-State partnerships and refocuses all Departmental efforts on services to the general public and employer communities as customers.

The one-stop career center system is only in its infancy and is compatible with all current proposed workforce development and career preparation legislation. The one-stop concept, as it is being implemented by the Department of Labor, adheres to four basic principles -- universal public and employer access to a wide array of services; customer choice in where and how information and assistance can be obtained; seamless integration of service delivery at the local level; and the application of performance driven/outcome-based measures.

By the end of fiscal year 1996, it is anticipated that all States will be aboard the fast-moving one-stop career center system train. I note that Indiana -- the Chairman's home State -- is scheduled to begin implementation under its grant this summer. Each local one-stop center may have some commonalities, but with independent design to meet unique State and local needs,

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each will be potentially different than all other centers, even within the same State.

What does this mean for our Nation's veterans? Since the Employment Service and the DVOP and LVER programs are all required to be a part of each State's one-stop system, the potential exists for veterans to be served more efficiently and affectively. Once fully implemented, the one-stop career center system will present a broad range of workforce development services that previously were not accessible or easily available to veterans who reported to local employment security offices.

Veterans reporting to the one-stop centers for other related services will likely be offered labor exchange services they may not have previously known were available. Using a case management approach to the delivery of services, DVOP and LVER staff will offer more intensive one-on-one services to enhance the semi-skilled veteran's employability. They will be able to capitalize on on-site education or training linkages. They have been trained at the National Veterans' Training Institute on how best to develop long-lasting employment opportunities with career potential for veterans who have gone from one stop-gap job to another, been chronically unemployed, or have been under-employed since leaving military service.

VETS has been provided a prominent place at the one-stop table as full partners. We have dedicated staff resources located with the national one-stop team and are involved in the day-to-day decision-making process. This partnership has yielded several tangible results, such as reference to veterans and veterans' organizations in the recently implemented Solicitation for Grant Applications. VETS staff served on the grant application review teams. We have members of the Federal one-stop teams in every U.S. Department of Labor region. Many of our Directors for Veterans' Employment and Training -- located in each State -- are intricately involved in the technical conduct of developing these centers within their State. They are supported by a network of their peers who maintain communication through regularly scheduled conference calls -- a cost-efficient and productive means of information sharing.

Our Directors for Veterans' Employment and Training, with support of the VETS staff serving on each regional team, serve as a linchpin between our national vision for veterans in a one-stop system and the sub-state or local realities. Our Directors located in each State will work with the appropriate State and Federal officials as local one-stop system designs and operations are negotiated between the several programs and services which will be provided through One-Stop. Local VETS staff may even sit at the table with local workforce investment or development boards when center plans are under consideration as they endeavor

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to achieve equitable agreement on resource utilization and observance of required service priorities.

It is clear that one-stop service delivery systems are how employment services will be provided everywhere in the very near future. With its flexible and localized construction, VETS will be challenged to ensure the continued priority of employment services for veterans. As I described, we are positioning ourselves at the appropriate decision making points to provide needed input into center designs.

Mr. Chairman, the expansion of the one-stop career center system has given us the opportunity to clarify matters of preference and service priorities to guide agencies participating under and operating within the one-stop environment. Section 4102 of title 38, United States Code, states that,

Congress declares as its intent that there shall be an effective (1) job and job training counseling service program, (2) employment placement service program, and (3) job training placement service program for eligible veterans and eligible persons ... so as to provide such veterans and persons the maximum of employment and training opportunities, with priority given to the needs of disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era through existing programs, coordination and merger of programs and

implementation of new programs.

The Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training and I agree that the provisions of title 38 require the State Employment Service, including its LVER and DVOP staff, to provide preference to veterans for employment and training services available at each service delivery point. We encourage State Employment Services and their partners to find ways to provide to veterans the maximum of job placement opportunities as they move toward shared resources and the one-stop approach. I will soon be sending policy guidance to this effect to our field staff and their State partners.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I am proud of VETS' reinvention efforts and its USERRA implementation accomplishments, and am pleased with the Agency's level of involvement in the on-going evolutionary development of one-stop career systems. Again, I thank you for the opportunity to tell the VETS' story, and will be glad to answer any questions you might have.

U.S. Department of Labor

Assistant Secretary for
Veterans' Employment and Training
Washington, D.C. 20210



NOV 22 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

FROM: PRESTON M. TAYLOR JR. *Preston M. Taylor Jr.*

SUBJECT: Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS)
Achievements

A recent review of the VETS organization has revealed an impressive number of achievements for fiscal year 1994 and program year 1993 (ending June 30, 1994). The list of achievements is attached. Among those achievements were:

- o 559,000 veterans were found jobs through VETS funded staff in State employment agencies.
- o 3,686 Transition Assistance Program workshops at 200 military installations trained 163,044 military men, women and their spouses to find jobs in the public and private sectors. This exceeded our previous record by over 16,000 participants.
- o 4,053 homeless veterans were helped into jobs by the VETS' Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Projects this fiscal year.
- o 2,829 veterans' service providers were trained at the VETS' sponsored National Veterans' Training Institute.
- o 9,600 recently separated or disabled veterans were matched with jobs in employer career training programs under the Servicemembers Occupational Conversion and Training Act.

I shall provide you with updates relating to VETS' employment, reemployment and training programs.

Attachment

cc: Deputy Secretary
Associate Deputy Secretary

VETS

VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE ACHIEVEMENTS

Fiscal Year 1994 and Program Year 1993

PROGRAM YEAR 1993 EFFORTS (Ending June 30, 1994)

■ EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

- Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP)
- Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) program

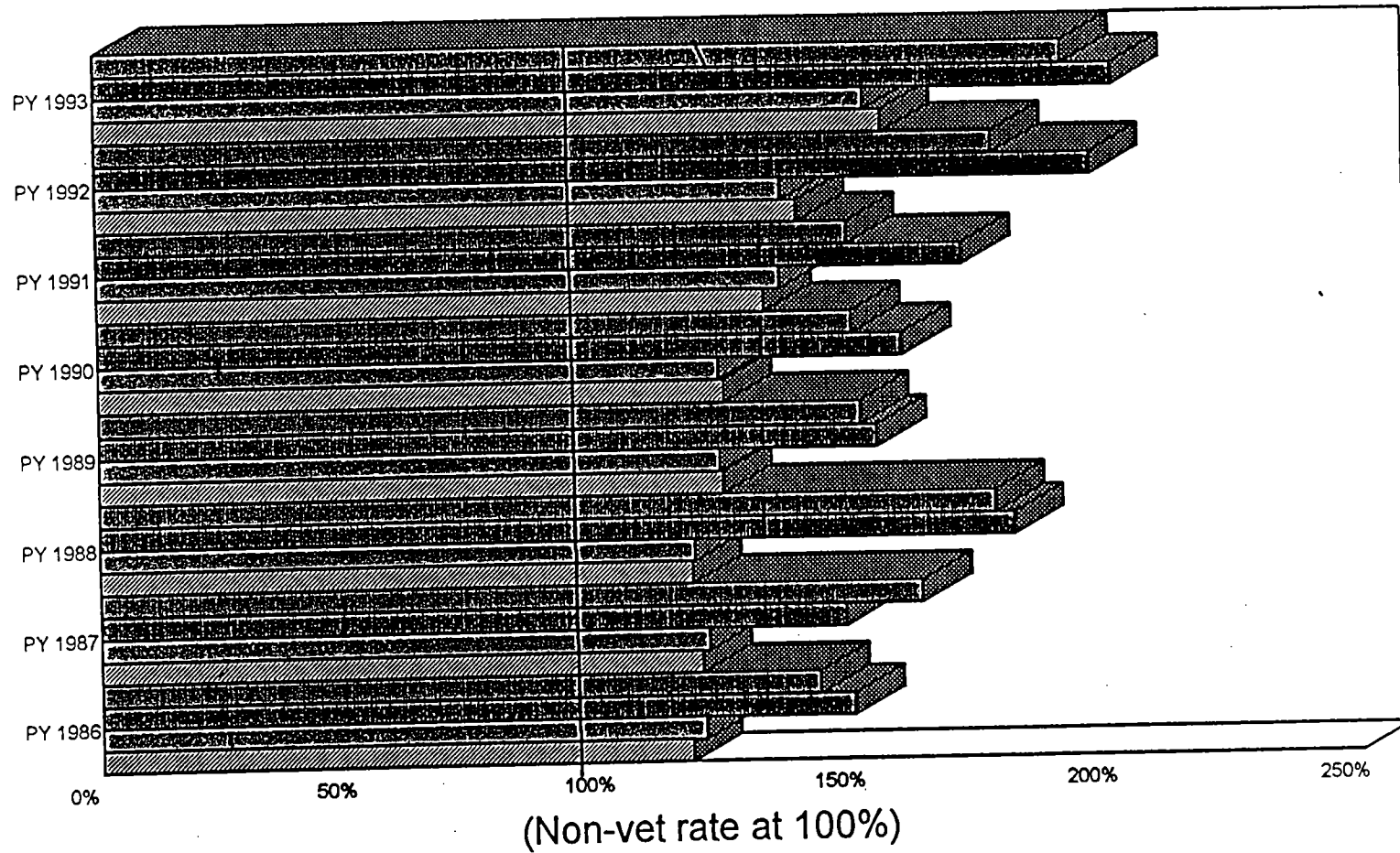
■ JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT, Title IV, Part C (JTPA IV-C), Veterans' Employment Programs

Employment Service (Job Service) Activities

- VETS and its funded staff assure that veterans receive priority of service from all SESA staff
 - Of the 2.57 million veterans registered for assistance during the year, 559,324 veterans were helped into jobs (21.7% of applicants)
 - 2 million veterans were provided services (including job counseling, vocational guidance, referral to training, placement and other employment services)
 - of the 54,917 special disabled veterans looking for help, 15,389 were helped into jobs (28% of applicants).

Source: Aggregation of State ETA 9002 reports - As of June 30, 1994

Entered Employment Rates Veteran Group vs. Nonveterans



VETS Funded Staff

- Employment Service achievements include work performed by VETS-funded staff:
 - Local Veterans' Employment Representatives , and
 - Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program specialists

Local Veterans' Employment Representatives

- Coordinate local employment service office efforts to provide priority of service
 - Registered 771,837 applicants
 - Helped 177,604 veterans into jobs
 - including 66,322 Vietnam-era veterans; 13,063 disabled veterans; and 5,318 special disabled veterans (400 more than last year)

Source: Aggregation of VETS-200 reports (As of June 30, 1994)

Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program specialists

- Conduct outreach - seeking disabled veterans
- Conduct job development with employers
- Provide case management services to customers
 - Registered 929,237 veterans
 - Helped 189,324 veterans into jobs
 - including 72,174 Vietnam-era veterans; 16,669 disabled veterans;
and 6,905 special disabled veterans

Source: Aggregation of VETS-200 Reports (As of June 30, 1994)

Job Training Partnership Act, Title IV, Part C (JTPA IV-C)

- Process reinvented this year to award larger competitive grants
- 4,672 service-connected, Vietnam-era or recently separated veterans will participate in the JTPA program for veterans
- Of these, 3,265 are expected to be placed upon completion of their classroom or on-the-job training

Source: From grant award provisions, PY 1993

FISCAL YEAR 1994 EFFORTS (Ending September 30, 1994)

- Service Members Occupational Conversion and Training Act (SMOCTA)
- Transition Assistance Program
- Federal Contractor Program
- National Veterans' Training Institute
- Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Projects
- Veterans' Reemployment Rights

Service Members Occupational Conversion and Training Act

- Matches separating servicemembers with employer career job training programs
 - Placed over 9,600 veterans in employer training programs

Source: VA Muskogee weekly reports of Notices of Intent to Employ a veteran - As of September 30, 1994.

Transition Assistance Program

- 163,044 military men and women and their spouses attended workshops on how to get a job and were provided employability information
- 3,686 workshops were offered, covering 200 military installations in the United States

Source: Aggregation of TAP site reports - Final September 30, 1994 reports

Federal Contractor Program

- 147 complaints from Vietnam-era or service-connected disabled veterans were investigated by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs during the fiscal year
 - 14 of these resulted in findings of violation of the veteran's rights

Source: OFCCP 38 USC 4212 compliance actions report to VETS

National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI)

- 2,829 veteran service providers were trained at NVTI
 - Of these, 1,034 were DVOP staff; 713 were LVER; and 139 were VETS' staff.

Source: NVTI tally of class participants as of September 30, 1994

Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Projects

- 4,053 homeless veterans were helped into jobs through grant programs ending September 30, 1994
- 4,295 homeless veterans are expected to be helped into jobs through grant awards for this year (programs ending on September 30, 1995)

Source: Grantee Technical Performance Reports - As of September 30, 1994, and grant provisions

Enforcement - Veterans' Reemployment Rights

- Ensures that individuals serving our Nation in uniformed service do not lose jobs or benefits of employment
- President Clinton signed the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 into law on October 14, 1994 (Public Law 103-353)
 - Enhances protection for servicemembers when they return to their pre-service employer
- 1,208 veterans filed new VRR claims with VETS
 - 1,053 were closed within 90 days (87%)
 - It took 43 days on the average to process a claim to closure
 - Claims settled by VETS resulted in \$700,298 being paid to claimants
 - 71 claims were forwarded to the Department of Justice for litigation