U.S. Department of Labor

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

JAN 2 3 2007

ASVET MEMORANDUM NO. 01-07

TO: All Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program Grantees, All Veterans' Workforce Investment Program Grantees and all VETS Staff

FROM: Charles S. Ciccolella

SUBJECT: Implementation of Common Measures for all Competitive Grants funded by the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) and Veterans' Workforce Investment Program (VWIP)

I. **Purpose:** To provide information and guidance to HVRP and VWIP grantees and all Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) staff at the State, Regional, and National levels, concerning revised technical performance reporting requirements that integrate common measures definitions, methodologies, and reporting requirements.

Effective immediately all current HVRP and VWIP grantees must collect and report technical performance information as described within this memorandum and the attached Common Measures Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) for Competitive Grantees. The TAG was developed to assist in implementing and incorporating common measures methodologies and reporting requirements into all competitive grants funded by HVRP and VWIP.

In an effort to assist grantees with implementation expenses, all HVRP and VWIP grantees are allowed to request a grant modification request of their existing budget to pay for software changes to accommodate common measures implementation.

If the quarterly administrative expenditures exceed the allowed percentages as a direct result of common measures implementation, grantees will explain and request an exception in their quarterly technical performance narrative reports to their respective Director for Veterans' Employment and Training (DVET)/Grant Officer Technical Representative (GOTR).

DVETs/GOTRs are hereby authorized to approve competitive grantees administrative expenditures that exceed the allowed percentages of 20% for HVRP and 10% for VWIP for the purposes of common measures implementation upon written request from the

grantee(s). DVETs/GOTRs may allow up to 25% of the total grant award for HVRP and 15% of the total grant award for VWIP for PY 2006 administrative expenses on a one-time common measure implementation basis (without Grant Officer approval). DVETs/GOTRs will approve the one-time administrative overhead deviations in writing and attach the approval letter in the VETS Outcomes and Performance Accountability Reporting (VOPAR) system under the appropriate grant number(s) and quarter.

II. **References:** HVRP Urban Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA) # 06-04, HVRP Non-Urban SGA # 06-02, HVRP New Grantee SGA #06-05 and VWIP SGA # 06-03, 38 U.S.C., Section 2021, as added by Section 5 of Public Law 107-95, the Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Assistance Act of 2001, Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Section 168, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 17-05, dated February 17, 2006; ETA TEGL No. 28-04, dated April 15, 2005; ETA 9002 and VETS 200 Data Preparation Handbook, ETA Handbook No. 406, OMB Approval No.: 1205-0240, Expiration Date: 02/28/2009

III. **Rescissions:** None.

IV. **Background**: In the summer of 2001, the President's Management Agenda announced an aggressive strategy for improving the overall management of the Federal government. One area addressed was the integration of common measures to evaluate the effectiveness of similar programs across different executive departmental level agencies.

As a result, VETS first introduced common measures reporting requirements in the HVRP and VWIP 2006 Solicitations for Grant Applications. In August 2006, Common Measures training was provided to all HVRP and VWIP grantees and all attending VETS staff during several sessions held at the 2006 Competitive Grantees Training Conference (see Attachment A).

VETS has indicated that Program Year (PY) 2006, for the performance period July 1, 2006 thru June 30, 2007, is the year-long "hold harmless" transitional period in order to integrate common measures definitions, methodologies, and reporting requirements into all the HVRP and VWIP competitive grants reporting systems by no later than June 30, 2007. Please keep in mind that while PY 2006 is the hold "harmless" transitional year grantees are still expected to perform according to their proposed and approved planned levels.

During PY 2006, it is the intent of VETS to retain pertinent current performance measures that are needed to demonstrate HVRP and VWIP historical outcomes for reporting purposes as mandated by the appropriate authorizing legislation. The Common Measures TAG and an updated Glossary of Terms (see Attachments B and C) explains the terminology and methodologies to be used in implementing the common measures reporting requirements. The attached Common Measures Quarterly Technical Performance Report incorporates all of the HVRP and VWIP grantee reporting

requirements (Attachment D – and see example Attachment E).

Implementing Common Measure benefits the Competitive Grants in several ways:

- ✓ First, Common Measures established a consistent methodology across all federal programs that will allow us to highlight our comparable successes. We have had a history of success, especially with HVRP, which has lead to incremental increases in funding allocations. We are very fortunate that recently enacted legislation maintained the HVRP authorization level at $50 million.

- ✓ Second, while we implement Common Measures, we will also maintain some of the pertinent "old" measures that will allow us to continue to analyze trend data and compare future results against current performance. This also enables the program to explain any declines in future performance that may result from Common Measure implementation.

- ✓ Finally, we expect that once common measures are fully incorporated into all HVRP and VWIP competitive grants, that the actual grantee performance levels for 90- and 180-day retention in employment will increase as we are only counting those participants that have completed employment for the 90- to 180-day timeframes for retention purposes (vs. all eligible participants that were placed during the quarter). This will add additional creditability to our claim of lasting program success.

As directed, common measures must be fully implemented and "officially" reported to Congress by VETS and all its HVRP and VWIP competitive grantees for the performance period July 1, 2007 thru June 30, 2008, and thereafter until rescinded.

Training Opportunities: In the coming weeks, we will be conducting several technical assistance conference calls and/or webinars to provide information to any and all HVRP and VWIP grantees and VETS staff on common measures implementation (more details to follow via separate correspondence).

We will be discussing common measures with all Competitive Grants Expert Cluster (CGEC) members during their monthly conference calls and during the April 2007 CGEC training session. Therefore, CGEC members will be better prepared to provide technical assistance to VETS staff and grantees within their respective Regions.

Also, staff will be made available to discuss common measures for competitive grantees for any upcoming regional or national VETS staff training sessions upon request to the Director of Operations and Programs as funding and staffing schedules permit.

V. **HVRP and VWIP Grantee Actions Required:**

1. All current HVRP and VWIP grantees are to review the contents of this ASVET Memorandum and its attachments. If questions or concerns arise, please contact your DVET/GOTR.

2. All current HVRP and VWIP grantees are responsible for fully implementing common measures data collection methodologies and reporting requirements as outlined in this ASVET Memorandum and the attached Common Measure TAG for Competitive Grantees for the services provided in PY 2006 by no later than June 30, 2007.

3. All HVRP and VWIP grantees are to report their progress in implementing common measures data collection methodologies and reporting requirements in each of their quarterly technical narrative reports for PY 2006.

4. Until such time as the VOPAR quarterly reporting system programming is updated for common measures purposes, all HVRP and VWIP grantees will report actual non-cumulative performance activities utilizing the attached Common Measures Quarterly Report Excel spreadsheet beginning with the performance period ending December 31st, 2006, (if possible) and by no later than June 30, 2007. Grantees are to electronically attach their Common Measures Quarterly Technical Performance Report spreadsheet with actual data in Excel format into VOPAR for each PY 2006 performance quarter, as appropriate.

   Grantees are advised not to alter the spreadsheet report format as we will be rolling-up the data electronically. If changes are made to the spreadsheet report format, the national roll-up will not work properly and we will need to request appropriate revisions.

5. Once the VOPAR reporting system is updated to incorporate common measures, we anticipate utilizing the grantee submitted Common Measures Quarterly Report Excel spreadsheets for PY 2006 to populate VOPAR, as practicable.

6. HVRP and VWIP grantees are to request technical assistance, as appropriate, from their respective DVET/GOTR.

7. During the Common Measures transition period, VETS is requesting approximately 6 to 10 volunteer HVRP/VWIP grantees to "pilot" test the attached Common Measures Quarterly Report Excel spreadsheet. Interested volunteer grantees are to inform their respective DVET/GOTR and provide their programmatic point of contact via e-mail by no later than February 2nd, 2007.

VI. **VETS Staff Actions Required**:

1. All respective DVETs/GOTRs, Assistant Directors for Veterans' Employment and

Training (ADVETs), Veteran Program Specialists (VPSs), Regional Administrators for Veterans' Employment and Training (RAVETs), CGEC members, National Office Program staff, and other pertinent competitive grants VETS field staff are to review the contents of this ASVET and its attachments.

2. RAVETs and DVETs/GOTRs are responsible for overseeing and ensuring that all HVRP and VWIP grantees in their respective areas implement all of the common measures data collection methodologies and reporting requirements as outlined in this ASVET Memorandum and the Common Measures TAG by no later than June 30, 2007.

3. If/when a DVET/GOTR receives a request from a HVRP/VWIP grantee requesting to "pilot" test the Common Measures Quarterly Report Excel spreadsheet, they are to send an e-mail to their respective RAVET with the grantee name and point of contact information. RAVETs will forward the volunteer grantee name and point of contact information to the Competitive Grants Lead via e-mail by no later than February 9th, 2007. If we do not receive 6 to 10 grantee volunteers by then, the Competitive Grants Lead will contact specific grantees directly and request their assistance.

4. In March/April 2007, all respective DVETs/GOTRs will evaluate the HVRP and VWIP grantees progress in implementing common measures data collection methodologies in conjunction with the required on-site monitoring visits, as travel funds permit. We encourage DVETs/GOTRs to increase communications with their respective grantees (via phone calls and e-mails) to offer technical assistance during the common measures conversion process. If/When grantees are found that have not implemented common measures data collection methodologies and reporting requirements, appropriate DVETs/GOTRs and their respective CGEC member(s) will provide intensive technical assistance as appropriate to ensure all competitive grantees are in compliance by June 30, 2007.

5. RAVETs will submit an executive briefing on the status of each HVRP and VWIP grantee within their respective regions concerning their progress in converting to common measures reporting by no later than February 20th, May 20th, and August 20th to the Director of Operations and Programs with a copy to the Competitive Grants Lead.

6. The Competitive Grants Lead with the assistance of the CGEC will advise the VOPAR Developer on the programmatic changes necessary to incorporate common measures into the HVRP and VWIP reporting modules. The VOPAR common measures changes are expected to be implemented within the next few months.

7. Until the VOPAR system is updated, the Competitive Grants Lead with the assistance of the CGEC will review and electronically roll-up all of the grantee submitted Common Measures Quarterly Technical Performance Report Excel spreadsheets by

State, Region, and overall National totals. If/when errors and/or omissions are found on the grantee Excel spreadsheets, we will notify the appropriate RAVET and DVET/GOTR to request appropriate corrective action(s). We anticipate utilizing the grantee submitted Excel spreadsheets to initially populate the VOPAR system for Common Measures purposes, as practicable.

VII. **Effective Date:** Immediately

VIII. **Inquiries:** DVETs/GOTRs are to provide technical assistance to grantees within their respective States. DVETs/GOTRs are to request technical assistance from their respective CGEC member(s) and/or RAVET. RAVETs and CGEC members are to request technical assistance from the Competitive Grants Lead at e-mail address mclaughlin.kristine@dol.gov or phone number (202) 693-4756.

IX. **Expiration Date:** Until superseded.

X. **Attachments:**

A. Common Measures Training Slides @ http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/hvrp/CommonMeasures.ppt)

B. Competitive Grantees Common Measures TAG
C. Glossary of Terms (revised)
D. Common Measures Quarterly Technical Performance Report
E. "Sample" Common Measures Quarterly Technical Performance Report