

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**  
**Veterans' Employment & Training Service**



**Annual Report to Congress**  
**Fiscal Year 2010**



**Office of the Assistant Secretary  
for Veterans' Employment and Training  
U. S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20210**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>INTRODUCTION</u> .....	3
<u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u> .....	4
<u>VETS' PROGRAMS AND OUTCOMES</u> .....	5
• <u>PERFORMANCE GOALS 08-1.E (VETS)</u> .....	5
• <u>PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS METHODOLOGIES</u> .....	6
<u>JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANT PROGRAM</u> .....	7
• <u>DISABLED VETERANS OUTREACH PROGRAM (DVOP)</u> .....	7
• <u>LOCAL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTATIVE (LVER) PROGRAM</u> .....	8
• <u>AVERAGE EARNINGS AND WEIGHTED MEASURES</u> .....	10
• <u>INCENTIVE AWARD ANALYSIS</u> .....	11
<u>HOMELESS VETERANS' REINTEGRATION PROGRAM (HVRP)</u> .....	12
• <u>HOMELESS VETERANS STAND DOWNS</u> .....	13
<u>VETERANS' WORKFORCE INVESTMENT PROGRAM (VWIP)</u> .....	14
<u>TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)</u> .....	14
• <u>TAP EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS</u> .....	15
• <u>DOMESTIC ACTIVITY</u> .....	15
• <u>RESERVE AND NATIONAL GUARD</u> .....	16
• <u>OVERSEAS ACTIVITY</u> .....	16
<u>COMPLIANCE AND INVESTIGATIONS</u> .....	17
• <u>UNIFORMED SERVICES EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT OF 1994</u> .....	17
• <u>VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACT (VEOA)</u> .....	18
• <u>FEDERAL CONTRACTOR REPORTING</u> .....	19
• <u>VIETNAM ERA VETERANS' READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1974</u> .....	22
<u>VETS' COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES</u> .....	22
• <u>RECOVERY AND EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE LIFELINES</u> .....	22
• <u>VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT</u> .....	23
<u>VETERANS' PRIORITY OF SERVICE</u> .....	24
• <u>VETERANS' PRIORITY OF SERVICE SUMMARY</u> .....	29
<u>APPENDIX (PROGRAM YEAR 2009 FINAL REPORTS)</u> .....	30

## **INTRODUCTION**

---

This report is prepared in accordance with Title 38, United States Code, Sections 4107(c), 4212(c), and 4215(d) [38 U.S.C. §§ 4107(c), 4212(c), and 4215(d)], and 38 U.S.C. § 2021(d). The report describes the programs and compliance activities for which the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training (OASVET) has primary responsibility.

Some of the activities described in this report are carried out on a Program Year (PY) basis while others operate on a Fiscal Year (FY) basis. Since only one quarter of PY 2010 occurs during FY 2010, the performance measure data reported for 2010 is for PY 2009 which ended June 30, 2010. Information for the prior PY and FY has been included in this report to facilitate comparisons of results.

### **VETS' Mission Statement**

VETS proudly serves Veterans and Service Members! We provide resources and expertise to assist and prepare them to obtain meaningful careers, maximize their employment opportunities, and protect their employment rights.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Fiscal Year 2010, the U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL/VETS) continued to provide comprehensive services to meet the employment and training needs of eligible Veterans, especially those with disabilities and severe injuries, and to help employers find well-qualified, reliable, industrious, and resilient Veterans to fill any job vacancies.

The Jobs for Veterans State Grant program provides funding to States for Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff. These personnel provide intensive case management services to Veterans and promote the hiring of Veterans through direct marketing and outreach activities with employers.

During the period of this Annual Report, the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) grantees continued to achieve job placement and job retention rates for enrolled homeless Veterans that exceed most, if not all of the other targeted DOL employment and training assistance programs. VETS strives to maintain the HVRP as an exemplary program for reintegrating homeless Veterans into society and the workforce. As in the past, for a relatively small investment in FY 2010, the HVRP successfully helped place thousands of previously, sometimes chronically, homeless Veterans on a path to self-sufficiency.

The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshops continued to provide critical assistance to Service Members and their spouses by giving them the tools necessary for a successful transition from military to civilian life. The Overseas Transition Assistance Program (OTAP) continues to grow, with four new sites helping to facilitate an easier, faster return to civilian employment for Service Members stationed overseas.

Innovations and improvements continue to increase positive outcomes in the majority of VETS' programs and in other special projects undertaken on behalf of Veterans. The Recovery & Employment Assistance Lifelines (REALifelines) program, which focuses on services to those transitioning Service Members and Veterans wounded and injured in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, has expanded existing services and led to increases in securing new and meaningful employment for those most in need. VETS is responsible for annually collecting the VETS-100 and VETS-100A Reports from Federal contractors that show the number of Veterans employed and recently hired. In addition, it is responsible for investigating claims of any Federal agency's failure to provide Veterans' Preference in hiring or during a reduction-in-force, and claims of "access" to Federal Agency's job announcements covered by the Veterans' Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA).

VETS accepts and investigates complaints under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) of 1994. The Act prohibits discrimination in employment based on an individual's prior service in the uniformed services; current obligations as a member of the uniformed services; or intent to join the uniformed services. An employer is prohibited from discriminating against a person because of such person's attempt to enforce his or her rights under the Act. In addition, an employer may not retaliate against an individual who has testified or otherwise assisted in any proceeding under the Act. USERRA also provides reemployment rights with the pre-service employer following qualifying service in the uniformed services. In general, the protected person is entitled to be reemployed with the status, seniority, and rate of pay as if continuously employed during the period of service. USERRA applies to private employers, the

Federal Government, and State and local governments. During Fiscal Year 2010, VETS opened 1,438 USERRA cases. By July 1 of each year, VETS provides its USERRA Annual Report to Congress.

Finally, the following Report also demonstrates VETS’ compliance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA) of 2002 and collaborative activities with partner departments, like the Departments of Defense and Veterans’ Affairs; and, other DOL agencies, like the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP). It also describes the successful implementation of a variety of program changes and new initiatives that illustrate a continuing focus on serving and protecting the rights of Veterans and preparing them to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce.

**VETS’ PROGRAMS AND OUTCOMES**

**DOL PERFORMANCE GOAL 08-1.E (VETS)**

*Improve the employment outcomes for Veterans who receive One-Stop labor exchange services.*

*Indicators, Targets and Results for Participants - Program Year (PY) based (July-June) data:*

<b>Goals for Participants</b>	<b>PY 2008 Target</b>	<b>PY 2008 Result</b>	<b>Target Reached</b>	<b>PY 2009 Target</b>	<b>PY 2009 Result</b>	<b>Target Reached</b>
Percent of Veterans employed in the first quarter after exit	62.5%	58.7%	N	58.1%	46.2%	N
Percent of Veterans employed in the first quarter after exit still employed in 2nd & 3rd quarters after exit	82.0%	80.6%	N	78.9%	75.6%	N
Average earnings of Veterans in the second and third quarter after exit	\$15,300	\$16,573	Y	\$14,923	\$15,922	Y
Percent of Disabled Veterans employed in the first quarter after exit	58.5%	55.8%	N	53.9%	43.9%	N
Percent of Disabled Veterans employed in the first quarter after exit still employed in 2nd & 3rd quarters after exit	81.0%	79.7%	N	78.0%	75.8%	N
Average earnings of Disabled Veterans in the second and third quarter after exit	\$15,500	\$16,873	Y	\$15,310	\$16,449	Y

## **PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS METHODOLOGIES**

---

The workforce investment system supports economic growth; provides workers with the information, advice, job search assistance, and supportive services they need to get and keep good jobs; and it provides employers with skilled workers in demand industries and occupations. The federally-funded workforce system supports the One-Stop Career Center system and programs to serve employers and job seekers at no cost to either the employer or the job seeker. The workforce system also provides priority of service and supplementary assistance to Veterans, Disabled Veterans and other eligible persons (see 38 U.S.C. § 4215) by the staff of all programs supported wholly or in part through the funds provided by the U.S. Department of Labor.

In PY 2009 VETS continued to implement a system of Common Measures to assess the performance of the One-Stop Career Center system regarding services to Veterans. Common Measures are an integral part of the performance accountability system. The value of implementing Common Measures is the ability to describe the outcomes of the workforce system across agency and program lines. Common Measures answer three key questions:

- How many unemployed people went to work after receiving services?
- How many of those employed remained at work after receiving services?
- What are the average earnings of individuals who are employed after receiving services?

The three key measures of performance set for those State-based programs operated by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) in PY 2009 were:

- Entered Employment Rate (EER), which is the percent of the participants served who are employed in the first quarter after exit;
- Employment Retention Rate (ERR), which is the percent of those entering employment who are still employed in the second and third quarters following the quarter in which these participants exited; and,
- Average Earnings (AE), which is calculated based on the wages paid to those entering employment who are still employed in the second and third quarters following the quarter in which these participants exited.

These three performance measures are applied to the outcomes achieved separately for Disabled Veterans (DVs) and for all Veterans (including DVs). These three measures are defined under the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) Common Performance Measures Policy. The EER, ERR and AE performance measure numerical targets were negotiated between VETS' Director for Veterans' Employment and Training (DVET) located in each State and appropriate State Agency administrative staff. One set of negotiated performance measure targets covers all Veterans receiving employment services through the One-Stop Career Center system, and the second set covers those Veterans served by DVOP specialists and LVER staff (Grant-Based Measures) both of which are covered by this report. There is an expectation that States will set their targets for outcomes high enough to be challenging, but still remain achievable. If a State falls short of its negotiated targets VETS provides technical assistance, through the appropriate DVET, to help the State achieve success in providing Veterans with services that lead to viable opportunities for employment. Mutually agreed upon targets for Veterans were included in each State's plan of service under the Jobs for Veterans State Grant program.

## JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANT PROGRAM

VETS offers employment and training services to eligible Veterans through the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) program. Services are provided to maximize employment and training opportunities for Veterans. VETS allocates program funds to each State, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands according to a formula that relates: 1) the number unemployed in the general population in each State compared with the total number unemployed in the general population across all States; and, 2) the number of Veterans in the civilian labor force in each State compared with the total number of Veterans in the civilian labor force across all States. JVSG program funds support services to Veterans provided by two principal staff positions, Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff members. DVOP and LVER staff provide direct client services and refer qualified Veterans and other eligible persons to training opportunities developed through field visitation, to individuals in Veterans Administration Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR & E) funded training, or for those participating in available training programs funded under the Workforce Investment Act. Eligible Veterans receive priority consideration in all Department of Labor funded employment and training programs in accordance with 38 U.S.C. 4215.

**DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM (DVOP):** The DVOP is authorized by the Veterans' Rehabilitation and Education Amendments of 1980 (Public Law (P.L.) 96-466), as amended by P.L. 107-288, the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA) of 2002, and is codified at 38 U.S.C. § 4103A. The primary duty of DVOP specialists is to provide intensive services to Veterans. P.L. 109-461 amended the DVOP statute requiring DVOP staff appointed to the position on or after January 1, 2006, to receive training from the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI) within three years of appointment. On October 13, 2010, P.L. 111-275 was enacted and that period was substantially reduced from three years down to eighteen months for those who are assigned on or after that date. During FY 2010, 175 DVOP specialists completed the Labor and Employment Specialist course and 196 DVOP specialists completed the Case Management Training course, the two core required courses for DVOP Specialists at the NVTI.

DVOP specialists' services target Veterans and transitioning Service Members with barriers to employment. They may be located within the One-Stop Career Centers or co-located with other service providers such as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). DVOP Specialists:

- Provide intensive services to meet the employment needs of Special Disabled, Disabled, and other eligible Veterans; and,
- Provide a full range of employment services to Veterans with maximum emphasis on assisting economically or educationally disadvantaged Veterans.

In accordance with flexibility given the States by the JVA, each State establishes the appropriate mix of DVOP specialists and LVER staff based upon local economic conditions and related factors and allocates a corresponding share of its JVSG funds to support those staff members each year. Although proportionately fewer funds were requested by and provided to JVSG grantees for DVOP, they planned to increase the number of DVOP specialists in FY 2010 over the FY 2009 total by 63.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. This was primarily due to the lag in refilling vacancies caused by hiring freezes that resulted from State budget deficits. JVSG grantees

supported a greater number of less senior DVOP specialists and maintained a lower average cost in FY 2010, as a result. The number of DVOP specialists actually supported by States consequently increased over FY 2009 levels. The total DVOP FTE position level in FY 2010 rose by nearly 60 full-time equivalent positions.

<b>DVOP Specialists</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>	<b>FY 2010</b>
DVOP Funding	\$81,711,000	\$80,429,000
Projected DVOP Staffing	1,064	1,128
Actual DVOP Positions Paid	976	1,036
% of Planned Level Paid	92%	92%
Average Cost per Position	\$83,720	\$77,667

### **PY 2008 Productivity**

During PY 2008, DVOP specialists served 345,133 transitioning Service Members, Veterans and other eligible persons. Of this total, 50,687 (15%) were Disabled Veterans, 90,661 (26%) were campaign badge Veterans, 8,344 (2%) were transitioning Service Members and 37,160 (11%) were recently separated Veterans.

### **PY 2009 Productivity**

In comparison, during PY 2009, DVOP specialists served 351,069 transitioning Service Members, Veterans and other eligible persons. Of this total, 54,605 (16%) were Disabled Veterans, 134,193 (38%) were campaign badge Veterans, 7,801 (2%) were transitioning Service Members and 55,022 (16%) were recently separated Veterans. Most of these Veterans faced barriers to employment and were served using the case management approach to delivering intensive services. The table below depicts the outcomes achieved as a result of services provided by DVOP specialists in PY 2009:

<b>Employment Outcomes for Veterans Served by DVOP Specialists In PY 2009</b>	<b>Veterans/ Eligible Persons</b>	<b>Disabled Veterans</b>
Number of Veterans who Entered Employment	95,159	15,659
Entered Employment Rate	40.05%	45.09%
Employment Retention Rate	75.89%	75.45%

**LOCAL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTATIVE (LVER) PROGRAM:** LVER staff members have been providing employment services to Veterans for the past 66 years. The local office positions were first authorized under the original "GI Bill," the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (Public Law (P.L.) 78-346). The program was substantially amended by the JVA in 2002. The LVER program is codified at 38 U.S.C. § 4104. LVER staff members are primarily responsible for conducting outreach to employers to assist Veterans in gaining employment. P.L.

109-461 amended the LVER statute requiring LVER staff appointed to the position on or after January 1, 2006, to receive training from the NVTI within three years of appointment. On October 13, 2010, P.L. 111-275 was enacted and that period was substantially reduced from three years down to 18 months for those who are assigned on or after that date.

During FY 2010, 112 LVER staff completed the Labor and Employment Specialist course and 173 LVER staff completed the Promoting Partnerships in Employment course, the two core required courses for LVER staff at the NVTI.

LVER staff members are located in service delivery points -- such as One-Stop Career Centers-- throughout the States. Their specific responsibilities are to:

- Conduct outreach to employers in the area to assist Veterans in gaining employment;
- Provide seminars for employers and, in conjunction with employers, conduct job search workshops and establish job search groups for job-seeking Veterans; and
- Facilitate and provide employment, training, and placement services to Veterans under the applicable state employment service delivery system.

In accordance with the JVA, each State establishes the appropriate mix of DVOP and LVER staff based upon local economic conditions and related factors and allocates a corresponding share of its Jobs for Veterans State Grant funds to support those staff members each year. Given the state of the economy, grantees requested a larger amount of funding for LVER employer outreach and job development related activities. This fact accounts for the increase of 25 FTE positions in FY 2010 LVER positions requested. The increase in funds also served TAP.

As a result, JVSG grantees supported 57 more LVER FTE than in FY 2009 and filled 94 percent of planned staff positions, and at a cost per position that was almost \$5,000 less than in FY 2009. Like with DVOP, this was partially due to the filling of vacancies caused by staff turnover the previous year with lower cost entry level LVER staff, resulting in LVER program savings and slightly reduced turnover of staff, when compared with FY 2009.

LVER STAFF	FY 2009	FY 2010
LVER Funding	\$72,741,000	\$73,372,000
Projected LVER Staffing	938	963
Actual LVER Positions Paid	848	905
% of Planned Level Paid	90%	94%
Average Cost per Position	\$85,779	\$81,074

### **PY 2008 Productivity**

During PY 2008, LVER staff members served 359,314 transitioning Service Members, Veterans and other eligible persons. Of this total, 38,143 (11%) were Disabled Veterans, 91,850 (26%) were campaign badge Veterans, 9,191 (3%) were transitioning Service Members, and 47,222 (13%) were recently separated Veterans.

## **PY 2009 Productivity**

During PY 2009, LVER staff members served 357,936 transitioning Service Members, Veterans and other eligible persons. Of this total, 42,506 (12%) were Disabled Veterans, 144,780 (40%) were campaign badge Veterans, 11,851 (3%) were transitioning Service Members, and 42,971 (12%) were recently separated Veterans.

The table below depicts the outcomes achieved as a result of services provided by LVER staff in PY 2009.

<b>Employment Outcomes for Veterans Served by LVER Staff Members in PY 2009</b>	<b>Veterans/ Eligible Persons</b>	<b>Recently Separated Veterans</b>
Number of Veterans who Entered Employment	120,276	17,234
Entered Employment Rate	48.6%	51.9%
Employment Retention Rate	76.0%	77.3%

## **PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS – AVERAGE EARNINGS AND WEIGHTED MEASURES**

---

### **PY 2009 Average Earnings**

Veterans who entered employment exclusively through the efforts of the DVOP and LVER program staff members had average earnings of \$15,782. The average earnings figure for all Veterans who entered employment as a result of using the State One-Stop Career Center system was \$15,922, and for all Disabled Veterans it was \$16,449.

### **Weighted Outcome Measure**

In PY 2009, VETS utilized data from the VETS-200 C Report in an internal analysis of reported outcomes to best implement the Jobs for Veterans Act requirement that the DVOP and LVER program measures take into account the difficulty of serving Veterans with particular barriers to employment by “weighting” those measured outcomes. The study also responded to a similar recommendation by the Government Accountability Office (GAO). The three measures that VETS concluded most accurately reflect the efforts that DVOP specialists and LVER staff members provide when serving Veterans with barriers to employment are:

- Number of Veterans who Entered Employment (EE)
- Number of Veterans who received Intensive Services
- Number of Veterans who EE after receiving Intensive Services

VETS concluded that the most appropriate weighted measure of the JVSG program’s effectiveness is the consolidated Entered Employment Rate Following Staff Assisted Services for Total Veterans and Eligible Persons. The weighting is implemented by adjusting the value for that measure based on the number of Veterans who Entered Employment following Intensive Services.

The table below depicts the weighted outcomes achieved as a result of intensive services provided by DVOP specialists and LVER staff during PY 2009 as compared with PY 2008. The numbers within the table are unduplicated counts obtained from the VETS-200 C Report.

<b>Weighted Veterans' Measure for PY 2008-2009</b>	<b>PY 2008</b>	<b>PY 2009</b>
Number of Veterans who Received Services	627,682	624,387
Number of Veterans who Entered Employment (EE)	268,909	206,815
Number of Veterans who received Intensive Services	129,001	153,531
Number of Veterans who EE after receiving Intensive Services	57,320	44,652
Un-Weighted Entered Employment Rate	60.1%	48.2%
<b>Weighted Entered Employment Rate</b>	<b>63.3%</b>	<b>50.8%</b>

## **INCENTIVE AWARD ANALYSIS**

---

The JVA requires a program of performance incentive awards for quality employment, training and placement services to be administered by States. The JVA stipulates that one percent of a State's total grant allocation shall be used for this purpose. The intent is to:

- Encourage the improvement and modernization of employment, training and placement services for Veterans; and
- Recognize eligible employees and employment service offices for excellence in the provision of such services, or for having made demonstrable improvements in the provision of services to Veterans.

Generally, incentive awards are cash awards for individual recipients. However, non-financial incentives may be awarded in lieu of, or in combination with, cash awards as outlined in an approved State Veterans' Services Plan.

With the passage of the Veterans' Benefits, Health Care and Information Technology Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-461), enacted December 22, 2006, States were provided additional flexibility to include employment service offices and One-Stop Career Centers as eligible recipients of Incentive Award funds. In accordance with the amendments made to 38 U.S.C. § 4112, office award recipients may use their incentive awards "for any purpose."

One percent of the total funds authorized in FY 2010 (\$1,624,130) were set aside for incentive awards. Thirty-five State agencies (including the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands) were awarded \$1,096,810 in FY 2010 incentive award funds. Nineteen State agencies declined use of any incentive award funding due to legislative restrictions, State policies, union agreements or other unspecified reasons.

Of the 35 States awarded incentive award funds, 12 States fully utilized all of the incentive funds authorized, 19 States expended a portion of their funding for a total of \$879,921 expended on incentive awards, and the remaining four States with acceptable incentive award plans did not use their incentive award funds. Of the \$879,921 expended on incentive awards, a total of \$360,033 was awarded to DVOP specialist or LVER staff, \$253,764 was awarded to other employment staff, and \$253,764 was awarded to employment offices.

## HOMELESS VETERANS' REINTEGRATION PROGRAM (HVRP)

The HVRP is authorized by 38 U.S.C. § 2021. On October 13, 2010, President Barack Obama signed H.R. 3219, the Veterans' Benefits Act of 2010, into law (P.L. 111-275). Section 201 reauthorizes the HVRP through FY 2011.

The HVRP provides employment and training services to assist in reintegrating homeless Veterans into meaningful employment within the labor force and to stimulate the development of effective service delivery systems that will address the complex problems facing homeless Veterans. HVRP is the only nationwide program focusing exclusively on employment of Veterans who are homeless.

HVRP funds are awarded to eligible entities through a competitive grant process outlined in the annual Solicitation for Grant Applications. Eligible entities in PY 2009 included State and local workforce investment boards, State and local public agencies, and private non-profit organizations including faith-based and community organizations. HVRP grantees provide an array of services utilizing a holistic case management approach that directly assists homeless Veterans as well as provides critical linkages for a variety of supportive services available in their local communities. HVRP applicants need to specifically describe how their outreach approach will establish contact and build an effective level of collaboration with other entities, such as Grant and Per Diem (GPD) grantees, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Veterans' Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) resources, Health and Human Services (HHS) Pathways out of Poverty grantees (PATH), that encounter homeless Veterans to inform potential program participants about the services provided under the HVRP. In FY 2010, VETS hosted a competitive grants conference during which the importance of maintaining strong working linkages was conveyed and emphasized. HUD Special Needs Assistance Program, HHS Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration, the Social Security Administration, the National Institute of Corrections, the Federal Bureau of Bureau of Prisons, Veterans' Health Administration (VHA) Prisoner Reentry program representatives and Atlanta DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) are a few of the federal partner agencies whose representatives were present to provide information to HVRP grantees.

The program is employment-focused and homeless Veterans receive customized employment and training services to assist them to successfully transition into the labor force. Homeless Veterans receive occupational, classroom, and on-the-job training as well as job search and placement assistance, including follow-up services. Since more women than ever before are serving in the uniformed services, VETS has been working closely with the Department's Women's Bureau to help women Veterans who are homeless to find gainful employment. During the performance period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010 (PY 2009), VETS received \$26.330 million for HVRP of which \$24.571 million was allocated to grantees; a four percent increase over the prior year's allocation of \$23.620 million. During PY 2009, the number of participants increased to 14,424 (a 5% increase over PY 2008) and the number of Veterans who were placed in employment increased to 8,458 (8%). While the placement rate rose from 57 to 59 percent, the employment retention rate fell from 67 to 49 percent. The cost per participant (\$1,604) increased 4 percent while the cost per placement (\$2,736) increased by less than the national rate of inflation over PY 2008. The average wage at placement decreased 2 percent to \$10.16 per hour. The entered employment and retention rates for homeless veterans have exceeded rates for the general population.

DVOP and LVER staff are essential to HVRP grantees because they provide necessary employment assistance to assist grantees achieve their entered employment and retention goals through the provision of case management, direct employer contact, job development and follow-up to ensure retention.

VETS awarded a total of 139 HVRP grants, including 75 newly competed grants and 64 grantees approved to receive second or third year funding in PY 2009. Among these were 26 grants in 15 States and the District of Columbia totaling over \$5 million to support partnerships that ensure that homeless women veterans and veterans with families have meaningful training and career opportunities.

## **HOMELESS VETERANS' STAND DOWNS**

---

VETS utilizes a portion of HVRP funds to support “stand down” activities. VETS allows all of its competitive grantees to budget and expend up to \$10,000 of their existing funds per year to support stand down events since they are considered to be an effective means of outreach. Stand down events are a gateway for many homeless Veterans into a structured housing and reintegration program.

A “stand down” is an event held in a local community where a variety of social services are provided to homeless Veterans. Stand down organizers partner with local business and social service providers to provide critical services such as:

- Shower facilities/haircuts;
- Meals;
- Legal advice;
- Medical examinations and dental treatment;
- Hygiene care kits;
- Immunizations;
- Information on Veterans benefits;
- Information on training and employment opportunities;
- Information on support services, including child care; and
- Emotional support and camaraderie amongst other Veterans.

The maximum amount awarded to HVRP eligible entities (that do not have a competitive HVRP grant) to support a stand down event is \$7,000 for a one-day event and \$10,000 for a multi-day event. During FY 2010, stand down event activities increased nationwide, probably due to the recessionary economy. VETS awarded \$637,000 in non-competitive grants for 81 “Stand Down” events that provided direct assistance to homeless Veterans.

Last year, VETS and the Women’s Bureau supported a Women Veterans’ “Stand Down” in Kansas City, Missouri. This Stand Down represented the first such event exclusively designed to assist and meet the needs of women who served in the military and are either homeless or who risk becoming homeless. Both Federal and other service providers were on hand to offer assistance to the hundreds of women who attended this most successful event.

## **VETERANS' WORKFORCE INVESTMENT PROGRAM (VWIP)**

The statutory intent of Workforce Investment Act (P.L. 105-220), Section 168, Veterans' Workforce Investment Programs (VWIP), is to support employment and training programs, through grants or contracts, to meet the needs for workforce investment activities of veterans with service-connected disabilities, veterans who have significant barriers to employment, veterans who served on active duty in the armed forces during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized, and recently separated veterans. The primary objectives of VWIP are to provide services to assist eligible veterans to reintegrate into meaningful employment within the labor force and to stimulate the development of effective service delivery strategies that will address the complex problems facing those Veterans eligible for VWIP. Eligible Veterans include:

- Veterans with service-connected disabilities (Disabled Veterans);
- Veterans who have significant barriers to employment;
- Veterans who served on active duty in the armed forces during a war or in a campaign/expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized (Campaign Veterans); and
- Veterans who were discharged four years or less prior to entering participation (Recently Separated Veterans).

VWIP funds are awarded to eligible organizations through a competitive grant process. Eligible organizations in PY 2008 included State and local workforce investment boards, States and State agencies, local public agencies, and private non-profit organizations including faith-based and community-based organizations.

VWIP grantees provide an array of services utilizing a case management approach that directly assist Veterans and that also provide critical linkages with a variety of supportive service agencies available in their local communities. The program is employment-focused and Veterans receive the employment and training services they need in order to re-enter the labor force. VWIP allows for specialized employment, training, and educational resources, tailored to meet the needs of the specific target populations of veterans served. In many programs, minority, female, economically disadvantaged, homeless veterans, and/or disabled veterans receive these specialized resources.

In PY 2009, VWIP grants totaling \$6.7 million provided training for 3,295 Veterans to include 425 Homeless Veterans. A total of 1,601 Veterans were placed in jobs, yielding a placement rate of 48.6 percent.

## **TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)**

The TAP for separating and retiring Service Members is a cooperative effort between VETS, the Department of Defense (DoD), Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the VA. Since 1990, TAP Employment Workshops have provided job preparation assistance to over two million separating and retiring military Service Members.

Title 10 U.S.C. Chapter 58, requires DOL to assist the DoD, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the VA in providing transition assistance services to separating Service Members and their spouses. In September 2006 these agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the TAP and Disabled TAP (DTAP). VETS provides employment search workshops based on projections made by each of the Armed Services and the DHS (for the U.S. Coast Guard). P.L. 108-183 added Section 4113 to Title 38, U.S.C., Chapter 41 mandating VETS to provide TAP services at military installations overseas. DVOP and LVER staff members are the primary source for facilitation of the TAP Employment Workshops in most States. However, where logistical and other cost factors indicated need for augmentation of the staffing for workshop delivery, VETS' provides contracted personnel.

## **TAP EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS**

---

TAP Employment Workshops are standardized so that all attending Service Members and spouses receive the same high level of instruction. Participants also receive an evaluation of their employability relative to the current job market. The course curriculum covers two and one-half days of classroom instruction and provides information on a variety of topics including:

- Career exploration;
- Resume preparation;
- Strategies for an effective job search;
- Interview techniques;
- Reviewing job offers;
- Prevention of homelessness;
- Entrepreneurship information; and
- Other available support and assistance.

VETS requires that all TAP facilitators receive training conducted by the NVTI at the University of Colorado in Denver. All TAP attendees receive the same student manual and all TAP facilitators receive the same facilitator manual. Both the TAP Employment Workshop manual and the facilitator manual are available via the Internet through VETS web site at:

<http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/tap/main.htm>.

## **DOMESTIC ACTIVITY**

---

The table below compares TAP activity between FY 2009 and FY 2010.

### **National Rollup of Domestic TAP Activity – Comparison of FY 2009 & FY 2010**

	<b>FY 2009</b>	<b>FY 2010</b>	<b># Difference</b>	<b>% Difference</b>
Workshops	3,877	3,510	- 367	- 9.5%
Participants	117,283	119,064	+ 1,781	+ 1.5%

## RESERVE AND NATIONAL GUARD

---

VETS began offering TAP Employment Workshops to members of the Reserve and National Guard returning from active duty assignments in FY 2005. VETS' Directors for Veterans' Employment and Training (DVETs) coordinate closely with VETS' grantees to ensure that staff members are available to facilitate TAP Employment Workshops for returning Reserve and National Guard component Service Members. Additionally, DVETs work directly with officials of the State Adjutant General offices and local reserve unit commanders to advertise the availability of TAP Employment Workshops to their returning Service Members. VA representatives provide pertinent information on benefits, education assistance, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder during most TAP workshops. Spouses are invited to attend these workshops.

VETS pursued an acquisition action during FY 2010 to award a contract for the redesign of the TAP Employment Workshop. VETS expects to award the contract and begin work on the redesign beginning in FY 2011.

## OVERSEAS ACTIVITY

---

As noted above, P.L. 108-183 requires VETS to assist in providing TAP workshops at military installations overseas. Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA) with host countries are needed to allow contractor and VETS staff to provide workshops on a regularly scheduled basis. VETS currently delivers TAP Employment Workshops at 50 sites in Germany, the United Kingdom, Guam, Japan, Korea, Belgium, Italy, and the Azores (Portugal). In FY 2010, VETS expanded workshop delivery to Bahrain, and Turkey. In FY 2011, VETS expects to complete expansion to Spain and Greece.

The table on the next page provides a comparison of the number of workshops delivered and total participants between FY 2009 and FY 2010.

### Rollup of Overseas TAP Activity – Comparison of FY 2009 & FY 2010 Data

	FY 2009	FY 2010	# Difference	% Difference
<b>Workshops</b>	549	555	+ 6	+ 1%
<b>Participants</b>	9,770	10,548	+ 778	+ 8%

Although there has been a relatively small increase in the number of workshops conducted during FY 2010, a larger number of participants completed TAP training. The across the board increase in the size of TAP classes reflects our success in getting commanders to allow more of their personnel to attend scheduled TAP employment workshops.

## COMPLIANCE AND INVESTIGATIONS

VETS is responsible for administering three Federal compliance programs which provide employment protections for Veterans:

- The USERRA guarantees reemployment rights and protects Veterans from employer discrimination due to military obligations. VETS field staff accept and investigate complaints filed by eligible veterans against public and private sector employers in accordance with protections enumerated in Chapter 43 of Title 38, United States Code. Where resolution cannot be directly achieved by VETS, the cases are referred to the Solicitor of Labor for consideration and may be referred to the Department of Justice or the Office of Special Counsel; or, the veteran may seek private counsel to attempt resolution. The annual report for the USERRA compliance program is separately submitted by July of each year.
- The Veterans' Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (VEOA; 5 U.S.C. § 3330a) provides protection to those who are eligible for preference when applying for Federal jobs and during a Federal reduction-in-force. In addition, the VEOA allows certain Veterans who served in the military for three years or more under honorable conditions, and other preference-eligible persons, to compete for job openings that a Federal agency announces under merit promotion procedures.
- The Federal Contractor Program, authorized by 38 U.S.C. § 4212 (d), required covered federal contractors and subcontractors to report at least annually the number of covered Veteran employees and new hires in their workforce by job category and hiring location.

### **THE UNIFORMED SERVICE EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT OF 1994 (USERRA)**

---

There are three levels of federal assistance available to individuals who believe their USERRA rights (38 U.S.C., Chapter 43) may have been violated. Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves' (ESGR) Ombudsmen services are the most informal level at which resolution can be sought. If the issue cannot be resolved by the ESGR Ombudsman, or if the individual prefers to bypass informal resolution, VETS receives, formally investigates and attempts to resolve complaints filed by aggrieved parties.

If, following VETS' investigation and attempts at resolution, the claimant is not fully satisfied with the outcome, VETS informs the individual of his or her right to have the case referred for consideration of legal representation at no cost to the claimant. Referrals are made to the Department of Justice in cases involving a private or State or local government employer, or to the Office of Special Counsel in cases involving a federal employer. Claimants also have the right at any time to withdraw their case to pursue enforcement at their own expense, either on their own or with the assistance of a private attorney. VETS files a detailed Annual USERRA Report to Congress by July 1, which describes its activities and outcomes in the enforcement of USERRA.

## **VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACT (VEOA)**

---

The VEOA, 5 U.S.C. § 3330a, was signed into law on October 31, 1998, providing improved redress for preference-eligible persons and transferring certain administrative responsibilities for assuring that they receive applicable preferences in Federal Employment to VETS. Veterans who are disabled or who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during certain recognized time periods, or in military campaigns, are entitled to preference over other qualified candidates from competitive lists of eligible applicants and are also provided protection for retention consideration during reductions-in-force.

Veterans are entitled to employment preference for most Federal civil service jobs based on when they served, how long they served, and any service-connected disability. Veterans' Preference entitles preference-eligible persons to five or ten additional points on examinations that are scored numerically, provides for the consideration of preference-eligible persons ahead of non-preference eligible persons within a quality category under category rating procedures, and protects preference-eligible persons during reductions-in-force (RIFs).

Section 3304(f) of title 5, United States Code, allows preference-eligible persons or Veterans who have been separated from the armed forces under honorable conditions after three years or more of active service to apply for certain Federal merit promotion opportunities. This group of individuals is able to compete for vacant positions for which the agency is accepting applications from individuals outside its own workforce under merit promotion procedures. Those Veterans mentioned above with three years of active service are not required to be preference-eligible persons to gain access to jobs under the VEOA.

The most significant impact of the VEOA is that VETS, and not the Office of Personnel Management, investigates complaints of violations of Federal Veterans' preference law and denial of access to vacant positions for those individuals described above. VETS investigates each complaint and tries to bring about voluntary compliance. If resolution cannot be achieved within 60 days, the claimant may appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB). If the MSPB issues an adverse decision, an appeal may be taken to the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. If the Federal Circuit fails to issue a judicially reviewable decision within 120 days, the claimant may seek judicial redress in U.S. District Court.

VETS has developed the "Veterans' Preference Advisor" to provide electronic information and advice to employers and employees on Veterans' preference issues. It also helps Veterans to determine the type of preference and benefits to which they are entitled, explains how to file a complaint, and provides an electronic claims form that can be downloaded, completed, and mailed or submitted electronically. The Advisor can be found on the Department's e-laws site at <http://www.dol.gov/elaws/vetspref.htm>.

VETS developed and issued the "Veterans' Preference Operations Manual" in 2009. The purpose of this manual is to provide VETS investigators with uniform guidance for processing complaints brought by preference-eligible persons alleging denial of their rights under the provisions of the VEOA. The manual is available to VETS investigators both in hard copy and electronically.

The table below indicates the total number of Veterans' Preference cases investigated during FY 2010. Of the 730 complaints received in FY 2010 and the 66 cases carried over from FY 2009, VETS closed 722 cases. On average, those cases were resolved in 30 days. There were 74 cases carried over into FY 2011.

<b><u>VETERANS' PREFERENCE CASES FY 2010</u></b> <b><u>(Based on VPIMS entries through 10-31-10)</u></b>		
Cases carried in from FY 2009:		66
Issue Hiring:	690	
Issue RIF:	40	
Cases opened during FY 2010:		<u>730</u>
Total carried from 2009 and opened in 2010:		796
Cases Closed in FY 2010 by Case Age		
% Closed within 60 days:	671 (93%)	
% Closed within 90 days:	715 (99%)	
Total cases closed FY 2010:	722 (100%)	
Average numbers of days open:		
	30 Days	
Case Investigative Findings:		
Merit Finding		
Issue – Hiring:	28	
Issue – RIF:	<u>4</u>	
Total:	32	
No Merit Finding		
Issue – Hiring:	463	
Issue – RIF:	<u>21</u>	
Total:	484	
Not Eligible:		
	58	
Untimely Filed (Equitable Tolling):		
	26	
Cases Closed Before Investigations Completed		
Administratively closed:	33	
Claim Withdrawn:	46	
Merit Undetermined	28	
Duplicate:	15	
Converted to USERRA:	<u>00</u>	
Total	122	
Cases Opened – Carries Over to FY 2011:		
	74	

## **FEDERAL CONTRACTOR REPORTING**

---

### **Federal Contractor Veterans' Employment Program (VETS-100) Report**

The Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act (VEVRAA) of 1972 (P.L. 92-540) and the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Amendments of 1974 (P.L. 93-508) required Federal contractors and subcontractors awarded a Federal contract of \$25,000 or more prior to December 1, 2003, to report annually to the Secretary of Labor, via the VETS-100 Report, the number of employees who were:

- Special Disabled Veterans;
- Vietnam Era Veterans;
- Recently separated Veterans (within 12 months following discharge from active duty); and
- Other Protected Veterans (Veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. military during a war or campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge is awarded).

These groups of covered Veterans are reported for each hiring location and specific job categories. The Act also required reporting on the number of new employees hired during the reporting year who belong to the specified categories of covered Veterans. The regulations that implement this requirement are found in 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 61-250.

The Jobs for Veterans' Act (JVA) of 2002 changed the reporting requirements for contracts entered into on or after December 1, 2003. In accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4212 (a) and (d), the dollar amount of the Federal contract that triggers a contractor's obligation to report on Veterans' employment increased to \$100,000 or more, and the categories of Veterans that must be tracked and reported changed.

The new reporting categories include:

- Disabled Veterans;
- Other Protected Veterans (Veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. military during a war or campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge is awarded);
- Veterans who, while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces, participated in a United States military operation for which an Armed Forces service medal was awarded pursuant to Executive Order 12985; and
- Recently separated Veterans (within three years from discharge from active duty).

In 2008, DOL promulgated new regulations to implement the change to the reporting requirements and established a VETS-100A Report for those contractors who meet the new dollar threshold requirement. The regulations are published in 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 61- 300. In addition, DOL revised the regulations in 41 CFR Part 61-250 to incorporate the amendment to VEVRAA made by the Veterans' Benefit and Health Care Improvement Act of 2000 (VBHCIA). These new reporting requirements apply to reports submitted for FY 2009 and future years.

Covered Federal contractors can submit the VETS-100 and the VETS-100A either electronically or via hard copy. In the 2010 reporting period, 99.0 percent of the VETS-100 Reports and 97.7 percent of the VETS-100A Reports were submitted electronically. The electronic filing of the reports significantly reduces employer costs, improves the accuracy of the data reported, and

reduces the clerical cost of manually inputting paper reports. In addition, VETS is now able to provide nearly real-time data; in past years, VETS had to provide preliminary data to meet its reporting requirements. The amount of time required to file an electronic VETS-100 Report and the VETS-100A report has been reduced by half -- from one hour per report to approximately 30 minutes, saving employers approximately 200,000 work hours.

The table below provides a comparison of the numbers reported for certain VETS-100 and VETS - 100A items in reports filed from 2008 through 2010:

**ANNUAL FEDERAL CONTRACTOR REPORTING  
COMPARISON TABLE  
January 31, 2011**

<b>Category</b>	<b>2010 VETS-100A</b>	<b>2010 VETS-100</b>	<b>2009 VETS-100A</b>	<b>2009 VETS -100</b>	<b>2008 VETS -100</b>
Total Federal Contractors	13,536	8,880	13,011	11,919	22,159
Single Establishments	9,664	6,461	10,618	9,717	18,943
Multiple Establishment Organizations	5,665	3,543	7,340	4,861	8,690
Multiple Establishment Hiring Organizations	208,435	85,998	144,896	76,631	46,903
Multiple State Consolidated Reports	61,626	17,099	26,684	13,964	10,177
Total Reports Submitted	285,390	113,101	190,190	105,251	84,713
Special Disabled Veterans	n/a	49,368	n/a	45,800	62,020
Vietnam Era Veterans	n/a	217,600	n/a	199,055	341,000
Other Protected Veterans	n/a	184,510	n/a	324,531	364,424
Newly Hired Special Disabled Veterans	n/a	8,131	n/a	7,436	15,466
Newly Hired Vietnam Era Veterans	n/a	15,968	n/a	14,285	32,007
Newly Hired Recently Separated	n/a	5,457	n/a	10,269	21,213
Newly Hired Other Protected Veterans	n/a	28,035	n/a	45,817	8,476
Disabled Veterans	155,386	n/a	154,002	n/a	n/a
Other Protected Veterans	784,593	n/a	669,265	n/a	n/a
Armed Forces Service Medal	161,759	n/a	142,677	n/a	n/a
Recently Separated	124,523	n/a	118,263	n/a	n/a
Newly Hired Disabled Veterans	54,601	n/a	50,053	n/a	n/a
Newly Hired Other Protected Veterans	133,333	n/a	116,769	n/a	n/a
Newly Hired Armed Forces Service Medal	58,056	n/a	51,332	n/a	n/a
Newly Hired Recently Separated Veterans	52,118	n/a	49,194	n/a	n/a

In 2010, employers filed more VETS-100A Reports than they filed in 2009 (up 34.8%). The number of covered Veterans employed by Federal contractors increased in all categories of the VETS-100 and VETS-100A Reports, from 2009 to 2010.

## **VIETNAM ERA VETERANS' READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1974**

---

### **Veterans' Employment Emphasis by Federal Contractors and Subcontractors**

The DOL Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) administers and enforces the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 (VEVRAA), as amended, 38 U.S.C. § 4212. The VEVRAA statute at § 4107(c) of Title 38 requires the Secretary of Labor to include, as part of this annual report, the number of complaints filed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section. In FY 2010, OFCCP investigated 88 complaints brought under the VEVRAA, which accounted for 14 percent of all 609 complaints investigated in 2010. Of the 88 cases investigated, 85 were closed with findings of no violations by the employers. Conciliation agreements were reached in two of the three remaining cases, which resulted in compensation for two Veterans. In addition, no Veterans received a salary adjustment in any of the three remaining cases.

## **VETS' COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES**

### **RECOVERY AND EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE LIFELINES (REALIFELINES)**

---

The REALifelines initiative is a VETS project conducted in collaboration with the DoD and the military service branches. Its purpose is to create a seamless, personalized assistance network to ensure that seriously wounded and injured Service Members from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan (and their spouses) are offered opportunities to be trained for and employed in rewarding careers in the civilian labor force. The program started at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Bethesda National Naval Medical Center in FY 2004. As of Fiscal Year 2010, VETS has expanded the REALifelines program into military medical treatment facilities located throughout the nation. There are fulltime REALifelines personnel at the following locations:

- Walter Reed Army Medical Center (Washington, DC)
- Madigan Army Medical Center (Ft. Lewis, WA)
- The National Naval Medical Center (Bethesda, MD)
- Navy Medical Center San Diego (San Diego, CA)
- Brooke Army Medical Center (Ft Sam Houston, TX)
- Tripler Army Medical Center (Honolulu, HI)
- Medical Holding Company (Ft. Carson, CO)

Additionally, there are REALifelines program outreach personnel who work on an "as-needed" basis at other medical treatment facilities in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, New York, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Washington, DC, Maryland, Virginia, California, Hawaii, and Washington.

REALifelines staff located at these facilities assist each person to discover his or her special interests and unique talents to help guide their right career path. They also answer questions and provide insight into the processes for exploring and selecting new job and vocational training opportunities. REALifelines personnel have established solid working relationships with the U.S. Army Warrior Transition Units and the U.S. Marine Corps Warrior Transition Battalions by improving their overall networking to better serve our injured/wounded Service Members and their

families. Through 2010, REALifelines personnel have assisted 9,478 Service Members, spouses or Veterans in some way since the beginning of the program. Of those Service Members, 1,651 participants have entered civilian employment, and 1,618 participants have returned to active duty.

An invaluable component of the REALifelines program is the connection made to the local Career One-Stop Career Center in the home region to which the Service Member will return. This connection ensures that those wounded or injured Service Members who cannot return to active duty are trained for rewarding new careers or are assisted to return to their pre-military service employers. The DVET in each State is responsible for referring returning Veterans for services. In addition to assisting wounded and injured Veterans, job training and employment services also are made available to spouses in families that have suffered an active duty casualty, as well as to family members who have temporarily left their jobs to be with their loved ones during their recovery.

The REALifelines program uses a Technical Assistance Guide to standardize service across Regions, and a Memorandum of Understanding between DoD and DOL to improve the ability to collect and share data.

## **VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT (VR&E) ASSISTANCE**

During FY 2010, VETS renewed the focus of DVOP specialists on serving those Disabled Veterans who participate in the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program, which is administered by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA). The ultimate goal in this partnership is successful job placement and adjustment to employment for Disabled Veterans without duplication, fragmentation, or delay in the services provided.

Interagency initiatives to increase the employment opportunities and placements for service-connected Disabled Veterans who participate in VR&E continue to improve. DOL/VETS and VA/VR&E have been implementing an updated Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) outlining the process – and responsibility – to work together to maximize the services both agencies provide on behalf of Disabled Veterans and their dependents.

During FY 2010, VETS and VR&E established a joint work group to include three individuals from each agency for a total of six. The goal of this work group is to improve the quality of employment services provide to and job placements for Veterans with disabilities. The work group will engage in:

- Performance Measures for Assessment of Partnership Program Results;
- Capacity-building Curriculum Design for State Agency, DOL and VR&E staff ; and
- Joint Data Collection, Analysis, and Reporting.

Much of VETS' interface with the VR&E program is through the workforce investment system. Accordingly, VETS continues to work in partnership with its Jobs for Veterans State Grant recipients on behalf of VR&E job-ready Veterans who are referred to the State Workforce Agencies for intensive employment services. Therefore, in conjunction with the interagency initiatives underway at the national level, most of the grantees and their counterpart VA/VR&E agencies also have updated, as needed, their local written agreements.

## **VR&E Participants and Outcomes, FY 2010**

During FY 2010, a comprehensive set of revised reporting procedures was implemented for VR&E. VETS developed a data validation system for reports received, however, VETS cannot yet ensure that the data is correct if information was not uniformly entered correctly onto the VR & E report forms by States and VA offices. VETS continues to work with all offices to ensure data is uniformly entered and will include results once a full year of data has been received and validated.

### **VETERANS' PRIORITY OF SERVICE**

Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service in Department of Labor (DOL) funded qualified workforce preparation programs (as defined by 38 U.S.C. Section 4215(a) (2)). The term “priority of service” means, with respect to any qualified workforce preparation program, that a Veteran (or an eligible spouse) shall be given preference over a non-Veteran for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under that program. As detailed subsequently in this section, the available data indicate that DOL’s Employment and Training Administration’s (ETA’s) programs for adults served over 1.8 million Veterans among their 24.5 million customers during PY 2009. In other words, 7.5 percent of those taking part in the workforce system are Veterans.

Priority of service was initiated by the enactment of the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002 (Section 2 of P.L. 107-288), and applies to Department-funded workforce preparation programs. Most of these programs have only general program eligibility requirements and do not target specific participant groups. However, ETA also administers a number of programs that have existing statutory targeting provisions that must be taken into account when applying Veterans’ priority. The ETA programs in which Veterans receive priority of service include, but are not limited to:

- Wagner-Peyser Funded Programs;
- Trade Act Programs;
- Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs;
- National Emergency Grants;
- Senior Community Service Employment Program;
- Indian/Native American and Migrant/Seasonal Farm Worker Programs;
- Projects authorized under WIA §171, including grants to smaller or grassroots entities such as faith-based and community organizations, and Offender grants under the Youth Offender Initiatives and the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative;
- Virtual Workforce Information Tools;
- Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative;
- High Growth Grants; and
- Community Based Job Training Grants.

Other Partner Agencies/Offices:

- Job Corps
- The Women’s Bureau;
- Office of Disability Employment Policy Pilot & Demonstration grants; and
- Bureau of International Labor Affairs Grants.

## **Veterans' Priority Provisions**

The JVA (P.L. 107-288) established provisions for priority of service to Veterans. The purpose is to provide priority of service to Veterans and certain eligible spouses for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services in any workforce preparation program directly funded, in whole or in part, by the Department. To obtain priority of service for a specific program, a Veteran or eligible spouse must meet the statutory definition of a “covered person” and also must meet any other statutory eligibility requirements applicable to that program. The Department issued the final rule to implement priority of service in qualified job training programs on January 19, 2009. During FY 2010, ETA and VETS issued joint guidance on November 10, 2009, through Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 10-09 and Veterans’ Program Letter (VPL) 07-09 to provide additional details on the expectations for implementing Priority of Service for Veterans and eligible spouses under Department of Labor funded job training programs.

## **DOL Strategies for Enhancing Services to Veterans**

ETA has made it a strategic priority to develop and implement innovative and enhanced strategies for connecting Veterans to good jobs and career opportunities. On November 10, 2010 ETA and VETS jointly released a Protocol for Implementing Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses. The protocol’s goal is to encourage recipients of the Department’s funding to review, and if necessary, enhance their policies and procedures, to ensure that Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority access to the workforce investment system.

In addition to implementing the technical features of the JVA, the strategies espoused in the guidance letters and protocol promote overall systemic change in how the workforce system serves Veterans. Throughout the year, ETA and VETS made presentations at National and Regional Workforce Conferences on implementing priority of service. The presentations reviewed the Department’s expectations around priority of service implementation and provided a forum to discuss strategies for connecting Veterans to good jobs and career opportunities.

By connecting over 1.8 million Veterans to the workforce investment system, One-Stop Career Centers are helping to provide the support Veterans’ need to be successful and competitive in today’s workforce. Building on this success, ETA continues to strive to increase Veterans’ awareness of, access to, and use of the One-Stop service delivery system including ETA’s suite of on-line electronic tools.

ETA sponsors an integrated suite of national electronic tools that help businesses, job seekers, students, and workforce professionals find employment and career resources. The CareerOneStop ([www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org)) and the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) systems are both sponsored by the Department of Labor and include the following resources:

- [mySkills myFuture \(www.myskillsmyfuture.org\)](http://www.myskillsmyfuture.org) – this new resource helps laid-off workers and other career changers such as transitioning Service Members find new occupations to explore, based on transferable skills they’ve gained in past jobs.

- My Next Move (<http://mynextmove.dol.gov> or [www.mynextmove.org](http://www.mynextmove.org)) – this new resource delivers O\*NET information in a streamlined, user-friendly format. It links to both the job search function in mySkills myFuture as well as providing links to three (3) Veterans’ assistance sites: Key to Career Success, TurboTAP, and VetSuccess.
- The Reemployment Portal ([www.careeronestop.org/ReEmployment](http://www.careeronestop.org/ReEmployment)) – This new resource is designed to assist impacted workers following job loss, and to connect laid-off workers to needed resources for training, reemployment, career planning, financial and emotional help during the process of job transition. The site serves as a single source for information on jobs, career training, unemployment benefits and assistance with necessities such as food, housing, health care, utility payments and tax help. The resources will prove useful to everyone from recently laid-off workers, transitioning military members, and unemployment insurance claimants to individuals who have exhausted their unemployment benefits and those seeking to change careers.
- America’s Career Info Net ([www.careerinfonet.org](http://www.careerinfonet.org)) - a site that offers access to a wide array of current and accurate career and labor market information.
- America’s Service Locator ([www.servicelocator.org](http://www.servicelocator.org)) - a tool that directs citizens to available workforce services and location information at the Federal, State and local level.
- O\*NET OnLine (<http://www.online.onetcenter.org>) - provides access to career information, including detailed occupational requirements and characteristics. It can be accessed readily by selecting Military Crosswalk and entering either a Military Occupational Classification code or title that will link to related civilian occupations and the related O\*NET information.
- Military to Civilian Occupation Translator (<http://www.careerinfonet.org/moc>), a site that provides easy access to detailed information for transitioning workers to identify occupations that match their work-related interests. Users can search by keyword and find military occupational specialties (MOS) with a civilian jobs’ crosswalk.
- Information specifically related to transitioning separating Service members to civilian life can be found by accessing the following link: [www.careeronestop.org/militarytransition](http://www.careeronestop.org/militarytransition).

### **One-Stop Services for Veterans with Disabilities**

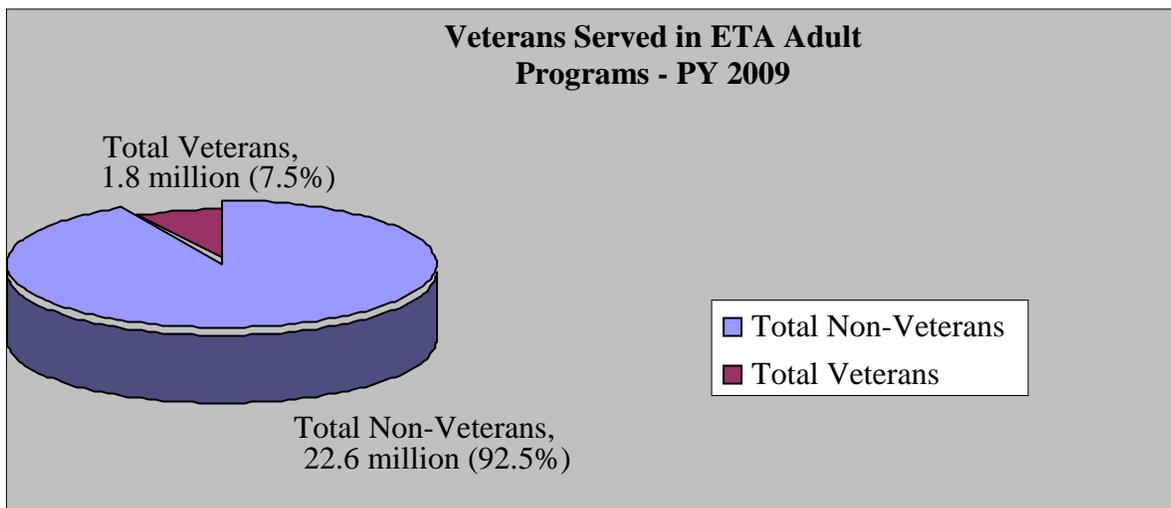
The One-Stop Career Center system has become increasingly accessible to all individuals with disabilities through initiatives such as the Disability Program Navigator and the issuance of a Disability Checklist under Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act. In PY 2009, WIA served over 72,000 individuals with a disability and the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service served over 614,000 individuals with a disability.

#### **Veterans’ Participation Rates for PY 2009**

The JVA requires the Secretary of Labor to evaluate whether covered persons are receiving priority of service and are being fully served by qualified job training programs, and whether the participation of Veterans in such programs is in proportion to the rate of representation of Veterans in the civilian labor force.

Data for PY 2009 as displayed in the pie chart below, indicate that: a) adult employment and training programs subject to Veterans' priority of service provisions (38 U.S.C. § 4215) served 1.8 million Veterans among their 24.5 million participants and exiters; and, b) the participation rate for Veterans in these ETA-funded adult programs was 7.5 percent.

The chart below depicts the number of Veterans served in PY 2009 by ETA-funded programs for adults versus the number of non-Veterans served.



The table below breaks out the participation of Veterans for PY 2009 according to the specific workforce development programs in which they participated. Among the DOL programs, the highest Veterans' participation rates were recorded by the Senior Community Service Employment Program (13.0%) and the Trade Act Program (8.4%).

The overwhelming majority of the Veterans served participated in programs operating within the context of Wagner-Peyser, including those Veterans who were served by DVOP specialists and LVER staff supported by VETS' Jobs for Veterans State Grants. This is not surprising since Wagner-Peyser is responsible for serving the majority of all workforce customers. Because Wagner-Peyser is a "universal access" system, it often serves as the "front door" to many workforce system services, especially WIA funded services. Interestingly, while Wagner-Peyser had a Veteran participation rate of 7.5 percent, the participation rates for the WIA programs were higher (WIA Adult 7.6%, Dislocated Worker, 7.7% and National Emergency Grants, 8.0%). The higher rates of participation in WIA programs are positive because these programs offer a wider range of services, including classroom training and employer specific on-the-job training.

For FY 2009, ETA looked at the number of Veterans participating in WIA funded training services, which typically involve the most substantial investment of financial resources and staff effort by local One-Stop Career Centers. Priority of service applies both to program participation and to priority of access to the full range of services offered by each program. Therefore, the rate at which Veterans enter training compared with their rate of program participation provides an indicator of the extent to which Veterans are receiving access to this substantial investment.

Of those individuals who received training in the WIA Dislocated Worker program, 8.6 percent were Veterans; this is nearly one percentage point higher than the proportion of Veterans

represented in that program (i.e., 7.7 %). On the other hand, of those individuals who received training in the WIA Adult program, 5.8 percent were Veterans; this is roughly 1.8 percent lower than the proportion of Veterans represented in that program (i.e., 7.6 %). However, this program also is required by law to give priority for training to low-income individuals when training resources are scarce, and over 48 percent of those served through the WIA Adult program were identified as low-income.

PY 2009 DOL/ETA ADULT PROGRAMS:	Number of Veteran Participants/ Exiters	Total Number of Individual Participants/ Exiters	Veterans' Participation Rate in DOL Programs	Veterans' Rate of Representation in the Adult Civilian Labor Force – PY 2009
Public Labor Exchange/Wagner-Peyser Program.	1,674,034	22,447,124	7.5%	<b>8.0%</b>
WIA Adults	87,956	1,163,229	7.6%	
WIA Dislocated Workers	40,865	531,617	7.7%	
National Emergency Grants	1578	19,612	8.0%	
Senior Community Services Employment Program – Ages 55+ (Veterans and eligible spouses)	13,460	103,642	13.0%	
Trade Act Program	5,643	67,528	8.4%	
High Growth Grants	600	11,971	5.0%	
Community Based Job Training Grants	2,569	52,343	4.9%	
Indian and Native American Program	211	32,986	.6%	
National Farmworker Jobs Program – Adult	134	21,277	.6%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,827,050</b>	<b>24,451,329</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	

Sources: Program data was derived from Employment and Training Administration reporting systems including the WIASRD; LERS; SPARQ; TAPR; BearTracks; and discretionary program reporting mechanisms. Most programs operate on a Program Year basis with the exception of the Trade program which operates on a Fiscal Year basis. Individuals reported count only once per Program Year per program. The data for PY 2009 programs is for the period of July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010.

Note: The WIA Adult and Dislocated Workers Programs, the Trade Act Program, the Indian and Native American Program, the National Emergency Grants, and the National Farmworker Jobs Program track exiters (i.e., individuals who participated and then exited the program).

## VETERANS' PRIORITY OF SERVICE SUMMARY

The ETA recognizes that priority of service for Veterans will continue to be critical as more military personnel return from abroad. Currently ETA has the ability to capture data on characteristics, services and outcomes of Veteran customers. Additional data collection is planned for priority of service which would be done in conjunction with broader reporting enhancements that are pending WIA reauthorization so as to not overly burden the States with excessive reporting changes. ETA plans to consult with the State Workforce Agencies about the revised performance accountability framework. In the meantime, ETA and VETS staff perform joint monitoring of priority of service implementation using the Core Monitoring Guide, a tool to gauge, during on-site examinations, the readiness and capacity of grantees to operate programs within the guiding laws, regulations, and agency policies.

ETA also used the WIA State Planning process as a tool to ensure that States are developing strategies for implementation of priority provisions. In the WIA State Plans submitted to DOL June 30, 2010, States outlined their policies and strategies to ensure that, pursuant to the JVA, priority of service is provided to Veterans and certain spouses who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for all employment and training programs funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. To further assist in the application of priority of service, ETA and VETS will continue to provide training related to the implementation protocol that was recently released.

ETA also will continue to highlight the requirement for priority of service and to implement overall strategies that support Veterans moving successfully into employment and continue to explore methods of capturing the outcomes of these efforts.

## APPENDIX

### PROGRAM YEAR (PY) 2009 FINAL REPORTS\*

---

Attachment 1	Veterans Who Were Participants by State
Attachment 2	Veterans Who Received Staff-Assisted Services by State
Attachment 3	Veterans Who Entered Employment by State
Attachment 4	Veterans Who Retained Employment for 60 Days by State
Attachment 5	Veterans Who Received Intensive Services by State
Attachment 6	Veterans Who Were Referred to Employment by State
Attachment 7	Veterans Who Were Referred to Federal Training by State
Attachment 8	Veterans Who Were Placed in Federal Training by State
Attachment 9	Veterans Who Were Referred to Federal Jobs by State
Attachment 10	Veterans Who Entered into Federal Jobs by State
Attachment 11	Adult and Veterans' Entered Employment Rates by State

\* Report with all Attachments available on-line at VETS web site at:

<http://www.dol.gov/vets/media/FY2010AnnualReportToCongress.pdf>