

Veterans Benefits Administration
FY2015 Accomplishments

Over \$90B in direct benefits paid to Veterans and their dependents in FY 2015! – costing less than 3 cents on the dollar to tax payers

Compensation

- Paid an estimated **\$70.5B** in compensation benefits to nearly **4.5M** Veterans and survivors – in record time and quality
- Completed **1.4 million** claims – nearly **67,000 more than last year – and the highest ever in our history! The sixth year in a row for more than 1 million claims and the fourth year in a row that we set new records again!**
- Reduced backlog **88.4%** from a peak of 611K in March 2013 to a **historic low 71,352**
- Reduced inventory **59%** from **884K** peak in June 2012 to **363,034 – 29.6%** lower than FY14
- Finished FY15 strong with a production of **7,749K** claims in a single day on Sept. 30
- Claim quality at **91%**; Issue Quality at **96%** and 7 of 8 categories where we measure quality – **above 98%** -- several above 99% -- 1 at 97.7%
- **Average days a Veteran is waiting for a claims decision (pending) is 93.1 days** – a 189 day reduction from a peak of 282 days in March 2013 – **lowest ADP in the 21st Century**
- Average days to complete are **169.6** days – a 59 day reduction from FY14 but **ADC in the month of September is 149!** – a **201 day reduction from Sept '14**
- Expediting Veterans claims: **46%** of receipts from VSOs in FY15 were Fully Developed, up from **3%** in 2012 – average days pending for FDC claims is **79.6** days
- **Increased Claim productivity by 25% and Medical Issue productivity to 81%**
- Dedicated non-rating workforce completed **3.1M non-rating end products** in FY15 – **15%** more than the 2.7M completed in FY14 – and **71%** more than FY11
- More automation: in FY15, **over 1 in 5** Veterans submitted their dependency requests online – **more than 57 percent** of these receive payments in **under 1 day**
- Held appeal rates steady amidst increased production – nearly **1.4M** completed claims in FY15, approx. **11-12%** (historical rate) appealed, **4-5%** reached Board of Veterans' Appeals, **1.2%** decided in Veteran's favor, often based on additional evidence
- **30%** increase in appeals actions from 135K in 2011 to **176K** in FY15

Pension

- Paid an estimated **\$5.5B** in pension benefits to over **521K** Veterans and survivors
- Reduced Pension backlog by **97%** from peak of **15.3K** to **405**
- Reduced Pension inventory by **66%** from peak of **36.4K** to **12.5K**
- Reduced DIC backlog by **86%** from peak of **8.8K** to **1.2K**
- Reduced DIC inventory by **57%** from peak of **19.1K** to **8.3K**
- Improved DIC timeliness by **111 days** from peak of **182** to **71 days** while maintaining **99%** accuracy
- Automatic burial allowance payments to surviving spouses within **6 days** – down from 190

Fiduciary

- Reduced the national ADP of initial appointment field examinations by **20 days** – from 48 days in FY14 to **28 days** in FY15
- Updated the Beneficiary and Fiduciary Field System (BFFS) to incorporate an agile quality review process at the national and local level, which replaces STAR – allowing VA Central Office to provide real-time results to fiduciary hubs, in turn allowing hubs to provide targeted training to improve the quality of services VBA provides to fiduciary program beneficiaries
- Conducted a work measurement study of all fiduciary work tasks to more accurately define and quantify the time involved in completing fiduciary program work, and to refine assessments of the program’s resource requirements
- **Over 183K Fiduciary Beneficiaries on the rolls –10K more than FY14**

Education

- Paid an estimated **\$12.6B** in Education benefits to over **1 million** Veterans, Service members, and their dependents
- Completed **4 million** education claims with a timeliness of **17.2 days** for original claims and **6.3 days** for supplemental claims with over **99%** accuracy
- Provided nearly **\$56B** to send nearly **1.5M** Veterans and dependents to school under the Post-9/11 GI Bill since 2009
- Improved the GI Bill Comparison Tool and GI Bill Feedback System, and for the first time deployed Veteran Outcome Measures for the Post 9/11 GI Bill

Loan Guaranty

- Over **2.4M** loans on the books
- Guaranteed a record **631,000** loans, totaling over **\$153B** – a **44%** increase from FY14
- Lowest foreclosure rate for 25 of 28 quarters
- Approved a record **1,800** Specially Adapted Housing grants, totaling approximately **\$96M** – a **50%** increase from FY14

- Helped a record **89,000** Veterans and their families retain their homes or avoid foreclosure – a **13%** increase from FY14 – saving taxpayers almost **\$2.8B**
- Collected a record **\$1.7B** in funding fees
- By increasing work sent to national work queue, eliminated COE backlog and **reduced Average Days Pending from 26 business days to 2 business days**
- Sold over **14,500** homes in FY14, recovering over **\$1.3B**

VR&E

- Paid an estimated **\$1.2B** in Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefits to nearly **100K** Veterans
- In VR&E's 20-year longitudinal study, the majority of participants for all cohorts (approximately 90%) reported **moderate to high satisfaction** with the VR&E Program

Life Insurance

- Insured more than **6.5 Million** beneficiaries
- **11th** largest Insurance program in U.S.
- Provided over **\$1.3 trillion** in coverage under **10 lines of protection**
- Paying insurance death claims in an average of **3.6 days** at **99.2% accuracy**

Benefits Assistance Service

eBenefits

- Surpassed **5 million** unique users – **up from 250K in Jun 2011**
- Over **50 million visits** to eBenefits
- **212M** contacts with Veterans in FY15 (**96%** online) – **211%** increase over FY14 – vs. **9M** contacts (majority by phone) in 2009

Social Media

- Over **422K** Facebook followers
- Over **61K** followers on Twitter

Outreach

- Completed over **50K** hours of outreach at over 5200 events
- Over **2.15M** encounters with veterans, family members, survivors, and those that support them

Quality & Training

- Conducted refresher training to nearly **7K** Public Contact Representatives in National Call Centers and Public Contact Teams
- Call Agent Dependency pilot launched in October 2014 and has processed over **30K** dependency claims

Call Centers

- JD Powers Satisfaction Index Score of **789** – up **126** index points since March 2010, and exceeds Government Benchmark of 721
- Answered **7.2M calls** at the National, Pension, and Education Call Centers in FY15
 - Agents answered **192,681** First Notice of Death calls with a wait time of 14 seconds and no blocked calls
- Generated over **258K** automated benefit letters in CRM UD for FY15 through 4th Quarter
- Voice Access Modernization (VAM) – Veteran-friendly telephone improvements.
 - Virtual Hold - automatically calls Veterans back
 - Over **3.4M** calls returned during FY15 through 4th Quarter (**94.3%** reconnect success rate)
- Dependency Pilot Rapid Response – launched October 6, 2014
 - The Dependency Pilot was implemented at the St. Louis, Phoenix, Cleveland and Philadelphia Call Centers. Full pilot implementation to remaining Call Centers was completed in September. 140 agents are supporting the pilot.
 - Pilot includes adding: minor biological child, spouse, step child, school age child, and removal of spouse due to death or divorce (when children are not currently on the award as dependents)
 - Processed **30,363** dependency claims from inception of pilot through 4th Quarter
- National Call Center Chat Pilot Program – launched September 15, 2014
 - Provides an additional access channel for VSOs and Veterans to reach us
 - Assists in load balancing volumes across access multiple access points
 - **5,711** Anonymous chats answered
 - **59,398** Authenticated chats answered

OBPI

- In the last year, **through Centralized Mail -- transitioned from a mail process in use since 1910 to one where we have traceability from envelope to decision – no longer will Veterans have to worry about lost mail!**
- About one fourth of our correspondence now comes electronically via eBenefits or fax – eliminating paper receipts
- Scanned over **1.75B images** since inception of VCIP into Veterans eFolders
- Transitioned our workplace from one focused on bricks and mortar to one focused on the application of our skills, with thousands of VA employees now able to telework – **nearly 50% of our workforce now teleworks!**

VBMS

- Went from touching **5,000 tons of paper annually** to processing **99.8% of disability compensation claims electronically**, with **342K claims** in electronic inventory – only **21K** pension and DIC in paper
- **99.8%** of disability compensation claims are now processed electronically
- Completed over **3.7M** rating decisions and **over 2M** claims in VBMS end-to-end since inception
- Demonstrating the growing momentum of the system, the one millionth award in VBMS was completed in February 2015 – and just six months later, the second millionth award was completed in VBMS

VHA

- Completed **2,838,153 Compensation and Pension exams** – that's **11,353** exams per working day and **1,419** exams per working hour nation wide
- Made **1.1M** exam requests to VHA and received over **2.8M** completed exam templates in FY15

ORM

Administrative and Loan Accounting Center (105)

- Partnered with LGY and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to help develop a process by which VA will begin managing USDA foreclosed properties
 - Currently responsible for all accounting supporting 7,745 foreclosed properties valued at \$85M
 - By bringing in USDA foreclosed properties, we are poised to receive and manage another 1,600 properties in 2015 and a total of 2,400 properties in subsequent years—total value \$400M

VBA Finance Center (201)

- Primary mission is the certification and recertification of payments. During 2015, VBAFC accurately:
 - Certified over **72.5M** in Education and C&P payments to Veterans and their beneficiaries in excess of \$90B
 - Recertified an additional **187K** Treasury returns back to the appropriation or the Veterans in excess of **\$183M**

Finance Services Staff (241A)

- Consolidated and streamlined process so Veterans who have fraud/identity theft committed against them can receive replacement funds in **less than 5 days**
 - Veterans with several hardships paid the same day

Support Services Division

- Supported the payroll and HR needs of the highest ever use of Mandatory Overtime and one of the largest needs for travel for training in our history

- Led the complete conversion of our Mail Room operations from paper to digital mail in the Centralized Mail Portal

ISO

- Supported our greatest need for technology support with the massive move to telework (50%) and distribution of hardware and home visits to assure secure access.

Accounting Policy and Reporting Division (241B)

- Reduced the dollar amount of “on the top” journal vouchers input into the MINX Financial Reporting System by over 90%

Credit Reform Staff (245)

- Spent \$405M in 2015 appropriated funds to produce **\$150B** new loan guarantee commitments for **614,514** Veterans Affairs’ mortgage borrowers
- **47%** increase from a year ago of **\$103B loans** and **450,030 borrowers**
- The VA new loan guarantees market share is **11%** in 2015; up from 8% in 2014 for new U.S. residential mortgages

Transition and Employment

- **Provided more than 15,000 briefings to more than 185,000 transitioning Service Members and their families at 303 military installations**
- **Veterans Employment Center (VEC)** hired 365,000 Veterans; and employers committed to hire more than 668,000
- **Established** plan for 50 VECI (Veteran Economic Communities of Interest) and already stood up first 8 with next 25 announced

PA&I

- Moved to **7-day-a-week operational reporting** for the first time since VBA began using automation
- Deployed **Tableau visualization** to VBA with **over 20 new reports** being used by the management and the field
- Deployed a **Reports Hub** that provides two-click access to **more than 100** PA&I produced operational and analytical reports
- Provided nearly **2.7M** user interactions with the Enterprise Data Warehouse with an average query response time of **2.5 minutes**
- Trained more than **500** management analysts and field personnel in using data to improve performance
- Led the redesign of the Quality sampling and reporting tool (STAR) which improved the efficiency of the STAR process while ensuring statistical validity
- Provided the primary data analysis for the Interagency Principles of Excellence Education Outcome workgroup.

- Developed a regression model that predicts RO productivity based on a variety of factors such as employee availability, OT hours, month (seasonality affect) for the Office of Field Operations
- VBA achieved a **96% on-time rate** for submission of a record-breaking **117 responses** to GAO and OIG reports – a 10% increase over FY 2014
- Monitored **57** active/open GAO and OIG reviews/audits and the associated 119 open recommendations; an 18% increase over FY 2014
- VBA successfully closed 9 OIG reports, 6 GAO reports, and 2 hotline case referrals FY 2015