

# **VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES**

**COMMISSIONER'S 2010 ANNUAL REPORT**

**TO**

**GOVERNOR ROBERT McDONNELL**

**AND**

**THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**December 1, 2010**

*Serving those who served.*



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## Commissioner's Message

I was deeply honored to be appointed Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Veterans Services this past April. The honor of being chosen to lead the agency tasked with serving Virginia's 823,000 veterans brings with it the responsibility of ensuring their welfare as well as fulfilling Governor McDonnell's goal to make Virginia the most veteran-friendly state in the nation.

DVS had already made significant accomplishments during FY10, but during the last three months of the fiscal year, the agency embarked squarely on a mission to become even more dynamic and responsive to veteran's needs—from our elderly World War II and Korean War veterans to our newest and often youngest veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq.

By taking control of our information technology future, we have guided the agency away from a lengthy and costly development of a database system to replace the agency's current inadequate system and once again put our support behind TurboVet. Over the past two years, AMVETS nurtured development of this software program, which will provide an automated solution that both veterans and veteran service organizations can use to develop claims for USDVA benefits. As a result, a beta version was presented in November to the Department of Veterans Services, members of the McDonnell administration, representatives from veterans service organizations, and members of the Board of Veterans Services and Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC). Beta testing will be conducted during December, and roll out could be as early as spring 2011.

During the past year, veterans again enjoyed bipartisan support from the Virginia General Assembly thanks largely to the strong leadership of the JLC. Of six legislative initiatives, five were passed, including passage of legislation proposing a constitutional amendment to grant real estate tax relief to veterans with a 100 percent, permanent and total, service-connected disability. Voters overwhelmingly voted yes to this amendment in November.

DVS provides a broad range of services—from assisting veterans and their families with the benefits claims process, helping wounded warriors, and supporting educational benefits for veterans, to caring for injured, ill, and elderly veterans and meeting their final needs through our cemetery services. This report details the accomplishments of each of the agency's five areas of service. However, I'm proud to provide this quick snapshot of agency accomplishments during FY10.

- Filed 26,431 disability compensation claims, more than an eight percent increase over FY09. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) adjudicated 15,941 claims submitted by DVS, and approved 11,233, or approximately 70 percent. Virginia veterans received nearly \$32 million in retroactive claim awards during FY10, more than a 12% increase over the previous year.



- Disbursed \$1.3 million in funding to five regional consortia to provide services at the community level to veterans with combat stress and traumatic brain injuries as well as to their families.
- Certified that 963 educational programs met G.I. Bill requirements. Virginia veterans received more than \$130 million in educational benefits during FFY09, and Virginia ranks fifth in the nation in terms of the number of veterans using their G.I. Bill benefits.
- Provided 137,052 patient days of care at the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center and the Virginia Veterans Care Center in Roanoke.
- Served the memorial needs of Virginia's veterans by performing 1,015 burials at Virginia's two state veterans cemeteries, more than a 14 percent increase over FY09.

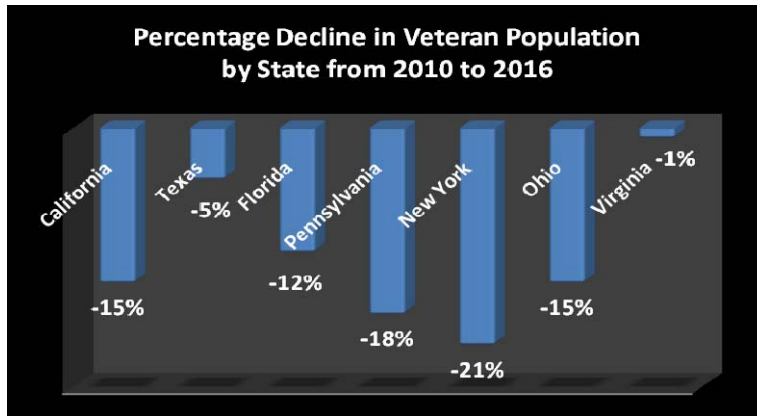
I fully expect this agency to achieve major accomplishments in the coming months—opening of the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery, increasing the number of veterans and their families served by the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program, beta testing and possibly implementing TurboVet, and working with the McDonnell administration and our key partners to make Virginia the nation's most veteran friendly state.

Paul E. Galanti, Commander, USN (Ret.)  
Commissioner

## Who Are Virginia's Veterans?

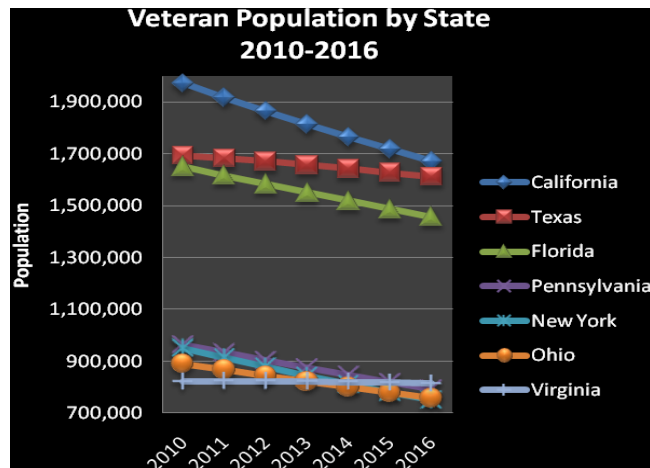
### Population

822,312 Projected number of veterans living in Virginia as of September 30, 2010  
 (USDVA, Table 1L)



The number of veterans living in Virginia will peak in 2011 and 2012 to approximately 823,000 and will begin to decline in 2013. The size of the veterans population in other states, such as California, Florida, Pennsylvania, New York, and Ohio, is forecast to decline significantly during that same period. In contrast, Virginia's decline will be relatively small (i.e. between 2,000 and 3,000 annually) compared with other states' declines (e.g., California's population is forecast to decline by 20,000 to 30,000 veterans per year).

7th Virginia's national ranking in terms of the 2010 veteran population (USDVA, Table 1L). The USDVA predicts that Virginia will rank 5<sup>th</sup> by 2014 and 4<sup>th</sup> by 2016.



92,036 Number of female veterans in Virginia (USDVA, Table 1L)



**Deployment**

- 4,841 Number of deployed active duty troops listing Virginia as home of record. (Contingency Tracking System Deployment File as of July 31, 2010, [http://dva.state.vi.us/pa\\_veteransdata.asp](http://dva.state.vi.us/pa_veteransdata.asp))
- 2,193 Number of deployed Guard & Reserve forces listing Virginia as home of record. (Contingency Tracking System Deployment File as of July 31, 2010, [http://dva.state.vi.us/pa\\_veteransdata.asp](http://dva.state.vi.us/pa_veteransdata.asp))

**Education**

- 42,092 Number of veterans receiving G.I. Bill benefits in Virginia in FFY10. Virginia ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in terms of number of veterans enrolled and receiving GI Bill benefits
- \$130.5M Total G.I. Bill benefits paid to veterans in Virginia in FFY09

**Disabled veterans**

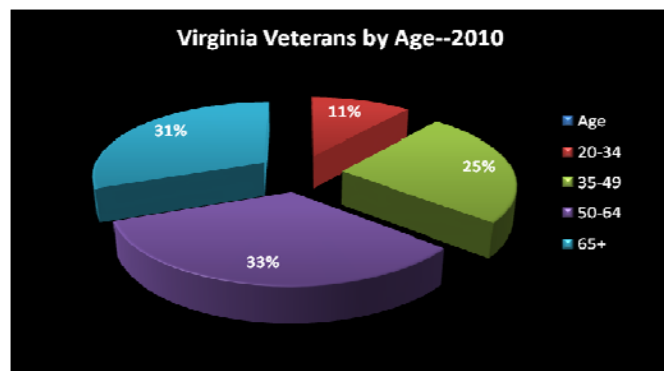
- 121,691 Number of veterans receiving disability benefits in 2009
- 7,358 Number of 100% disabled veterans in 2009 (Compensation and Pension Master File and VETSNET)

**Homelessness**

- 900 Estimated number of homeless veterans in Virginia

**Aging**

- 252,364 Projected number of veterans age 65+ living in Virginia in 2010 (USDVA, Table 1L)  
 The number of veterans age 65+ will continue to increase annually, reaching more than 295,000 by 2017 (USDVA, Table 1L)



**Deaths**

- 17,053 Number of veterans in Virginia forecast to die during FFY10 (USDVA, Table 1D)



***Virginia's rankings nationwide for FY10***

- 7<sup>th</sup> Veterans population
- 9<sup>th</sup> Total USDVA expenditures
- 6<sup>th</sup> USDVA expenditures for disability compensation and pensions
- 22<sup>nd</sup> USDVA construction spending
- 5<sup>th</sup> Veterans using GI Bill benefits
- 8<sup>th</sup> USDVA expenditures for general operations
- 8<sup>th</sup> USDVA expenditures for indemnities and insurance
- 14<sup>th</sup> USDVA spending on medical care
- 12<sup>th</sup> Number of veterans receiving USDVA medical benefits
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Department of Defense expenditures for retirement pay (FFY09)

## Veterans Economic Impact on Virginia

Virginia's veterans have a significant positive economic impact on the Commonwealth, bringing in more than \$6.67B in federal funding through compensation and pension payments, construction expenditures, educational and vocational rehabilitation employment expenditures, medical expenditures, and military retiree pay.

### USDVA expenditures in Virginia during FFY09<sup>1</sup>

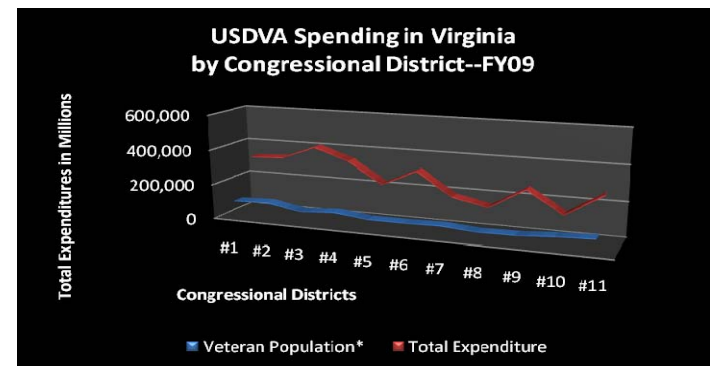
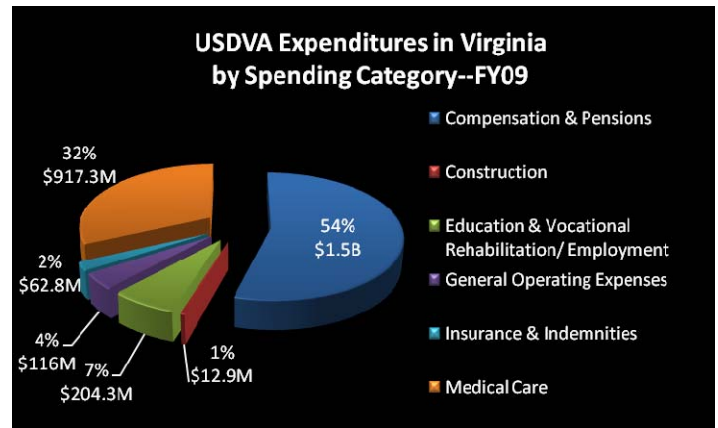
\$2.88B Total USDVA expenditures in Virginia

\$1.57B Compensation and disability payments to Virginia veterans and their dependents. In FFY09, more than 15% of Virginia veterans received disability compensation.

\$12.96M Construction expenditures

\$204M Education and vocational rehabilitation employment expenditures

\$917M Medical care expenditures



<sup>1</sup> Source for all data on this page: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures FFY09," [http://www1.va.gov/VETDAT A/docs/GDX/GDX\\_FY09\\_2.xls](http://www1.va.gov/VETDAT A/docs/GDX/GDX_FY09_2.xls)

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Virginia Congressional Districts





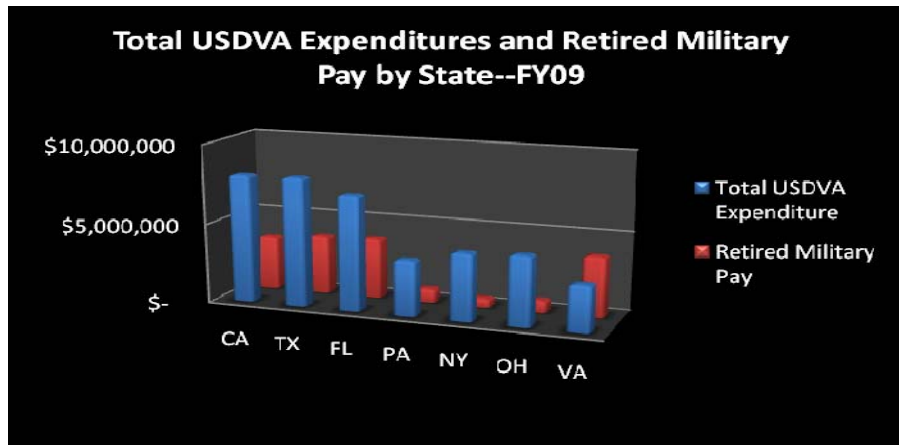
***Impact of New Compensation and Pension Claims FY10***

\$121.78M Estimated total fiscal impact of new compensation and pension claims in FY10.

This is based on number of claims submitted by DVS on behalf of Virginia's veterans and approved by the Roanoke Regional Office of the USDVA. 11,233 claims were approved out of 15,941 adjudicated. Multiplied by \$8,000 (the average compensation awarded by the USDVA in Virginia) gives a subtotal of \$89.86M. Retroactive awards to veterans in FY10 totaled \$31.92M, making the total impact \$121.78M.

***US Department of Defense expenditures in Virginia in FFY09***

\$3.8B Retirement pay to military retirees in Virginia. Interestingly, military retirement pay in Virginia significantly exceeds USDVA total expenditures, and Virginia ranks second, after Florida, in the amount of military retirement pay received.  
*(Department of Defense, Office of the Actuary, Statistical Information and Analysis Division, "Atlas/Data Abstract for the United States and Selected Areas, Fiscal Year 2009," [http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/L03/fy09/atlas\\_2009.pdf](http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/L03/fy09/atlas_2009.pdf))*



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## Mission, Vision, and Values

### Mission

*The Department of Veterans Services serves Virginia's veterans and their beneficiaries by ensuring they receive the benefits, support, quality care, and recognition they have earned through service and sacrifice.*

### Vision

*Become the benchmark for the delivery of quality veterans programs at the state level and help ensure Virginia veterans receive the federal benefits to which they are entitled*

### Values

- **Service:** *Provide exemplary service to Virginia's veterans and their families*
- **Dedication:** *Bring an enduring commitment to helping Virginia's veterans and their families*
- **Excellence:** *Be the best at what we do*
- **Innovation:** *Seek new and better ways to reach and serve Virginia's veterans and their families*
- **Transparency:** *Communicate with all stakeholders in a direct and sincere manner*
- **Stewardship:** *Support a climate of ownership at the lowest possible level*

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## Our Commitment to Veterans

*DVS' overarching goal is to make Virginia the most veteran-friendly state in the Nation.*

**Priority #1:** Build an effective agency administrative team by consolidating HQ functions in one location, filling critical positions, and enabling future growth and the development of new initiatives and services.

**Priority #2:** Improve services to Virginia veterans by filling vacant positions in the Benefits Services section, improving training, and expanding outreach efforts.

**Priority #3:** Ensure that state veterans cemeteries meet national shrine standards and operate in a safe, efficient manner by filling vacant positions, replacing worn out equipment, and purchasing necessary supplies.

**Priority #4:** Increase the accuracy, speed, ease, and number of disability claims filed with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, by implementing an automated claims processing system.

**Priority #5:** Improve access to claims representation for Virginia's veterans by assisting cities and counties in establishing county veterans service officer programs.

**Priority #6:** Provide more long-term care to Richmond-area veterans by adding a 40-bed addition to the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center. Provide long-term and domiciliary care to Virginia's veterans in other areas of the state by building care centers in Hampton, Northern Virginia, and Southwest Virginia.



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## Department Overview

### *DVS History*

Since 1942, Virginia has shown its respect and honor to veterans by serving them as effective advocates. Prior to 2003, veterans services in Virginia were fragmented among the former Virginia Department of Veterans Affairs, which operated the benefits and cemeteries programs; the Virginia Veterans Care Center, which was operated by a series of contractors under the supervision of a Board of Trustees; and the Virginia Department of Education, which oversaw the activities of the State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training. In 2003, these services were consolidated under one agency, known as the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS).

### *Fives Lines of Service*

DVS is organized into five service delivery branches – benefits, the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program, education, care centers, and cemeteries. As key partners of the Department of Veterans Services team, the Board of Veterans Services, the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations, and the Veterans Services Foundation all work collaboratively to support the effective delivery of services to Virginia's veterans.

**The Benefit Services** section assists veterans and their dependents in obtaining compensation and pension benefits from the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The Benefit Services section also determines eligibility for the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program. The Benefits section operates 20 field offices throughout the Commonwealth.

**The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program** serves veterans, members of the National Guard and Armed Forces Reserves not in active federal service, and their family members. The program coordinates support services for veterans with stress-related and traumatic brain injury and ensures these veterans and their families receive timely assessment, treatment, and support.

**The Education section, also called the State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training (SAA)** reviews and approves post-secondary education programs operating in the Commonwealth, ensuring the programs meet strict federal qualification guidelines. SAA program approval enables veterans and dependents to use G.I. Bill and other educational benefits at a wide variety of educational institutions and programs.

**Virginia's veterans care centers** provide long-term skilled care and assisted living services to veterans. The Virginia Veterans Care Center, located adjacent to the Salem VA Medical Center, is a 240 bed facility and the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center, located adjacent to the McGuire VA Medical Center in Richmond, is a 160-bed facility.

**Virginia's veterans cemeteries** provide burial and perpetual care services to veterans and eligible dependents. The Virginia Veterans Cemetery, in Amelia, is a 127-acre facility. The



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Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery, in Suffolk, is a 74-acre facility. A third cemetery, in Dublin, is under construction and expected to be operational in 2011.

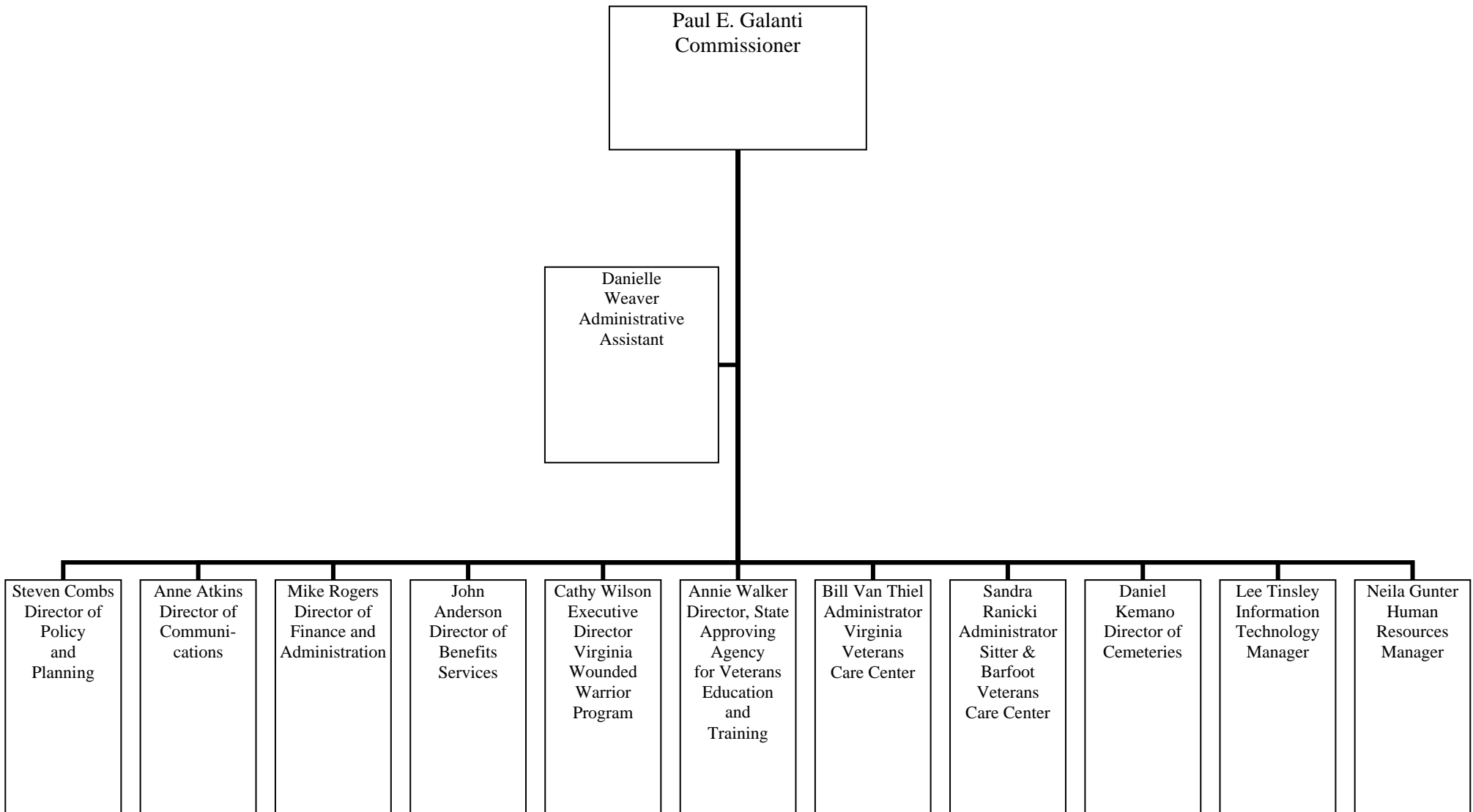
***Key Partners***

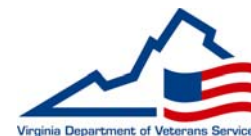
**The Board of Veterans Services (BVS)** is responsible for formulating policies, developing procedures, reviewing agency budget submissions, and making recommendations for the efficient and effective delivery of veterans services, as well as studying all matters affecting the welfare of Virginia's veterans.

**The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC)** advises DVS on matters of concern to veterans and their families.

**The Veterans Services Foundation (VSF)** is responsible for administering the Veterans Services Fund and for working with the agency to identify additional revenue sources for veterans programs.

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services  
**COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL REPORT**





*DVS at a Glance*

	FY08	FY09	FY10
<b>Client Base</b>			
Veterans*	813,977	819,490	822,312
Spouses and dependents**	406,988	409,745	411,156
<b>Operations (Employees and Service Locations)</b>			
Full-time Employees (FTEs)	484	523	536
Benefit Services Offices	21	20	20
Care Centers	2	2	2
Cemeteries	2	2	2

	FY08	FY09	FY10
<b>Appropriations</b>			
Benefits	\$3,761,814	\$3,278,384	\$3,139,749
State Approving Agency	\$577,435	\$704,233	\$704,223
Virginia Wounded Warrior Program	n/a	\$2,373,078	\$1,964,246
Care Centers	\$21,837,995	\$28,535,091	\$33,657,205
Cemeteries	\$767,911	\$834,539	\$834,539
Central Administration	\$2,056,070	\$1,759,558	\$1,611,090
Virginia War Memorial	\$430,174	\$271,908	\$247,313

	FY08	FY09	FY10
<b>Annual Services Provided</b>			
<b>Benefits Services</b>			
Claims submitted to USDVA	22,736	24,334	26,431
Client contacts	137,093	137,251	135,906
<b>Education and Training</b>			
Number of education and training institutions supported	837	904	963
Educational program approval actions	5,415	5,786	6,4218
Educational institution supervisory visits	395	429	468
<b>Virginia Wounded Warrior</b>			
Veterans and family members served	N/A	N/A	1,650



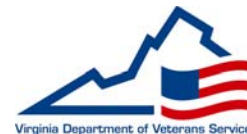
	FY08	FY09	FY10
<b>Veterans Care Centers</b>			
Patient days nursing / % capacity	65,064 / 56.5%***	105,053 / 85%***	118,213 / 96%
Patient days assisted living / % capacity	20,249 / 92%	17,252 / 79%	18,839 / 86%
<b>Cemeteries</b>			
Burials	804	886	1,015

\* Source: U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs

\*\* The estimated number of spouses and dependents is based on assumption that at least one-half of veterans have a spouse and/or dependent.

\*\*\* The number of patient days nursing for the care centers is artificially low because Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center was just beginning to accept residents in 2008 and not at full capacity in 2009.





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## Benefits Services

### Mission

*Assist Virginia's veterans and their dependents in obtaining benefits to which they are entitled under federal, state, and local laws.*

### Services and Organization

The federal government, through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA), provides many benefits and services to those who served this nation in times of war and peace. Among these benefits and services are compensation for service-connected disability or death, income-based pensions, medical care, educational benefits, and home purchase assistance.

The Benefits Services section of DVS assists Virginia's veterans in gaining access to the benefits to which they are entitled through their service and sacrifice. While veterans service representatives (claims agents) are able to help many veterans over the phone, much of the assistance takes place at a field office or itinerant contact point. During these face-to-face contacts, veterans service representatives guide veterans through the myriad steps required to file a USDVA claim.

Developing a solid claim is more than a matter of completing the application. Supporting documents, sometimes decades old, must be retrieved from federal and state archives. The process is labor-intensive. A veterans service representative may spend an hour interviewing a veteran, but then spend 20 hours or more finding records and completing the necessary supporting documentation. All of this hard work pays off if the USDVA approves the claim.

In FY10, the Benefit Services section operated 20 field offices across the Commonwealth: in Accomac, Big Stone Gap, Bristol, Cedar Bluff, Charlottesville, Danville, Fairfax, Front Royal, Hampton, Lynchburg, Portsmouth, Quantico, Roanoke, South Hill, Staunton, Tidewater, and Wytheville, plus offices co-located at each of the three VA Medical Centers in Virginia (McGuire, Salem, and Hampton).

The field offices were staffed by 28 full-time veterans service representatives and 21 full-time administrative assistants. Service areas are detailed in Table 1. The number of veterans service representatives and administrative assistants assigned to each field office depends on available resources and the number of veterans expected to be served.

In addition to serving veterans at the 20 field offices, the Benefit Services section also assists veterans at itinerant service points. The itinerant service points are, in effect, satellite field offices with space provided by federal, state, and local government agencies and private organizations, including veterans service organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion. Because the organizations often provide the space at no charge, the itinerant service points allow DVS to reach and serve a greater number of veterans without incurring the cost of fixed operating facilities.



The Benefit Services section is headed by the Director of Benefit Services, who is assisted by district managers who provide guidance and supervision to the field offices. The Director of Benefit Services, three district managers, and claims examiners also provide assistance during the claims appeals process.

## Resources

	FY09	FY10	FY11
<b>Budget</b>	\$3,378,384	\$3,139,749	\$3,126,480
<b>Authorized Positions</b>	69	69	69
<b>Filled Positions – as of December 1</b>	57	59	57
<b>Number of field offices – as of December 1</b>	22	22	20

## Activities

The Benefits Services section helped Virginia veterans file 26,431 claims in FY10. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) adjudicated 15,941 claims submitted by DVS, and approved 11,233, or approximately 70 percent. If approved by the USDVA, a claim results in two types of awards: monthly compensation based on the level of disability and a retroactive award back to the claim date.

While most retroactive (or retro) awards are relatively small, some exceed \$50,000 and can even reach the six-figure level. Forty-eight retro awards exceeded \$50,000 in FY10, for a total value of \$4.1 million. Ten awards exceeded \$100,000, for a total value of \$1.6 million. In FY10, a total of 2,211 retro awards for Virginia veterans were approved by the USDVA, representing almost \$31.9 million. Claims activity is shown in Tables 2 and 3.

Veterans service representatives and administrative assistants had 135,906 contacts with Virginia veterans in FY10. This number does not reflect the number of individual veterans served, since individual veterans often have multiple contacts with veterans service representatives, but gives an indication of the level of contact the section has with veterans. Fifty-three percent of the contacts took place over the phone, 41 percent occurred in one of the 20 field offices, and nearly six percent took place at one of the itinerant service points. Contact activity is shown in Tables 4 and 5.

As noted previously, helping a veteran file a claim can be a lengthy process. Thirty minutes spent with a veteran during a walk-in visit may translate into several hours spent gathering necessary documents and completing required forms. Although some phone contacts can be handled rather quickly, such as a referral to another office or source of information, most involve questions about pending claims or possible entitlement to benefits. While inquires into the status of pending claims may require little time with the client, significant time is often required to obtain a response from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. A five-minute phone conversation with a veteran can easily translate into 30 minutes or more spent obtaining the information the veteran has requested.



If a phone call concerns possible entitlement to federal benefits, the complexity of benefit eligibility rules means that a veterans service representative can spend significant time on the phone with a client obtaining the information necessary to determine potential eligibility. Frequently, a veterans service representative will complete the entire claims process over the phone and through the mail, as some clients are in poor health or lack the transportation needed to reach a field office or itinerant point.

A comparison between FY09 and FY10 shows a decrease in client contacts in FY10. In FY09, there were 137,180 contacts, while there were 135,906 contacts in FY10. However, the number of claims filed on behalf of Virginia's veterans increased, from 24,334 claims filed in FY09 to 26,431 filed in FY10, nearly a nine percent increase. In FY10, veterans services representatives visited 60 different itinerant locations and made 7,672 contacts with veterans during those visits.



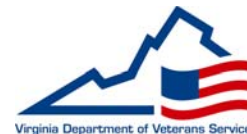
**Table 1**  
**Benefit Services Section Field Office Service Area – FY2010**

<b><u>Field Office</u></b>	<b><u>Counties Served</u></b>	<b><u>Cities Served</u></b>
<b>Accomac</b>	Accomack and Northampton	
<b>Big Stone Gap</b>	Dickenson, Lee, Scott, and Wise	Norton
<b>Bristol</b>	Russell, Scott, Smyth, and Washington; Sullivan, TN	Bristol, VA and Bristol, TN
<b>Cedar Bluff</b>	Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell, and Tazewell	
<b>Charlottesville</b>	Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, and Orange	Charlottesville
<b>Danville</b>	Pittsylvania	Danville
<b>Fairfax</b>	Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun	Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church as well as the Pentagon and Fort Belvoir
<b>Front Royal</b>	Clarke, Fauquier, Frederick, Page, Rappahannock, Shenandoah, and Warren	Winchester
<b>Hampton and Hampton VA Medical Center</b>	Charles City, Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, Mathews, and York	Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, and Williamsburg
<b>Lynchburg</b>	Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Buckingham, Campbell, Cumberland, and Prince Edward	Bedford, Lynchburg, and Madison Heights
<b>McGuire VA</b>	Amelia, Chesterfield,	Colonial Heights, Hopewell,




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<b>Medical Center (Richmond)</b>	Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Essex, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, King and Queen, King William, Lancaster, New Kent, Middlesex, Northumberland, Powhatan, Prince George, Richmond, and Surry	Petersburg, and Richmond
<b>Portsmouth</b>	Southampton, Sussex, and Isle of Wight	Chesapeake, Franklin, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach
<b>Quantico</b>	Caroline, Culpeper, King George, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Westmoreland	Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park
<b>Roanoke</b>	Alleghany, Botetourt, Buchanan, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Henry, Montgomery, Patrick, Pulaski, and Roanoke	Covington, Martinsville, Radford, Roanoke, and Salem
<b>Salem VA Medical Center</b>	Alleghany, Botetourt, Buchanan, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Henry, Montgomery, Patrick, Pulaski, and Roanoke	Covington, Martinsville, Radford, Roanoke, and Salem
<b>South Hill</b>	Brunswick, Charlotte, Greensville, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Southampton, and Sussex	Emporia and South Boston
<b>Staunton</b>	Augusta, Bath, Highland, Rockbridge, and Rockingham	Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Staunton, and Waynesboro
<b>Tidewater (Norfolk)</b>	Southampton, Sussex, and Isle of Wight	Chesapeake, Franklin, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach



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**Wytheville**

Bland, Carroll, Giles, Grayson,  
Pulaski, and Wythe

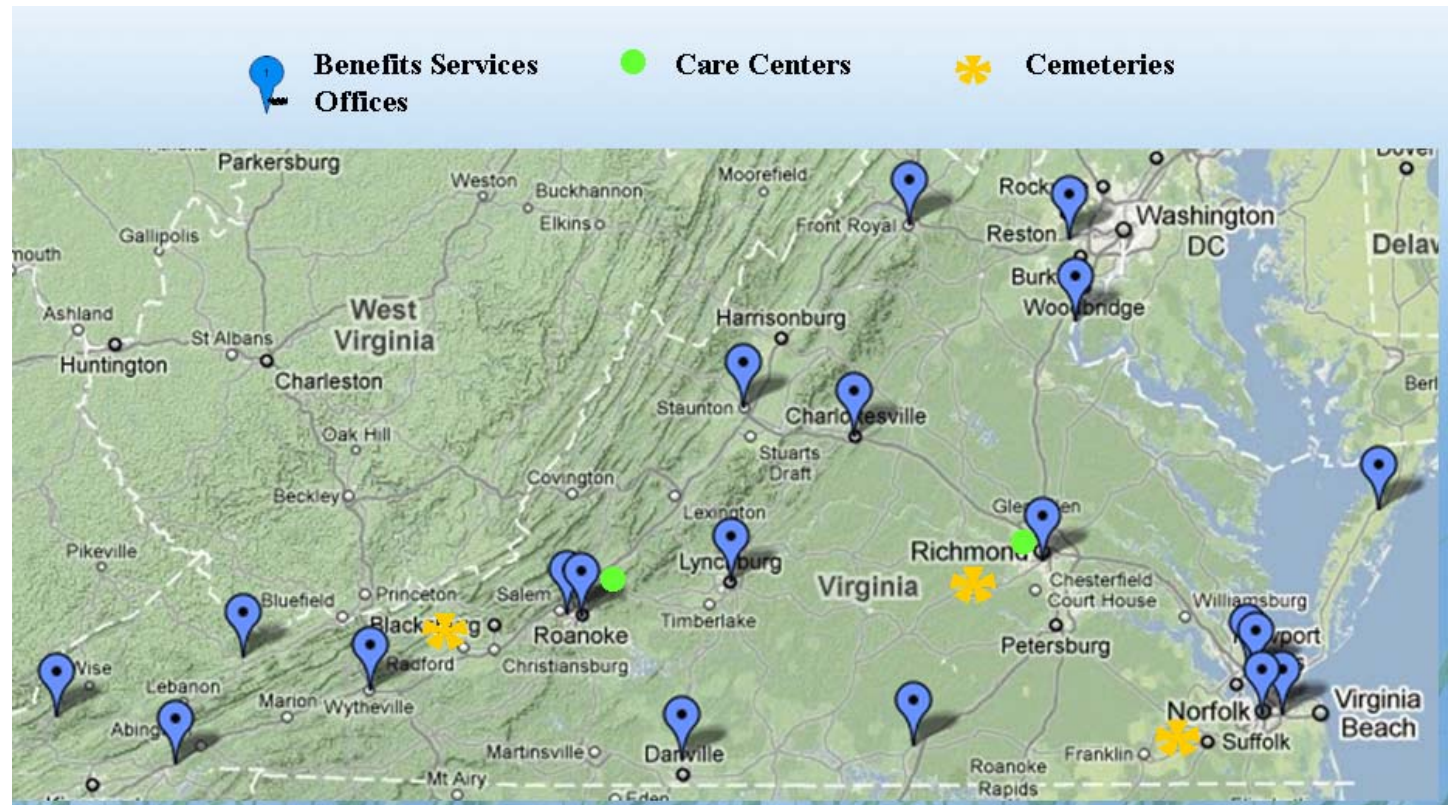
Galax and Wytheville



**DVS Locations**

**Benefits Services Offices**

- Accomac
- Big Stone Gap
- Bristol
- Cedar Bluff
- Charlottesville
- Danville
- Fairfax
- Front Royal
- Hampton
- Hampton VA Medical Center
- Lynchburg
- McGuire VA Medical Center (Richmond)
- Portsmouth
- Quantico
- Roanoke
- Salem VA Medical Center
- South Hill
- Staunton
- Tidewater (Norfolk)
- Wytheville



**Care Centers**

- Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center, Richmond
- Virginia Veterans Care Center, Roanoke

**Cemeteries**

- Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia
- Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery, Suffolk
- Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Dublin



**Table 2**  
**Claims Submitted to USDVA - Sorted by Month**

MONTH	NEW			REOPEN			21-8416			EVR			TOTAL CLAIMS		
	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10
JULY	1,329	1,461	1,585	384	493	520	25	33	39	6	14	8	1,744	2,001	2,152
AUGUST	1,543	1,462	1,556	433	511	480	29	38	40	4	2	15	2,009	2,013	2,091
SEPTEMBER	1,299	1,530	1,527	367	496	470	21	37	42	6	10	8	1,693	2,073	2,047
OCTOBER	1,281	1,446	1,340	375	471	433	15	29	26	3	8	11	1,674	1,954	1,810
NOVEMBER	1,207	1,181	1,277	387	388	429	30	25	24	9	5	5	1,633	1,599	1,735
DECEMBER	1,104	1,190	1,289	306	423	405	46	39	54	12	15	14	1,468	1,667	1,762
JANUARY	1,547	1,375	1,497	504	460	528	349	312	316	176	185	191	2,576	2,332	2,532
FEBRUARY	1,456	1,453	1,320	417	488	457	278	322	277	168	229	201	2,319	2,492	2,255
MARCH	1,513	1,620	1,831	425	535	652	95	126	141	42	48	76	2,075	2,329	2,700
APRIL	1,511	1,332	1,797	417	468	594	66	88	99	28	33	31	2,022	1,921	2,521
MAY	1,280	1,407	1,697	401	465	544	38	45	53	13	10	16	1,732	1,927	2,310
JUNE	1,279	1,502	1,790	473	464	642	28	47	65	11	13	19	1,791	2,026	2,516
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>16,349</b>	<b>16,959</b>	<b>18,506</b>	<b>4,889</b>	<b>5,662</b>	<b>6,154</b>	<b>1,020</b>	<b>1,141</b>	<b>1,176</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>22,736</b>	<b>24,334</b>	<b>26,431</b>





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Terms used in table:

**New:** A first-time claim.

**Reopen:** Reopen a denied claim or make a modification to an existing claim, such as for a new medical condition or disability or an increase in an established disability.

**21-8416:** The VA Form 21-8416 is used to report a claimant's medical expenses for the previous year, so that the claimant may claim partial reimbursement for medical expenses. Veterans service representatives frequently assist claimants in completing this form.

**EVR:** Eligibility Verification Report. Submitted annually by some pension recipients to verify income and continuing eligibility. Veterans service representatives frequently assist pension recipients in completing this form.



**Table 3**  
**Claims Submitted to USDVA - Sorted by Field Office**

MONTH	NEW			REOPEN			21-8416			EVR			TOTAL CLAIMS		
	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10
ACCOMAC	316	328	390	50	63	71	51	30	26	11	17	15	398	438	502
ALEXANDRIA <sup>1</sup>	379	269	143	457	279	32	13	5	0	0	0	0	849	553	175
RICHMOND/AMELIA <sup>2</sup>	211	76	0	103	48	0	37	14	0	6	2	0	357	140	0
BIG STONE GAP	880	974	824	35	90	78	64	53	52	33	20	30	1,012	1,137	984
BRISTOL	977	775	897	68	78	106	138	113	112	68	78	81	1,251	1,044	1,196
CEDAR BLUFF	876	1,192	1,065	385	305	240	58	63	59	27	45	36	1,346	1,605	1,400
CHARLOTTESVILLE	306	438	605	76	47	10	40	26	47	22	39	55	444	550	717
DANVILLE	674	671	754	51	211	314	19	21	35	9	13	25	753	916	1,128
FAIRFAX	154	0	302	48	0	306	3	0	2	2	0	0	207	0	610
FRONT ROYAL	466	830	869	32	199	272	12	33	26	6	18	6	516	1,080	1,173
HAMPTON VAMC	433	448	500	162	146	163	0	1	2	0	2	4	605	597	669
HAMPTON	1,582	1,748	1,722	603	755	480	20	20	7	20	17	15	2,225	2,540	2,224
LYNCHBURG	452	413	627	23	104	103	107	104	93	52	51	39	634	672	862
MCGUIRE VAMC	694	1,295	1,704	800	355	680	4	37	102	13	24	21	1,511	1,711	2,507
NORFOLK <sup>3</sup>	451	362	0	81	84	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	532	446	0
PORTSMOUTH <sup>4</sup>	0	555	1,117	0	74	201	0	9	17	0	4	1	0	642	1,336
QUANTICO	286	440	407	148	258	336	0	15	0	3	7	8	437	720	751
ROANOKE	475	217	311	106	313	313	31	9	10	15	5	25	627	544	659
SALEM VAMC	360	435	527	241	430	535	56	178	193	8	15	50	665	1,058	1,305
SOUTH HILL	441	497	718	131	190	209	106	96	88	65	67	50	743	850	1,065
STAUNTON	881	843	942	211	160	236	196	220	157	68	96	85	1,356	1,319	1,420
TIDEWATER	4,160*	3,764	3,769	958*	930	1,138	64*	56	70	44*	52	32	5,226*	4,802	5,009
WYTHEVILLE	885	389	313	120	543	331	31	38	78	6	0	17	1,042	970	739
TOTALS	16,349	16,959	18,506	4,783	5,662	6,154	1,008	1,141	1,176	478	572	595	22,736	24,334	26,431

\* Includes claims activity for the Portsmouth Benefits Office.

<sup>1</sup> Alexandria office closed October 2009

<sup>2</sup> Richmond/Amelia closed February 2009

<sup>3</sup> Norfolk office closed March 2009

<sup>4</sup> Portsmouth office opened in January 2009



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**Terms used in table:**

**New:** A first-time claim.

**Reopen:** Reopen a denied claim or make a modification to an existing claim, such as for a new medical condition or disability or an increase in an established disability.

**21-8416:** The VA Form 21-8416 is used to report a claimant's medical expenses for the previous year, so that the claimant may claim partial reimbursement for medical expenses. Veterans service representatives frequently assist claimants in completing this form.

**EVR:** Eligibility Verification Report. Submitted annually by some pension recipients to verify income and continuing eligibility. Veterans service representatives frequently assist pension recipients in completing this form.



**Table 4**  
**Client Contacts - Sorted by Month**

MONTH	WALK-INS			PHONE			ITINERANT POINTS			TOTAL CONTACTS		
	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10
JULY	3,582	3,995	4,377	6,913	7,143	7,837	640	570	658	11,135	11,708	12,872
AUGUST	4,391	4,025	4,396	7,663	6,958	7,173	469	797	613	12,523	11,780	12,182
SEPTEMBER	3,566	4,131	5,275	6,876	7,275	5,757	501	657	665	10,943	12,063	11,697
OCTOBER	3,656	3,936	5,192	6,892	7,329	6,326	475	693	653	11,023	11,958	12,171
NOVEMBER	3,414	3,200	4,421	6,358	5,618	4,986	450	551	565	10,222	9,369	9,972
DECEMBER	2,803	3,367	4,451	5,947	6,507	5,236	464	563	468	9,214	10,437	10,155
JANUARY	4,439	3,936	5,052	7,896	6,900	5,871	665	548	628	13,000	11,384	11,551
FEBRUARY	4,098	3,956	4,665	7,719	6,743	5,629	762	706	671	12,579	11,405	10,965
MARCH	4,156	4,189	4,794	7,750	7,543	6,372	726	731	726	12,632	12,463	11,892
APRIL	4,122	3,929	4,408	7,408	7,010	5,678	618	600	662	12,148	11,539	10,748
MAY	3,474	3,874	4,037	6,845	6,622	5,081	551	611	673	10,870	11,107	9,791
JUNE	3,715	4,134	4,712	6,382	7,270	6,508	707	634	690	10,804	12,038	11,910
TOTALS	45,359	46,672	55,780	84,565	82,918	72,454	7,026	7,661	7,672	137,093	137,251	135,906

**Terms used in table:**

**Office Walk-Ins:** Number of clients who visit a DVS field office

**Phone:** Number of phone calls received by DVS field offices

**Itinerant Point:** Number of clients who visit an itinerant service point



**Table 5 Client Contacts - Sorted by Field Office**

	WALK-INS			PHONE			ITINERANT POINTS			TOTAL CONTACTS		
	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10
ACCOMAC	1,215	1,279	1,437	2,647	2,872	2,809	80	89	121	3,942	4,240	4,367
ALEXANDRIA <sup>1</sup>	891	555	493	4,483	2,625	1,677	282	53	35	5,656	3,233	2,205
AMELIA/RICHMOND <sup>2</sup>	522	29	0	3,604	809	0	545	430	0	4,671	1,268	0
BIG STONE GAP	2,513	2,611	2,346	3,198	2,850	2,630	254	208	178	5,965	5,669	5,154
BRISTOL	2,183	2,114	2,441	3,407	2,890	3,095	114	113	89	5,704	5,117	5,625
CEDAR BLUFF	2,271	2,340	2,609	2,806	2,430	2,072	150	168	127	5,227	4,938	4,808
CHARLOTTESVILLE	986	1,253	1,332	1,587	1,853	1,432	20	108	110	2,593	3,214	2,874
DANVILLE	2,136	2,236	2,797	3,308	2,904	3,127	581	500	442	6,025	5,640	6,366
FAIRFAX	375	0	695	601	0	2,612	41	0	382	1,017	0	3,689
FRONT ROYAL	619	1,029	1,013	1,606	2,349	2,601	189	250	280	2,414	3,628	3,894
HAMPTON VAMC	2,187	2,252	2,158	977	1,620	2,995	27	1	18	3,191	3,873	5,171
HAMPTON	4,016	4,536	4,784	2,527	3,346	3,596	104	213	32	6,647	8,095	8,412
LYNCHBURG	1,318	1,307	1,337	3,569	3,896	4,270	182	187	101	5,069	5,390	5,708
MCGUIRE VAMC	5,124	4,788	6,761	2,784	3,722	5,553	259	270	610	8,167	8,780	12,924
NORFOLK <sup>3</sup>	784	1,000	0	608	724	0	33	214	0	1,425	1,938	0
PORTSMOUTH <sup>4</sup>	0	1,474	2,408	0	2,151	3,874	0	167	419	0	3,792	6,701
QUANTICO	982	1,163	1,134	2,332	2,884	3,543	41	312	507	3,355	4,359	5,184
ROANOKE	942	884	1,112	4,367	2,170	1,720	111	217	376	5,420	3,271	3,208
SALEM VAMC	717	1,122	1,377	2,162	3,236	3,176	315	278	328	3,194	4,636	4,881
SOUTH HILL	734	776	940	1,712	1,980	2,255	385	404	400	2,831	3,160	3,595
STAUNTON	2,765	2,744	2,899	2,615	2,767	2,491	598	557	596	5,978	6,068	5,986
TIDEWATER	11,158*	10,504	15,165	32,871*	31,167	15,172	2,646*	2,457	2,201	46,675*	44,128	32,538
WYTHEVILLE	978	724	542	878	1,594	1,754	71	425	320	1,927	2,743	2,616
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>45,416</b>	<b>46,720</b>	<b>55,780</b>	<b>84,649</b>	<b>82,839</b>	<b>72,454</b>	<b>7,028</b>	<b>7,621</b>	<b>7,672</b>	<b>137,093</b>	<b>137,180</b>	<b>135,906</b>

\* Includes contact activity for the Portsmouth Benefits Office.

<sup>3</sup>Norfolk office closed March 2009

<sup>1</sup> Alexandria office closed October 2009

<sup>4</sup> Portsmouth office opened in January 2009

<sup>2</sup> Richmond/Amelia closed February 2009

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services  
**COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL REPORT**



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**Terms used in table:**

**Walk-Ins:** Number of clients who visit a DVS field office

**Phone:** Number of phone calls received by DVS field offices

**Itinerant Point:** Number of clients who visit an itinerant service point



## Virginia Wounded Warrior Program

### Mission

*Coordinate support services for veterans, Guardsmen, and Reservists with stress-related and traumatic brain injuries resulting from military service, and ensure that these veterans, Guardsmen, Reservists, and their families receive timely assessment, treatment and support.*

### Services and Organization

In FY10, VWWP continued to build an extensive community network across the Commonwealth through five regional VWWP consortia. The Executive Director and three regional directors, provided guidance to the five VWWP regional coordinators and their staff for expanding outreach, referrals, and direct services to veterans and their families. Regional directors also assisted in developing new partnerships and offered direct assistance to veterans and their families. Extensive partnerships at the federal, state, and local levels have been fostered to expand awareness of services for veterans and families and to generate additional resources for the regional consortia. In FY10, VWWP provided services to more than 1,650 veterans and family members, and presented at 573 community education and military outreach events reaching more than 19,000 citizens.

### Resources

	FY09	FY10	FY11
<b>Budget</b>	\$2,372,078	\$1,964,246	\$1,964,246
<b>Authorized Positions</b>	5	5	5
<b>Filled Positions – as of December 1</b>	1	5	4

### Activities

#### *Regional Accomplishments*

The VWWP Regional Consortia have expanded access to services and informational resources for veterans and families affected by the stress of combat, multiple deployments and service connected injuries. Local partnerships have been formed with Wounded Warrior Transition programs on local military bases and with the National Guard Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Events and Joint Family Support and Assistance Programs. Numerous outreach, fundraising and educational events have been organized with local veterans services organizations, including the VFW, American Legion, Vietnam Veterans of America, DAV posts and MOAA chapters. The regions have also coordinated events and outreach with local colleges and universities and with numerous state agencies, including

local Departments of Social Services, Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services and Virginia Employment Commission offices. In every region, VWWP Coordinators have worked with the Community Services Boards to establish staff liaisons for referral of veterans and family members to behavioral healthcare and to develop protocols for referral and crisis intervention.

Although each of the five VWWP Regions are programmatically unique based on the veterans service needs and funding available, all of the programs provide comprehensive and timely assessment, case management, outreach activities, referrals to outpatient and inpatient treatment, rehabilitative services, peer and family support, and linkages to benefits services, housing, employment and educational programs. Veteran and Family Support Groups meet regularly in locally accessible facilities. Regional staff sponsors public awareness picnics, dinners and recreational events to engage veterans and families in discussions about their healthcare needs and to enhance the community support that strengthens their resilience. Each Region has also established an Advisory Board composed of local veterans services organizations, community providers, faith based organizations, colleges and universities and other community members interested in expanding outreach and services to veterans and families. These Boards are invaluable sources of information and referral, as well as providing direct and timely feedback on the services being provided in the region.

In **VWWP Region I (Northwestern)** peer specialists have been involved in numerous newspaper and television interviews, including coverage of the “Hometown Heroes Event, co-sponsored with the Fredericksburg VFW and American Legion, and a touching Christmas story about the laying of wreaths by the Veterans Support Group. Claude Boushey, Peer Specialist, was featured in an article in the Wounded Warrior Project *After Action Magazine*. Similarly, the VWWP Region V (Tidewater) Coordinator participated in a live on-line chat sponsored by the Daily Press in the Hampton Roads area.

**VWWP Region II (Northern)** began operations with a clinically based model, including behavioral healthcare and brain injury specialists. Specific protocols and triage procedures have been established by the clinical VWWP-Northern team to ensure timely access to appropriate services for veterans who are most in need of services. A procedure was also established with each of the five Community Services Boards (CSBs) in the region to connect callers to the VWWP-Northern phone line with the appropriate emergency services clinicians 24/7 if they are having a mental health or substance use emergency. While there are no VA Medical Centers in Northern Virginia, the VWWP-Northern team has established a great working relationship with both VAMCs in Martinsburg, WV and Washington, DC. Regular referrals are made to and from the Martinsburg VAMC Domiciliary programs which incorporate the inpatient PTSD and substance abuse treatment programs. The Washington, DC VAMC Polytrauma Unit routinely refers veterans to VWWP-Northern clinicians for individual and family counseling, and group substance abuse therapy. The VWWP-Northern team facilitated five region-wide trainings that have added to the clinical knowledge base of many CSB, private and non-profit providers who work with veterans and their family members.

In **VWWP Region III (Southwestern)** resource specialists have organized and sponsored weekly veterans and family support groups and networking events. Word of these community outreach



events spread quickly and attendance has tripled to more than 150 participants at the most recent community picnic. The regional staff participated in Regional Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) as panel members and guest speakers providing expertise on addressing the stigma of PTSD. The CIT training provided an opportunity for local law enforcement to discuss the proper response to dealing with a veteran in crisis and addressing the stigma that law enforcement personnel who are veterans deal with. The Region participated in several “Wounded Warrior Events” supporting our program including NASCAR veteran, Ward Burton and the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation.

**VWWP Region IV (Central and Southside)** working with the School of Social Work at Virginia Commonwealth University co-facilitated couples retreat workshops for veterans and spouses coping with the effects of PTSD and/or TBI. Veterans and their spouses provided extraordinary feedback about the usefulness of these retreats for strengthening their marriages and for understanding how to manage the symptoms manifested because of the stress of combat, repeated deployments and family separation. Building on this strong relationship with VCU, the Region IV program partnered to create a student veterans center at VCU, called USS RAMS—University Support to Returning Armed Forces Military Students. A Virginia Wounded Warrior Facebook page was created as an additional means of reaching out to veterans.

**VWWP Region V (Tidewater)** partnered with a company called Didlake, Inc., for employment counseling services for veterans. This relationship really paid off in assisting veterans to obtain employment and also to understand their treatment needs. The Region V Team has built a strong and supportive relationship with the Hampton VAMC OEF/OIF clinic, the VA Rural Health Team, the VET Center and the Community Based Outpatient Clinics. Recently, the Team partnered with the DVS benefits services staff on the Eastern Shore to hold a successful outreach event for veterans in that area. Region V’s partnership with the William and Mary Legal Resources clinic led to a collaboration on another outreach event held at the college, called *Warrior Connect*. This region is fostering strong faith-based connections, has worked closely with the local crisis intervention teams and will participate in a pilot project to work with veterans who are transitioning from the criminal justice system.

### ***Training: Virginia is for Heroes 2010 and Tiger Teams***

Through a generous grant from the Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative, VWWP partnered with the VCU Partnership for People with Disabilities (VCUPPD) to establish a three-year training program for VWWP staff and community providers. In FY 10, five regional training programs were held across the state. The all day trainings included presentations on: Understanding Military Culture; Navigating the VA; Virginia Department of Veterans Services Benefits and Services; and Traumatic Brain Injury.

VWWP also partnered with VCUPPD to present, *Virginia is for Heroes 2010*. Held in Richmond in February 2010, the statewide conference attracted more than 400 participants. Working in Regional break out groups, the participants developed broad priorities for VWWP and identified major service needs and priorities for each of the regional programs. These priorities for services access and expansion are being researched by VWWP Tiger Teams.

## *Grants*

VWWP, in partnership with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) was awarded a federal grant of \$71,250 from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services to fund the development and implementation of a targeted educational program for judges, court personnel, and other criminal justice partners across the Commonwealth. This project will train relevant personnel about the unique characteristics, symptoms and options for addressing the needs of active duty military personnel, Guardsmen, Reservists, and veterans affected by the spectrum of combat stress, PTSD, and TBI and those at risk for involvement or involved in the criminal justice system. The grant can be renewed for up to 4 years.

Partnering with the Virginia Department of Health, the State's Office of Rural Health, the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program will receive a federal grant award of \$296,667 from Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for *The Flex Rural Veterans Health Access Program*. The three-year grant will provide approximately \$300,000 per year to expand VWWP throughout Southwestern Virginia, in partnership with the rural health networks and primary care partners. These grants were targeted to states with significant veterans' populations and focus on coordinating mental health and primary care through innovative technologies such as telemedicine and telepsychiatry. Virginia is one of only three states funded.

In addition, VWWP and DVS have supported numerous grant proposals for services expansion. Leveraging this support, the Roanoke Office for Total Action Against Poverty was awarded \$200,000 by the U.S. Department of Labor to provide employment services to homeless veterans. Other grant proposals are pending, including a potential grant from the U.S. Health Resources Services Administration that would provide the resources to expand the VWWP Region III (Southwest) program throughout Southwestern Virginia.

## *Statewide Needs Assessment*

VWWP commissioned the Virginia Tech Institute of Policy and Governance to conduct a statewide needs assessment to evaluate how to facilitate services to veterans and families affected by combat/operational stress and traumatic brain injuries. The final report, "*Assessing the Experiences, Supportive Service Needs and Service Gaps of Veterans in the Commonwealth of Virginia*", reveals that Virginia veterans want more coordinated information on how to access benefits and healthcare services. Veterans, particularly those who live in rural areas, indicate that in addition to the services available from the VA, they would like to get their medical care from community providers who have been trained to understand how to treat the unique needs that are the result of military service, combat, multiple deployments, constant alert and the other demands of today's active duty military.



## State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training

### Mission

*Enable access to post-secondary education opportunities for veterans and eligible family members.*

### Services and Organization

Operating under a contract with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training (SAA) reviews, evaluates, and approves post-secondary education and training programs offered by educational institutions, businesses, and industries in the Commonwealth of Virginia. After a program has been approved, veterans and other eligible persons may enroll and receive financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The SAA ensures compliance with state and federal regulations through on-site visits to active institutions and establishments.

The SAA has a secondary mission of making veterans and eligible family members aware of veterans education and training programs. Outreach activities are conducted at job fairs, military bases in the Commonwealth, and at veterans events hosted by DVS.

With just seven full-time employees, the SAA has responsibility for providing supervision and support for 963 education and training institutions. While some institutions only offer one program, in many cases an institution offers multiple programs, each requiring separate approval. The institution with the most approved programs is George Mason University with 518 programs.

As of December 1, 2010, out of the 963 approved education and training institutions, there were 468 that had a veteran attending, receiving benefits and considered active, therefore requiring SAA supervision, support and training for the program.

### Resources

	FY09	FY10	FY11
<b>Budget</b>	\$704,223	\$704,223	\$704,223
<b>Positions</b>	7	7	7
<b>Filled Positions – as of December 1</b>	7	7	7

### Activities

As part of its mission to review, evaluate, and approve post-secondary education and training programs, the SAA performs two types of approval actions: program approval and other approval. Program approval actions deal with initial or revised approval of an educational program, while

other approval actions focus on revisions to a previously approved publication or document containing program or policy information.

The SAA performed 5,508 program approval actions between October 2009 and September 2010, with 5,355, or 97 percent, being approved, and 153 being disapproved. During the same period, SAA handled 913 other approval actions, of which 859, or 94 percent, were approved and 54 were disapproved. Table 6 shows program approval actions, while Table 7 details other approval actions. Data is presented for federal fiscal year 2010 (FFY10) since SAA activity is tracked on that basis.

A key element of the review, evaluation, and approval process is the supervisory visit, in which an SAA official visits the educational institution and meets with key staff members. SAA's contract with the USDVA called for visits to 90 percent of active institutions in FFY10. The SAA visited 100 percent of the 468 facilities in FFY10. The approvals for four schools were withdrawn prior to the supervisory visit. Supervisory visit activity is detailed in Table 8.

During the past year, the SAA staff assumed additional responsibility for providing direct service to veterans in follow up to implementation of the new Post 9/11 G. I. Bill. As a result of the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill, Virginia's student veteran population increased from 20,530 in FFY09 to 42,092 in FFY10. Virginia now ranks fifth in the nation for the number of veterans receiving G.I. Bill benefits, behind California, Texas, Florida, and Arizona. SAA staff assisted veterans by researching issues ranging from overdue payments, in-state tuition eligibility, the impact of the G. I. Bill on other financial aid awards, and by counseling veterans on their educational benefits. Table 9 illustrates some of the increased workload resulting from the Post 911 G. I. Bill.



**Table 6**  
**State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training**  
**Program Approval Actions: FFY08, FFY09, FFY10**

Oct - Dec	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
Number of Applications Received	1,113	893	1068	431	475	509	12	7	7	1	7	15	45	0	0
Number Approved	1,033	878	1053	365	458	498	12	5	7	1	7	15	10	0	0
Number Disapproved	80	15	15	66	17	11	0	2	0	0	0	0	35	0	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	93%	98%	99	85%	96%	98	100%	71%	100	100%	100%	100	22%	N/A	N/A

Jan - Mar	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
Number of Applications Received	288	864	0	248	364	258	26	5	3	3	4	6	3	1	0
Number Approved	271	846	0	237	328	252	26	3	2	3	4	6	3	1	0
Number Disapproved	17	18	0	11	36	6	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	94%	98%	N/A	96%	90%	98	100%	60%	50	100%	100%	100	100%	100%	N/A

Apr - Jun	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
Number of Applications Received	960	393	625	589	482	671	15	11	7	11	3	2	0	2	14
Number Approved	932	380	596	546	441	607	15	11	7	11	3	2	0	2	14
Number Disapproved	28	13	29	43	41	64	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	97%	97%	95	93%	91%	90	100%	100%	100	100%	100%	100	N/A	100%	100

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services  
**COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL REPORT**



Jul - Sep	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
Number of Applications Received	996	737	1160	586	422	617	9	5	8	6	8	2	0	11	5
Number Approved	944	726	1151	558	395	611	8	5	7	6	8	2	0	11	5
Number Disapproved	52	11	9	28	27	6	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	95%	99%	99	95%	94%	99	89%	100%	87	100%	100%	100	0	100%	100

Totals for Federal Fiscal Year	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	FFY 08	FFY 09	FFY 10	FFY 08	FFY 09	FFY 10	FFY 08	FFY 09	FFY 10	FFY 08	FFY 09	FFY 10	FFY 08	FFY 09	FFY 10
Number of Applications Received	3,357	2,887	3384	1,854	1,743	2055	62	28	25	21	22	25	48	13	19
Number Approved	3,180	2,830	3320	1,706	1,622	1968	61	24	23	21	22	25	13	13	19
Number Disapproved	177	57	64	148	121	87	1	4	2	0	0	0	35	0	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	95%	98%	98	92%	93%	96	98%	86%	92	100%	100%	100	27%	100%	100

IHL = Institute of Higher Learning  
 NCD = Non-College Degree Program  
 APP = Apprenticeship Program  
 OJT = On the Job Training Program  
 LIC/CERT = Licensing/Certification Program



**Table 7**

**State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training Other Approval Actions: FFY08, FFY09, and FFY10**

Oct - Dec	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
Number of Applications Received	75	69	73	107	91	68	22	29	16	64	46	33	6	0	0
Number Approved	65	62	70	95	84	61	22	27	16	64	46	33	5	0	0
Number Disapproved	10	7	3	12	7	7	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	87%	90%	96	89%	92%	90	100%	93%	100	100%	100%	100	83%	N/A	N/A

Jan - Mar	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
Number of Applications Received	45	78	76	87	115	56	43	38	23	86	94	62	2	1	0
Number Approved	40	73	70	83	102	53	43	36	22	86	94	62	2	1	0
Number Disapproved	5	5	6	4	13	3	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	89%	94%	92	95%	87%	95	100%	95%	96	100%	100%	100	100%	100%	N/A

Apr - Jun	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
Number of Applications Received	78	63	94	108	48	105	31	19	21	94	77	40	0	1	2
Number Approved	73	60	81	91	29	91	31	19	21	94	77	39	0	1	2
Number Disapproved	5	3	13	17	19	14	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	96%	95%	86	84%	60%	87	100%	100%	100	100%	100%	98	0	100%	100

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services  
**COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL REPORT**



Jul - Sep	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
Number of Applications Received	74	69	84	113	76	78	24	29	29	116	72	50	0	7	3
Number Approved	63	66	80	106	67	76	23	29	29	116	72	50	0	7	3
Number Disapproved	11	3	4	7	9	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	85%	96%	95	94%	88%	97	96%	100%	100	100%	100%	100	N/A	100%	100

Totals for Federal Fiscal Year	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	FFY 08	FFY 09	FFY 10	FFY 08	FFY 09	FFY 10	FFY 08	FFY 09	FFY 10	FFY 08	FFY 09	FFY 10	FFY 08	FFY 09	FFY 10
Number of Applications Received	272	279	327	415	330	307	120	115	89	360	289	185	8	9	5
Number Approved	241	261	301	375	282	281	119	111	88	360	289	184	7	9	5
Number Disapproved	31	18	26	40	48	26	1	4	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	89%	94%	92	90%	85%	92	99%	97%	99	100%	100%	99	88%	100%	100

IHL = Institute of Higher Learning  
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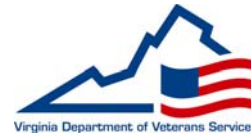
**Table 8**

**State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training Supervisory Visits: FFY08, FFY09, and FFY10**

	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
<b>Oct - Dec</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Number of Visits	20	19	26	12	20	10	10	20	17	8	0	12	N/A	N/A	0
<b>Jan - Mar</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Number of Visits	50	44	49	31	30	29	31	30	26	20	21	28	20	21	0
<b>Apr - Jun</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Number of Visits	61	75	79	38	35	43	16	17	23	27	29	37	N/A	N/A	0
<b>Jul - Sep</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Number of Visits	35	41	42	22	23	26	5	12	7	27	26	14	N/A	N/A	0
<b>Totals for Federal Fiscal Year</b>	<b>FFY 08</b>	<b>FFY 09</b>	<b>FFY 10</b>	<b>FFY 08</b>	<b>FFY 09</b>	<b>FFY 10</b>	<b>FFY 08</b>	<b>FFY 09</b>	<b>FFY 10</b>	<b>FFY 08</b>	<b>FFY 09</b>	<b>FFY 10</b>	<b>FFY 08</b>	<b>FFY 09</b>	<b>FFY 10</b>
Number of Visits	166	179	196	103	108	108	44	66	73	82	76	91	N/A	N/A	0

IHL = Institute of Higher Learning  
 NCD = Non-College Degree Program  
 APP = Apprenticeship Program

OJT = On the Job Training Program  
 LIC/CERT = Licensing/Certification Program



**Table 9**  
**State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training**  
**Other Activities in Support of Veterans Education**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>FY08</b>	<b>FY09</b>	<b>FY10</b>
Email & telephone inquiries	356	637	1,137
Governor's Office inquiries	4	8	46
Requests for application for a new facility	48	65	56
Active schools (facilities in which a veteran actively attends)	433	472	468
Number of students enrolled	21,495	20,530	42,092

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## Care Centers

### *Virginia Veterans Care Center*

#### **Mission**

*Provide affordable, high quality, and comprehensive nursing and domiciliary care to Commonwealth of Virginia veterans residing in the Virginia Veterans Care Center.*

#### **Services and Organization**

Opened on Veterans Day 1992, the Virginia Veterans Care Center (VVCC) provides state-of-the-art long-term health care for up to 240 veterans. Of the facility's 240 beds, 180 are dedicated as skilled nursing care beds, including 60 dedicated to the care of Alzheimer's patients. There are 60 beds serving assisted-living (domiciliary care) residents.

The VVCC provides on-site physical therapy, occupational and speech therapies, and podiatry care, as well as many other ancillary health care services. The care center also offers amenities such as a wheelchair accessible nature trail and deck, library, chapel, solariums, and barbershop. The Virginia Veterans Care Center is located adjacent to the Salem VA Medical Center, a 288-bed facility that provides a wide range of health care services.

With 260 authorized positions in FY10, the VVCC is the largest section in the Department of Veterans Services (DVS). The care center's largest operating divisions are nursing, housekeeping, and dietary.

Volunteers play an important part in VVCC operations, assisting in many areas of patient care. The facility interacts with approximately 30 veterans service organizations (VSOs) and more than 120 individual volunteers, who, in addition to donating generously of their time, also donate both money and materials to improve the welfare of care center residents.

Working in conjunction with VSOs and individual volunteers, staff members hold numerous activities for VVCC residents, including two carnivals for residents and their families. Attendance at each of the carnivals averages between 300 and 400 participants. The VVCC was pleased to again host a stop-over and dinner for more than 380 veterans on their way to Washington D.C. as part of the annual Run-For-The-Wall event. The bikers visited with VVCC residents, shared experiences, and showed off their bikes.

Each year, the VVCC conducts Operation Holiday Spirit (OHS) and raises approximately \$20,000 in donations to purchase Christmas gifts for all care center residents. OHS donations also provide funding and equipment for resident activities and special needs.



The Virginia Veterans Care Center receives no operating monies from the General Fund, operating entirely on revenues generated through services provided to VVCC residents. Revenue sources include Medicaid, Medicare, per diem payments from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and private funding sources. Per diem payments from the USDVA accounted for approximately 30 percent of VVCC revenues in FY10. Of the balance, 30 percent of the funding for care was provided by Medicaid, nearly 28 percent by private funds, and nearly eight percent by Medicare.

The Virginia Veterans Care Center provided 64,065 patient days of nursing care and 18,839 patient days of assisted living care to Virginia veterans in FY10. The patient day measure is used for billing purposes and to track occupancy. A patient day is one day spent by one patient in the care center. Dividing the number of patient days in a given month by the number of days in that month gives the average occupancy for the period in question.

## Resources

	FY09	FY10	FY10
<b>Budget</b>	\$19,229,752	\$18,701,737	\$18,700,000
<b>Authorized Positions</b>	260	260	260
<b>Filled Positions – as of December 1</b>	227	231	243

## Activities

The Virginia Veterans Care Center had 93 percent of the nursing care beds and 86 percent of the assisted living beds occupied during FY10. Table 10 shows VVCC patient days and occupancy levels.

In January 2010, the Virginia Department of Health, Office of Licensure and Certification conducted a standard survey of the Virginia Veterans Care Center. Five level 2 (no actual harm) deficiencies requiring a plan of correction were cited. The deficiencies were corrected.

A customer satisfaction survey was conducted addressing 14 areas of resident care and facility operations. Eighty-two percent of respondents ranked all 14 areas as Excellent or Good; 93 percent of respondents ranked all areas as Excellent, Good, or Fair. Results from the survey are used to identify and correct problem areas.

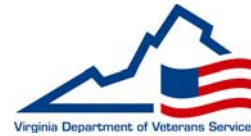
A facility upgrade and expansion project, funded jointly by the Commonwealth and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, is currently in progress. Major components of this upgrade include a new facility roof, and expansion of the areas for rehabilitation and activities.



**Table 10**

**Virginia Veterans Care Center Patient Days and average occupancy level - FY08, FY09, and FY10**

MONTH	PATIENT DAYS NURSING			AVERAGE # OF NURSING BEDS OCCUPIED			OCCUPANCY LEVEL: NURSING			PATIENT DAYS ASSISTED LIVING			AVERAGE # OF ASSISTED LIVING BEDS OCCUPIED			OCCUPANCY LEVEL: ASSISTED LIVING		
	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10
July	5,298	5,065	5,361	171	163	173	95%	91%	96%	1,769	1,463	1,588	57	47	51	95%	79%	85%
August	5,291	5,082	5,322	171	164	172	95%	91%	95%	1,777	1,466	1,612	57	47	52	96%	79%	87%
September	5,034	4,879	5,087	168	163	170	93%	90%	94%	1,721	1,392	1,509	57	46	50	96%	77%	84%
October	5,140	5,082	5,210	166	164	168	92%	91%	93%	1,780	1,436	1,562	57	46	50	96%	77%	84%
November	5,107	4,806	5,001	179	160	167	95%	89%	93%	1,727	1,464	1,549	58	49	52	96%	81%	86%
December	5,318	5,034	5,052	172	162	163	95%	90%	91%	1,795	1,462	1,586	58	47	51	97%	79%	85%
January	5,296	4,995	5,120	171	161	165	95%	90%	92%	1,797	1,388	1,605	58	45	52	97%	75%	86%
February	4,813	4,654	4,647	166	166	166	92%	92%	92%	1,575	1,265	1,457	54	45	52	91%	75%	87%
March	5,161	5,139	5,163	166	166	167	92%	92%	93%	1,617	1,421	1,590	52	46	51	87%	76%	85%
April	4,885	5,008	4,969	163	167	166	90%	93%	92%	1,575	1,449	1,564	53	48	52	88%	81%	87%
May	4,923	5,394	5,081	158	174	164	88%	97%	91%	1,601	1,523	1,651	52	49	53	86%	82%	89%
June	4,866	5,291	5,052	162	176	168	90%	98%	94%	1,515	1,532	1,566	51	51	52	84%	85%	87%
Annual Maximum Capacity	65,700	65,700	65,700	180	180	180	100%	100%	100%	21,900	21,900	21,900	60	60	60	100%	100%	100%
Total Patient Days	61,132	60,429	61,065							20,249	17,261	18,839						



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## *Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center*

### **Services and Organization**

The Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (SBVCC) opened in 2008 and features 160 single-occupancy rooms. All 160 beds are dually certified for both Medicare and Medicaid. The facility is also certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. SBVCC is located on the campus of the McGuire VA Medical Center in Richmond. The care center has two 60-bed skilled nursing care units and one 40-bed Alzheimer's/dementia care unit.

The Sitter & Barfoot Care Center is named for two Congressional Medal of Honor recipients: Colonel Van T. Barfoot and Colonel Carl L. Sitter. Barfoot was awarded the Medal of Honor as a sergeant in the U.S. Army for extraordinary heroism in the face of point blank fire on May 23, 1944, near Carano, Italy. Sitter received the Medal of Honor as a captain in U.S. Marines where he was the commanding officer in action against enemy forces at Hagaru-ri, Korea, on November 29 and 30, 1950. Colonel Barfoot lives in Richmond and is a frequent visitor at SBVCC.

The facility provides physical, occupational, and speech therapy, as well as therapeutic recreation, social and spiritual activities, and other amenities such as an on-site pharmacy, a fully equipped barber and beauty shop, activity and game rooms, resident lounges in each nursing unit, courtyards, and an outdoor walking trail. Veterans may be admitted as long-term residents or on a short-term basis for rehabilitation as they transition from hospital care to home.

Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center reached full occupancy March 2009. The care center consistently operates at 98% occupancy levels. In addition to providing long-term nursing care, many residents come to SBVCC for short-term therapy and rehabilitation in order to return home.

SBVCC receives no operating monies from the General Fund, and operates entirely on revenues generated through services provided. Revenue sources include Medicaid, Medicare, per diem payments from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and private funding sources. Revenue generated is from the following sources: Medicaid 35%, Medicare 11%, USDVA 23%, private/insurance 31%. Approximately 57% of residents are Medicaid beneficiaries.



## Resources

	FY09	FY10	FY11
<b>Budget</b>	\$14,420,453	\$14,880,468	\$14,882,205
<b>Authorized Positions</b>	233	233	233
<b>Filled Positions – as of December 1</b>	188	205	211

## Activities

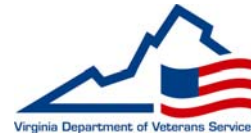
SBVCC occupancy has fluctuated between 95% and 100%, averaging 98%. Table 11 documents the care center’s patient days nursing and average occupancy level.

Volunteers are an important and welcome addition in the day-to-day service to veterans. There are currently 26 volunteer groups/individuals assisting the activity department with a variety of programs.

In February 2010, a customer satisfaction survey was conducted. SBVCC received an Excellent/Good rating from 95.83% of the respondents. The Care Center has several programs in place to improve the quality of life and services within the facility. These include the Resident Council, Resident Dietary Review Committee, and Employee Service Recognition Committee.

In March 2010, the USDVA conducted the annual inspection of all departments at SBVCC. Of the 158 USDVA standards reviewed, one was documented as unmet and a plan of correction was submitted.

In June 2010, the Virginia Department of Health Office of Licensure and Certification conducted an annual standard survey. Ten level 2 (no actual harm) deficiencies were cited for which a plan of correction was submitted and accepted.



**Table 11**  
**Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center**  
**Patient days and average occupancy level – FY08, FY09, FY10**

MONTH	PATIENT DAYS			AVERAGE # OF NURSING BEDS OCCUPIED			OCCUPANCY LEVEL: NURSING		
	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY08	FY09	FY10
July		2,053	4,860	66	157		41%	98%	
August		2,491	4,860	80	157		50%	98%	
September		2,768	4,707	92	157		58%	98%	
October		3,247	4,772	105	154		65%	96%	
November		3,503	4,563	117	152		73%	95%	
December		3,930	4,853	127	157		79%	98%	
January	101	4,208	4,918	4	136	159	3%	85%	99%
February	437	4,127	4,447	15	147	159	9%	92%	99%
March	729	4,591	4,903	24	148	158	15%	93%	99%
April	1,058	4,633	4,729	35	154	158	22%	97%	99%
May	1,607	4,761	4,855	52	154	157	32%	96%	98%
June	1,807	4,598	4,681	60	153	156	38%	96%	98%
Annual Maximum Capacity	29,200 <sup>1</sup>	58,400	58,400	160	160	160	100%	100%	100%
Total Patient Days	5,739	44,910	57,148	32	123	157	.20%	77%	98%

<sup>1</sup>Sitter & Barfoot began accepting residents in January 2008



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## Cemetery Services

### **Mission**

*Provide a dignified final resting place for veterans and eligible dependents.*

### **Services and Organization**

The Cemetery Services section of DVS operates Virginia's two state-owned veterans cemeteries – the Virginia Veterans Cemetery, in Amelia, and the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery, in Suffolk. The Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery, in Dublin, is under construction and is expected to be operational in 2011. These state-operated cemeteries provide veterans and eligible family members with a dignified and honorable final resting place.

The cemeteries accommodate three types of interments: in-ground burial of casketed remains, in-ground inurnment of cremated remains, and above ground inurnment of cremated remains in a columbarium. Cremated remains are inurned in the same manner and with the same honors as casketed remains.

Any member of the U.S. armed forces who dies on active duty, anyone retired from military service, or any veteran discharged under conditions other than dishonorable or undesirable is eligible for interment in a Virginia veterans cemetery. Also eligible for burial, if they meet certain requirements, are members of the reserve forces and the National Guard, commissioned officers of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, some American merchant mariners, and some others.

Dependents, including the legal spouse (or widow or widower) and/or an unmarried minor child under age 21, are also eligible to be buried in a Virginia veterans cemetery. In addition, an unmarried adult child, who, before the age of 21, became permanently incapable of self-support because of physical or mental disability, may be interred.

There is no charge for the gravesite/columbarium or necessary interment services for a qualified veteran at a Virginia veterans cemetery. The Commonwealth furnishes the gravesite, opens and closes the grave, orders a grave marker from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, places the grave marker, and furnishes perpetual care of the gravesite without charge. The veteran and his or her eligible dependent, however, must purchase a casket for full ground burials or a plastic, stone (marbleized) or metal urn for cremated remains. Wooden urns are acceptable for above ground placement.

The 2010 General Assembly passed legislation bringing operations at Virginia's two existing state-operated cemeteries closer in line with services offered by national veterans cemeteries. National cemeteries provide outer burial containers to veterans at no cost. Virginia's new legislation authorizes DVS to purchase outer burial containers (reinforced concrete containers with domed lids) in



volume and sell them at cost (currently \$400) to veterans and their spouses, which is approximately half the normal purchase cost for these containers. The legislation also brings Virginia’s two existing cemeteries closer in line with the services that will be offered at the new Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery, which is being constructed with pre-placed outer burial containers that will be provided at no cost to most veterans and their family members.

For each veteran buried in a state-operated veterans cemetery, DVS receives a \$300 reimbursement, called a plot allowance, from the USDVA. Dependents are charged an amount equal to the USDVA plot allowance. These monies, representing from 25 to 30 percent of the cemetery section’s annual budget, are used to fund both burial operations and grounds care and maintenance. The bulk of the section’s budget comes from the Commonwealth’s General Fund.

To eliminate any administrative difficulties that may occur at the time of death, veterans are encouraged to complete a pre-application for burial in a Virginia veterans cemetery. While DVS will not assign a specific gravesite when a pre-application is submitted, the pre-application process ensures that all required paperwork has been submitted and verified. At present, 1,467 pre-applications are on file at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery, while the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery has 2,729 pre-applications on file. The pre-application process is free of charge.

The Cemetery Services section is led by the cemeteries director who oversees all operations at both cemeteries and coordinates the construction process for Virginia’s third cemetery, the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery.

DVS cemeteries staff consists of 16 authorized positions although currently total employment for both cemeteries is 13 full-time positions. The Albert G. Horton Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery has 11 assigned positions (including the Cemeteries Director), with nine positions currently filled. The Virginia Veterans Cemetery has five assigned positions, with four positions currently filled. Due to budget constraints, two positions at the Albert G. Horton Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery and one full-time position at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery are not filled.

## Resources

	<b>FY09</b>	<b>FY10</b>	<b>FY11</b>
<b>Budget</b>	\$834,539	\$811,725	\$1,030,445
<b>Authorized Positions</b>	16	16	19
<b>Filled Positions – as of December 1</b>	14	14	13

## Activities

The Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia was dedicated in May 1997, with the first burial service conducted on June 17, 1997. The Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia currently has 28 acres developed with an additional 99 acres – representing three additional phases – available for future



development. The average annual burial/inurnment rate at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia has been approximately 230 burials per year, with 263 burials performed in FY10. If the burial rate remains between 200 and 250 burials per year, the Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia should be in full operation for another 80 years.

Phase One of the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery was dedicated on November 1, 2004, and encompasses 29 of 74 acres available on this site. The first burial service was conducted on December 13, 2004. Construction of three additional phases will be completed as needed. The number of burials/inurnments at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery has grown from 478 in FY06, the first full year of operation, to 752 in FY10. If the burial rate remains between 600 and 800 burials per year, the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery should be in full operation for approximately 50-60 years.

Both cemeteries host Memorial Day services sponsored by local veterans groups. The cemeteries hold Open House events on Veterans Day designed to inform veterans, family members, friends, and members of the public of the burial benefits available to veterans and eligible family members. Cemetery tours and assistance with completing pre-application documents are provided during business hours, Monday through Friday. The cemeteries are staffed with one employee on holidays (Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Memorial Day, and Veterans Day) to assist families who may be visiting a loved one's gravesite.

For the first time, DVS and more than half a dozen partners held a ceremony to inter the remains of ten forgotten heroes at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery. Participating organizations included the Virginia National Guard, the Marine Corps League-Chesapeake Detachment, Sturtevant Funeral Home-Portsmouth Chapel, Virginia Patriot Guard Riders, Red Knights Motorcycle Club, Blue Knights Motorcycle Club, and the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association. The 10 sets of cremains had been left unclaimed at the Sturtevant Funeral Home. The Missing in America Program estimates there are hundreds of veterans' cremains unclaimed in funeral homes, crematories, prisons, and other institutions nationwide. DVS encourages funeral homes to step forward and provide the names of their unclaimed cremains. DVS will research the names to identify if they are veterans and eligible for interment in one of Virginia's state-operated veterans cemeteries. DVS and its partners will provide a service with appropriate military honors and inter each veteran's cremated remains.

The Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia performed 263 burials in FY10 compared with 248 in FY09, while the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery performed 752 burials in FY10 compared with 638 burials in FY09. Table 12 shows burial activity from FY97 through FY10.



**Table 12**  
**Cemetery Burials FY1997 – FY2010**

**Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia**

	FY97	FY98	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10
<b>July</b>	N/A	5	6	8	9	13	16	14	18	16	26	17	26	23
<b>August</b>	N/A	9	8	12	13	15	9	14	17	16	17	13	23	12
<b>September</b>	N/A	11	3	9	5	17	10	10	16	20	17	15	19	17
<b>October</b>	N/A	5	8	9	13	19	14	23	17	15	22	25	21	17
<b>November</b>	N/A	7	7	8	6	13	18	11	20	18	22	13	9	25
<b>December</b>	N/A	14	7	7	8	16	16	19	18	14	18	22	20	29
<b>January</b>	N/A	7	8	10	12	11	19	17	16	19	20	15	18	17
<b>February</b>	N/A	9	6	12	12	11	13	15	11	25	18	16	13	21
<b>March</b>	N/A	12	9	11	12	18	18	13	16	21	19	19	19	32
<b>April</b>	N/A	9	8	12	10	12	8	15	12	23	18	19	29	23
<b>May</b>	N/A	3	9	17	12	16	12	13	11	23	13	18	28	16
<b>June</b>	2	4	12	9	9	14	16	15	16	21	18	21	23	31
<b>Total</b>	2	95	91	124	121	175	169	179	188	231	228	213	248	263



**Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery, Suffolk**

	<b>FY05</b>	<b>FY06</b>	<b>FY07</b>	<b>FY08</b>	<b>FY09</b>	<b>FY10</b>
<b>July</b>	N/A	42	40	54	36	55
<b>August</b>	N/A	40	39	31	51	58
<b>September</b>	N/A	39	32	35	48	52
<b>October</b>	N/A	28	29	49	49	59
<b>November</b>	N/A	35	37	40	36	61
<b>December</b>	34	37	41	52	65	77
<b>January</b>	47	36	48	60	59	60
<b>February</b>	29	51	47	56	54	55
<b>March</b>	40	43	58	51	62	69
<b>April</b>	44	40	38	55	59	76
<b>May</b>	28	46	50	44	53	65
<b>June</b>	33	41	51	64	66	65
<b>Total</b>	255	478	510	591	638	752



## Outreach

While DVS has more than 25 brick-and-mortar locations as well as a web presence, proactive outreach to Virginia's veterans is an integral part of the agency's mission. Staff not only provide services to veterans and their families, they must also educate them about benefits the veterans may be eligible for. Currently, the agency actively participates in dozens of events annually, garners media coverage, hosts a website and a listserve, and uses direct mail to let the Commonwealth's veterans and their families know about benefits, services, and activities available to them.

### *Events*

DVS actively participates in numerous events throughout the year—veterans service organization conventions, community events for veterans, stand downs for homeless veterans, dedication ceremonies, and a variety of other events. In many cases, benefit services representatives attend these events as well as personnel from the care centers, the cemeteries, the State Approving Agency and the Virginia Wounded Warrior program. During FY10, the agency was represented at 799 events. Table 16 shows outreach activity for FY08, FY09 and FY10.

During FY10, DVS held open houses at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia and the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery on both Memorial Day and Veterans Day. The agency also hosted the Wreaths Across America ceremonies at both cemeteries, conducted the groundbreaking ceremony for the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery, and partnered with the Virginia Commonwealth University Partnership for People with Disabilities to present the *Virginia is for Heroes 2010* conference. The conference attracted more than 400 participants, and resulted in identification of major service needs and priorities for the VWWP regional programs.

### *Media Relations and Publications*

Between July 2009 and June 2010, the agency issued 23 news releases and fielded approximately 30 media calls. The agency received positive coverage on the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program *Virginia Is for Heroes* training conference, the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery construction, Operation Holiday Spirit at the Virginia Veterans Care Center, activities at the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center, and the 2010 military bill signing by Governor Bob McDonnell. In early 2010, the agency purchased interior ads on 200 buses in Richmond and 50 buses in Roanoke advertising Post 911 G. I. Bill benefits and encouraging veterans to contact the agency with questions. The ads ran from March through May.

### *Electronic Communication*

DVS hosts a website ([www.VirginiaforVeterans.com](http://www.VirginiaforVeterans.com)) describing the agency's services. This year, the agency added an interactive donation page to the site which enables individuals to make online donations to the Veterans Services Foundation. The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program rolled out a feature-packed interactive site that serves as both an information source and meeting place for veterans. Late in the year, the agency launched a jobs board which enables employers to quickly post positions targeting veterans at no cost and gives veterans access to job listings and links to



employment applications. The DVS website features an extensive list of resources covering everything from healthcare to tributes and memorials. Finally, more than a dozen headlines from veteran-related stories are posted on the site's splash page and are updated almost daily, ensuring visitors have access to the latest veterans news.

More than 1,000 veterans, friends, family members, and service providers subscribe to the agency's listserv. Daily messages are sent out on a wide range of topics, from local veterans events to safety warnings and announcements about new services. All information sent via listserv must be actionable by subscribers. Signing up for the listserv is as easy as visiting [www.VirginiaforVeterans.com](http://www.VirginiaforVeterans.com) and entering your email address in the subscribe block on the splash page. The agency plans to start using Twitter later in the year as another tool for distributing messages and headlines to the veterans community.

### ***Direct Mail***

DVS receives copies of the DD214 for nearly all military service personnel recently discharged in Virginia and uses this information to send letters to these veterans. During FY10, DVS sent out 5,901 letters. The letters thank the military service personnel for their service, describe the services provided by DVS, and are signed by the Commissioner. An agency brochure is included with each letter.



**Table 16**  
**DVS Participation in Outreach Events—FY08, FY09, and FY10**

	BENEFITS			VWWP			EDUCATION & TRAINING			VVCC			SBVCC			CEMETERIES		
	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10
<b>JUL</b>	6	7	3	n/a	2	34	7	3	1	4	3	3	n/a	2	3	3	3	2
<b>AUG</b>	10	8	7	n/a	7	19	7	6	2	0	3	1	n/a	0	2	0	1	2
<b>SEP</b>	14	6	15	n/a	26	27	11	6	8	4	2	3	n/a	3	2	0	2	4
<b>OCT</b>	9	6	7	n/a	17	41	3	2	2	4	2	3	n/a	3	3	2	1	2
<b>NOV</b>	9	22	14	n/a	9	35	4	4	6	3	2	3	n/a	3	3	2	3	1
<b>DEC</b>	1	8	9	n/a	35	31	2	2	2	1	3	2	n/a	2	4	0	1	1
<b>JAN</b>	7	15	4	n/a	43	67	3	5	3	2	2	2	n/a	4	3	4	2	1
<b>FEB</b>	8	7	5	n/a	37	72	3	5	6	2	3	2	n/a	2	2	4	3	1
<b>MAR</b>	5	7	13	n/a	44	58	7	7	10	3	4	4	n/a	3	2	5	3	3
<b>APR</b>	13	7	6	n/a	52	51	10	5	7	1	1	2	n/a	2	1	7	4	1
<b>MAY</b>	17	9	13	n/a	30	70	2	0	5	1	3	2	n/a	6	4	3	3	1
<b>JUN</b>	8	11	12	n/a	31	48	3	7	6	2	1	2	n/a	3	2	0	5	1
<b>TTL</b>	107	113	108	n/a	335	553	62	52	58	27	29	29	n/a	33	31	30	31	20



## Legislative and Budget Highlights—2010 General Assembly

Veterans issues continued to enjoy the strong, bi-partisan support of the executive and legislative branches in fiscal year 2010. Budget and legislative highlights of FY10 include:

### Burial vaults at state-operated veterans cemeteries (HB479) (Carrico)

- Provides burial vaults at cost to eligible veterans and their family members interred at state-operated veterans cemeteries, based on available funding at the Department of Veterans Services.

### Exemption of handling fee for veterans opening small business (HB 262/SB 455) (Sherwood/Greason & Hurt/Stosch)

- Exempts veterans from paying the Department of Business Assistance's handling fee when establishing a small business through the one-stop small business permitting program.

### Honor and Remember Flag; State's emblem of service and sacrifice by members of U.S. Armed Forces (HJ137) (Cosgrove, Sherwood, Hurt)

- Designates the Honor and Remember Flag as the Commonwealth's emblem of service and sacrifice by the brave men and women of the United States Armed Forces who have given their lives in the line of duty.

### Constitutional amendment; property tax exemption for certain veterans (HB149/SB31) (O'Bannon/Puller)

- Provides for a referendum at the November 2, 2010, election to approve or reject an amendment requiring the General Assembly to provide a real property tax exemption for the principal residence of a veteran, or his or her surviving spouse, if the veteran has a 100 percent service-connected, permanent, and total disability.

### Veterans Bill of Rights (HB 1337) (Lingamfelter)

- Requires the Commissioner, in conjunction with the Board of Veterans Services, to establish and implement a compact with Virginia's veterans, which shall have a goal of making Virginia America's most veteran-friendly state. The bill specifies the provisions to be contained in the compact, and requires the Commissioner to include the status and progress of the compact in his annual report.



## Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (SB 299)

(J Miller)

- Requires the Department of Education to employ a military family education liaison to provide staff support for the Virginia Council on the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children and to assist military families and the state in facilitating the implementation of the Interstate Compact .

## Electronic processing of disability claims (HB 419)

(K Cox)

- Requires the Department of Veterans Services to replace its existing case management technology, which replacement of is required to support highly sophisticated electronic claims preparation.

## Eliminates requirement that Wounded Warrior Program cover only combat injuries (HB 174)

(K Cox)

- Eliminates the requirement that the Wounded Warrior Program cover only injuries sustained by military service personnel in combat areas.

## ***Other Legislative Initiatives***

### Study on Homelessness Among Virginia Veterans

On any night in Virginia, approximately 900 veterans are sleeping on the street. Many others may be staying with relatives and friends but are homeless nonetheless because they are unable to afford their own housing. Veterans experience homelessness due to effects of post traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury as well as other causes. Specialized services are available through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as well as through state, local, and private sources. However, gaps still exist.

Delegate Joe Bouchard proposed legislation in 2009 for a study of homeless veterans. However, rather than continuing with the legislative proposal, Delegate Kirk Cox asked the Joint Legislative Review Committee (JLARC) to conduct the study. JLARC conducted a study, which:

- Examined the current level of services provided by federal, state, local, and private sources
- Identified gaps in those services, and
- Identified the need for additional services and their cost.

The study was released in June 2010. The Commonwealth may face challenges in finding the resources necessary to implement recommendations from the study.



***Budget***

Tables 13, 14, and 15 show the DVS budget, approved funding, and staffing levels

**Table 13**  
**DVS Budget FY09, FY10, FY11**

<b>Program</b>	<b>FY09</b>	<b>FY10</b>	<b>FY11</b>
Benefit claims <sup>2</sup>	\$3,378,384	\$3,139,749	\$3,156,480
Virginia Wounded Warrior Program <sup>3</sup>	\$2,522,078	\$2,114,246	\$2,214,246
Education and Training	\$704,223	\$704,223	\$704,223
Long-term care <sup>4</sup>	\$28,535,091	\$33,657,205	\$33,652,205
Cemeteries	\$834,539	\$811,725	\$1,030,445
Virginia War Memorial <sup>5</sup>	\$247,313	\$234,473	\$391,312
Administration	\$1,844,539	\$1,611,090	\$1,951,292
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$37,916,167</b>	<b>\$42,122,711</b>	<b>\$43,100,203</b>

Notes:

1. Includes FY09, FY10, and FY11 budget reductions
2. Includes \$100,000 in FY09 and FY10 for Automated Claims Processing System
3. The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program was authorized by the 2008 General Assembly. Includes \$150,000 (NGF) appropriation each year for private donations, and \$100,000 for federal grants, beginning in FY11.
4. Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center accepted its first residents in January 2008 and was fully operational in June 2009
5. DVS began providing administrative and financial management services in July 2008



**Table 14**  
**DVS Funding as Approved by the 2010 General Assembly**

PROGRAM	FUND SOURCE					PROGRAM - PERCENTAGE OF DVS BUDGET
	GENERAL FUND	SPECIAL (FEE FOR SERVICE)	DEDICATED SPECIAL (PRIVATE DONATIONS)	FEDERAL TRUST (FEDERAL CONTRACT)	PROGRAM TOTAL	
Benefit Claims	\$3,156,480				\$3,156,480	7.32%
Virginia Wounded Warrior Program	\$1,964,246	\$0	\$150,000	\$100,000	\$2,214,246	5.14%
Education and Training	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$704,223	\$704,223	1.63%
Long-term care	\$0	\$26,560,091	\$70,000	\$7,022,114	\$33,652,205	78.08%
Cemeteries	\$721,979	\$78,466	\$5000	\$225,000	\$1,030,445	2.39%
Virginia War Memorial	\$391,312	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$391,312	0.91%
Administration	\$1,046,101	\$865,191	\$40,000	\$0	\$1,951,292	4.53%
<b>DVS Total</b>	<b>\$7,280,118</b>	<b>\$27,503,748</b>	<b>\$265,000</b>	<b>\$8,051,337</b>	<b>\$43,100,203</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
Fund type as a percentage of DVS budget	16.89%	63.81%	0.62%	18.68%	100.00%	



**Table 15**  
**DVS Staffing, FY09 and FY10 Authorized / FY10 Actual**

STAFFING BY AGENCY			
AREA	FY09—AUTHORIZED	FY10—AUTHORIZED	FY10—ACTUAL
Benefits	69	69	59
Education and Training	7	7	7
Virginia Wounded Warrior Program	5	5	3
Long-term Care Centers	493	493	441
Cemeteries	16	16	13
Virginia War Memorial	3	3	2
Central administration	16	16	6
Totals	609	609	531

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## Capital Projects

### *Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery*

The Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery is located in Dublin, Virginia on an 80-acre parcel of land transferred from the Department of the Army, Radford Arsenal to the Commonwealth of Virginia in 2008. The cemetery will be developed in four phases as grave sites are needed. Phase 1 construction, currently underway, covers 24 acres and includes the main entrance area, full casketed and cremation burial areas, a columbarium, a memorial garden and scatter garden, roads, an assembly area, committal shelter, cemetery office, maintenance complex, and supporting infrastructure. Interment areas include 5,167 standard burial plots; 2,750 pre-placed crypts; 500 in-ground cremation spaces; and 625 columbarium niches. Construction costs are funded by a \$7.2 million grant from the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration. Completion of construction is forecast for late 2010. A groundbreaking ceremony was held on October 19, 2009. Opening is slated for 2011.

### *Outer Burial Containers*

The construction grant provided by the National Cemetery Administration, a division of the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs, for construction of the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery included funding for 2,700 preinstalled outer burial containers. When the new cemetery opens in 2011, most veterans and their family members will be provided an outer burial container at no cost. However, this creates a disparity between the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery and the two existing cemeteries which require veterans and family members to purchase burial vaults.

To rectify this disparity, DVS applied for a \$5.8 million grant to retrofit the cemeteries in Suffolk and Amelia with preinstalled outer burial containers; however, the agency received notification from the National Cemetery Administration that the Commonwealth's grant request will not be funded in FFY011. It could take two years or more for the grant to be awarded.

### *Virginia Veterans Care Center Renovations*

The Virginia Veterans Care Center made approximately \$1.4M worth of renovations funded through federal recovery act funds. Renovations included replacement of the roof, additions to the activities and rehabilitation departments, replacement of the nurse call system, and replacement of the entrance doors. Construction will begin on a new parking lot in Spring 2011.

### *Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center*

The Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center released an RFP for construction of an additional 40-bed wing. The USDVA grant request for the \$5.2 million expansion is ranked #42 on the Priority List for State Home Construction Grants for FFY11.



## *Additional Care Centers*

DVS has submitted grant requests for construction of a 240-bed veterans care center in Hampton, and a 240-bed veterans care center in Fairfax. For FFY11, these projects are ranked #43 and #49, respectively. Land for the Hampton Veterans Care Center will be donated by the Hampton VAMC; however, land for the Fairfax Care Center still needs to be acquired.

States can apply for federal grants for construction of new care centers or expansion or renovation of existing centers. Federal grant funds cover up to 65 percent of project costs. States are responsible for 35 percent of the costs. For both the Sitter & Barfoot addition and these two new care centers, it is possible that a state with a higher project priority may decline federal grant funding in FFY11, meaning that Virginia could be notified later in the year that one or more of the Virginia projects could be offered funding. If the projects are offered federal funding, the state must provide the matching state funds (35% of project costs).



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## Implementing the Compact with Virginia's Veterans

House Bill 1337, passed by the 2010 General Assembly, requires the Commissioner of Veterans Services, in conjunction with the Board of Veterans Services, to establish and implement a Compact with Virginia's Veterans.

Signed into law by Governor Bob McDonnell as Chapter 534, 2010 Acts of Assembly, the new legislation took effect on July 1, 2010. The Commissioner of Veterans Services is required to include in his annual report an update on the progress of veterans services established in the Compact.

Governor Bob McDonnell's proposed budget and legislative agendas for the 2011 General Assembly include measures that are the first step towards implementing the Compact with Virginia's Veterans. The Commissioner's 2011 Annual Report will include an update on the progress of these new initiatives.

### ***Governor McDonnell has proposed these budget initiatives:***

1. \$387,164 in General Funds to ensure that state veterans cemeteries meet national shrine standards and operate in a safe, efficient manner through adequate staffing, replacement of obsolete equipment, and appropriate highway signage. This proposal supports the recommendations of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC).
2. \$280,000 in Nongeneral Funds to purchase for resale and install outer burial containers at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia) and the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk). This proposal supports a recommendation made by the JLC in advance of the 2010 General Assembly session. The program was authorized by 2010 General Assembly and \$36,000 in General Funds appropriated for equipment purchase and program start-up.
3. \$300,000 in Nongeneral Funds for the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP). The VWWP, through the Virginia Department of Health and the Office of Rural Health, was awarded a \$300,000 federal grant for the *Rural Veterans Health Access Program*. The grant is for three years.
4. An additional \$4 million in Nongeneral Funds for the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center, to reflect a full year of operation.
5. Authority to apply for \$19.5 million in federal grant funds to construct a new veterans care center in Southwest Virginia. The state's share of the construction cost is \$10.5 million.
6. \$82,306 in General Funds to establish and implement a DVS liaison program to provide training and technical support and assistance to county veterans service officers. The





proposed budget amendment will help improve access to claims representation for Virginia's veterans and their dependents.

***Governor McDonnell has proposed these legislative initiatives:***

1. Waive the one-year residency requirement to qualify for in-state tuition for veterans who wish to establish Virginia as their permanent residence. This proposal supports the recommendations of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations, and will improve access to higher education opportunities for veterans.
2. Exempt Department of Veterans Services' care centers from the certificate of public need requirements. The General Assembly has authorized the Governor to apply for federal grant funding to construct care centers in Hampton and Northern Virginia, and to expand the care center in Richmond. The General Assembly has also committed state funding to these projects. The proposal will facilitate the completion of these and future projects.
3. Allow any veteran or his or her survivor to obtain a certified copy of a vital record free of charge if the record is to be used to obtain service-connected benefits. This proposal will help some veterans receive their federal disability benefits sooner.
4. Eliminate the requirement for an advisory committee on veterans care centers. The functions of the advisory committee are duplicated by the Board of Veterans Services. Deleting the requirement will prevent duplication of effort and the unnecessary expenditure of funds.

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## Comments from the Chairman, Board of Veterans Services

The Board of Veterans Services changed leadership during the final six months of 2010 due to the retirement of Vince Burgess as the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services and appointment of Paul E. Galanti as the next Commissioner. Thad A. Jones, Vice Chair, assumed leadership of the Board. Mr. Jones met with the outgoing and incoming Commissioners as well as the Director of Planning and Policy to discuss the BVS vacancy and pledged to serve as Chair Pro Tem until the election of officers. Mr. Jones was elected Chairman at the September 30 meeting. Mr. William G. Haneke was elected Vice Chairman.

The Board of Veterans Services thanks Mr. Pat Green, Mr. Paris Davis, Mr. Judson Stanley, and Mr. Paul Galanti for their faithful, thoughtful, and excellent service to the Board of Veterans Services. They worked tirelessly to provide the best services to Virginia's veterans. In early September, Governor McDonnell appointed four new members to the Board of Veterans Services: Mr. William G. Haneke, Mr. Donald B. Kaiserman, Ms. Kate Kohler, and Mr. George Melnyk, Sr. The four new BVS members are energized and enthusiastic about their appointments. On September 15, the Department of Veterans Services hosted an orientation specifically for the new members. The orientation was a teachable moment, showing and telling new board members about BVS and DVS operations.

Board membership is at 100 percent. The Chairman is rejuvenating the Board, moving it toward being a more active policy board. By State code, the Board of Veterans Services is to investigate issues; study matters; develop recommendations; establish policies; monitor, and review and advise the Commissioner on all matters pertaining to the Department of Veterans Services. The Board's job is to work with the Commissioner of Veterans Services and his staff to ensure excellent service is delivered to the Commonwealth's veterans, their spouses, and dependents.

The Chair has revitalized the Benefits, Care Centers, and Cemeteries committees. The Benefits committee now has eight members, each assigned to an area of concern. The Cemeteries committee has a chair and a co-chair. The Veterans Care Centers committee has a chair and a co-chair. The Board Chair also appointed an ad-hoc By Laws Review Committee to review existing By Laws. All Board members have specific tasks except the *ex officio* members (the Commissioner, Joint Leadership Council (JLC) Chair, and Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Chair). BVS members are serious about their jobs as Board members and pledge to work diligently on behalf of all Virginia veterans.

BVS will continue to work with the JLC and VSF to support their initiatives. Chairman Jones pledged to attend all JLC and VSF scheduled meetings. The Chair will share lessons learned from these meetings and functions with members of the Board.

Finally, the Board's five legislative members represent 25 percent of the Board's membership. The three *ex officio* members represent 16 percent of the Board's membership; and the Board's largest contingent, private citizens, represent 58 percent of the membership. Working together as a unified



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team of skilled legislators and citizens, Board members are *Looking and Moving Forward as One Team*.

On behalf of members of the Board, we look forward to working with Governor McDonnell and his administration, the Joint Leadership Council of Veteran Service Organizations, the Veterans Service Foundation, and the DVS Commissioner and his staff as we help make Virginia the most veteran friendly state in the nation.

Thad A. Jones  
Chairman  
Board of Veterans Services



**Board of Veterans Services—as of December 1, 2010**

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>TITLE</b>
Thad A. Jones	Chairman, Retired Chief Warrant Officer, U.S. Army / U.S. Army Reserve
John A. Anderson	Executive Vice President, InoMedic, Inc. Retired Colonel, U.S. Air Force
<i>Delegate</i> Mark L. Cole	General Assembly of Virginia
<i>Delegate</i> M. Kirkland Cox	General Assembly of Virginia
<i>Senator</i> John S. Edwards	General Assembly of Virginia
William G. Haneke	Chairman, Families of the Wounded Fund. Retired Captain, U.S. Army.
Donald B. Kaiserman	Retired Colonel, U.S. Army
Kate Kohler	Chief Operating Officer, PenFed Foundation. U.S. Army veteran
Sandra Love	Forensic Clinician, Chesapeake Community Services Board U.S. Marine Corps Veteran
George Melnyk, Sr.	President, Premier Millwork & Lumber Co., Inc. U.S. Navy veteran
Samuel Metters	President and CEO, Metters Industries, Inc.; Retired Lt. Colonel, U.S. Army Reserves
<i>Senator</i> Toddy Puller	General Assembly of Virginia
J. W. Peyton Robertson	Retired Colonel, United States Marines
Alfredo Sample	CEO & President, HiTek Security LLC; Retired Chief Master Sergeant, U.S. Air Force
Max W. Taylor	U.S. Army Veteran
<i>Delegate</i> Vivian E. Watts	General Assembly of Virginia
Jenny M. Holbert	Chairman, Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations; Retired Colonel, United States Marine Corps
David N. Richardson	Chairman, Veterans Services Foundation Board of Trustees
Paul E. Galanti	Commissioner, Department of Veterans Services



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## Comments from the Chairman, Joint Leadership Council

The Joint Leadership Council (JLC) of Veterans Service Organizations advocates for positive change for our veterans and their families, to improve their lives and increase their equity as veteran-citizens of this Commonwealth. We owe them both our hard work and difficult decisions for all they have sacrificed and suffered so we may all enjoy the freedom given us through our membership in this Commonwealth and our great Nation.

The JLC is comprised of 23 veterans service organizations (VSOs), and represents over 250,000 VSO members who volunteer to improve the lives of Virginia's 820,000 veterans across the Commonwealth. Veterans comprise nearly 10 percent of the Commonwealth's citizenry, giving Virginia one of the highest per capita populations of veterans in the country.

In 2010, the JLC saw success during the legislative session with many of our objectives. Most notable was our advocacy of the real estate tax exemption for 100% disabled veterans. The General Assembly approved the Constitutional amendment and it was then approved by the voters on November 2, 2010, with an 82.4% favorable vote. We eagerly await the passage of enacting legislation by the 2011 General Assembly.

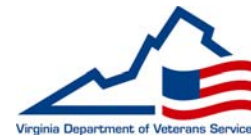
The General Assembly heard the requests of the JLC and continued the level funding of the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program; passed a bill so grants from the Military Family Relief Fund are not treated as taxable income; and appropriated funds so burial vaults can be sold at cost at our veterans cemeteries. The Department of Veterans Services (DVS) began selling vaults in August, providing our veterans a significant cost savings.

In these austere times, we deeply respect the work that faces both the Governor and General Assembly as they lead us to economic recovery. Each member of the JLC recognizes the pinch of the current recession and is dedicated to finding innovative, creative ways to help create efficiencies and increase revenue for the Commonwealth while supporting our veterans. We advocate for what our veterans need, all within the constraints imposed by current realities.

This past summer, we chose six legislative objectives to help our veterans and their families. As 2010 draws to a close, we will work diligently with the Governor and members of the General Assembly to prepare for their legislative session in 2011, to improve the lives of our greatest citizens, our veterans and their families, to whom we owe so much.

Respectfully,

Jenny M. Holbert, Chair  
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps, Retired



**Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations –December 1, 2010**

<b>VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>JLC MEMBER</b>	<b>ALTERNATE</b>
Air Force Association	Jeff Platte	Harold Barton
American Ex-Prisoners of War	George Coker	
American Legion	Brett Reistad	Dale Chapman
AMVETS	Bruce Brown	
Association of the U.S. Army	Don Kaiserman	Edward Dauksz
Disabled American Veterans	Dave Martinez	Daniel Miller
Fleet Reserve Association	Abe Zino	Edward McNamee
Korean War Veterans Association	James Jones	John Dozier
Legion of Valor of the U.S., Inc.	Roger Dimsdale	Rich Rinaldo
Marine Corps League	Bruce Steeley	John Prendergast
Military Order of the Purple Heart	Robert Fairchild	Thomas Gimble
Military Order of the World Wars	Bill Townsley	Earl Johnson
Military Officers Association of America	Wes Edwards	John Clickener
National Association for Uniformed Services	Chip Moran	David Ellis
Navy Seabee Veterans of America	Frank Driscoll	
Non-Commissioned Officers Association	Matthew Dailey	Richard Schneider
Paralyzed Veterans of America	David Coffield	Yusuf Shakir
Reserve Officers Association	Carmen Gentile	Thomas Stephen
Roanoke Valley Veterans Council	Nolan Jackson	Dan Karnes
Veterans of Foreign Wars	Dan Boyer	Kim DeShano
Vietnam Veterans of America	George Corbett	Charles Montgomery
Virginia National Guard Association	Mike Coleman	John Velleca
Women Marines Association	Jenny Holbert	Marie Juliano
Chairman of the Board of Veterans Services	Thad Jones	
Chairman of the Veterans Services Foundation	Dave Richardson	
Commissioner of Veterans Services	Paul Galanti	



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## Comments from the Chairman, Veterans Services Foundation

I'm proud to present to you a brief summary of the Veterans Services Foundation's (VSF) support of the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) and Virginia's veterans and their families. We are pleased with our accomplishments despite the continued weak economy and budget constraints that have challenged the Foundation's operations during FY10.

Our top priority for FY10 was support of the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP). The VSF-DVS team raised more than \$79,000 in contributions for VWWP and, combined with a federal grant, we met the FY10 goal of \$150,000. We also have been active in supporting other DVS programs and have helped raise almost \$60,000 for the care centers, cemeteries, and the Virginia War Memorial Honor Walk program. However, this represents a drop in donations from last year and is commensurate with the decline in donations experienced by other charitable organizations. On the positive side, an online donation option is available and is drawing a number of contributions, and the number of corporate contributions has increased.

We have administered the Veterans Services Fund, maintained Fund integrity, ensured accountability, transparency, and provided funding for DVS services and programs. The DVS finance team has provided outstanding assistance in Fund administration. However, budget constraints are challenging plans for Foundation operational self-sufficiency and our capacity to financially support ourselves from our own resources. We are in the process of meeting this challenge with the support of DVS.

The Foundation Executive Director works closely with DVS to assure mutual interests are maintained and we look forward to meeting new challenges as we work toward making Virginia America's most veteran-friendly state

Sincerely,

David N. Richardson  
Chairman of the Board of Trustees  
Veterans Services Foundation



**Veterans Services Foundation – as of December 1, 2010**

<b>POSITION</b>	<b>VSF REPRESENTATIVE</b>
Board Chairman	David N. Richardson
Board 1st Vice Chairman	Meade A. Spotts
Board 2nd Vice Chairman	Supriya Christopher
Finance Committee Chairman	William M. Lechler
Finance Vice Committee Chairman	Leo C. Wardrup, Jr.
Development Committee Chair	David Holt
Development Committee Vice Chair	Frederic H. Leigh
Board Member	James B. Boyd
Board Member	James Cuthbertson
Board Member	Juanita Farrow
Board Member	Leroy P. Gross
Board Member	Richard Schollmann
Board Member	Peter Trainer
Board Member	Randall L. West
Board Member	Frank G. Wickersham, III
Board Member	Kathleen Wilder
Ex Officio	Paul E. Galanti
Ex Officio	Jenny M. Holbert
Ex Officio	Thad A. Jones