

## **1. WORK PLAN TITLE: Federal Contractor**

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**SCOPE:** The Federal Contractor Work Plan focuses on the following areas of concentration:

1. Revise existing regulations and guidance materials to accommodate the increase in the threshold amount from \$25,000 to \$100,000 for all federal contracts that procure personal property and non-personal services.
2. Develop and issue guidance for listing job openings with the employment service delivery system.
3. Develop guidance/technical assistance on how information on the listed federal contractor job openings will be provided to States, subdivisions of States, and private entities carrying out employment, training, and placement services.
4. Revise reporting systems to accommodate the new definition of recently separated veterans and submit the proposed revisions for approval by the Office of Management and Budget.
5. Develop guidance on how job openings listed by federal contractors can be applied most effectively to improve veterans' opportunities for employment/advancement.
6. Develop a crosswalk between the data bases maintained for the Federal Contractor Award Information System (FCAIS) and for the VETS-100 Reports.
7. Review each related Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and make required updates.

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### **PROGRESS TO DATE:**

VETS' staff met with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) and the Office of the Solicitor of Labor (SOL) to discuss the changes that are required in the MOU between VETS and OFCCP based upon P.L. 107-288. VETS determined that revised regulations are needed for the Federal Contractor Program (FCP) to implement the changes in the contract threshold level and in the definition of the eligibility groups for the VETS-100 Report. VETS met with OFCCP and SOL to ensure that similar language and definitions will be used in those regulations that each organization is responsible for revising. VETS then submitted a draft Notice of Proposed Rule Making to the SOL for informal review.

VETS also met with staff members of the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA), and OFCCP to determine who should revise the regulations on the listing of federal contractor openings. It was agreed that ETA will revise those regulations.

Accordingly, it has been agreed that VETS will revise those regulations that address the responsibilities of federal contractors regarding submission of the VETS-100 Report, while OFCCP will revise those regulations that address the responsibilities of federal contractors regarding affirmative action, and ETA will revise those regulations that address the responsibilities of federal contractors regarding the listing of job openings.

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**MAJOR MILESTONES:**

- Issue new MOU with OFCCP by September 2003.
- Implement FCAIS/VETS-100 database crosswalk by August 2003.
- Revise FCP guidance materials by December 2003.
- Publish the final rule on VETS-100 reporting by January 2004.

## **2. WORK PLAN TITLE: Federal Hiring Tasks**

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**SCOPE:** The Federal Hiring Tasks Work Plan involves the following areas of concentration:

1. Review, update, or cancel the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between VETS and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), as appropriate.
2. Contact OPM to obtain time lines for the revisions required in the regulations for the Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA) and to determine the effect of those changes on VETS' links to the OPM web site.
3. Update guidance and brochures on VRA.

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### **PROGRESS TO DATE:**

After several meetings and interim contacts between OPM and the DOL Office of the Solicitor of Labor (SOL), it was determined that the MOU is no longer required and should be cancelled. Instructions were requested from SOL as to the proper procedures for canceling the MOU. Contact was initiated with OPM to obtain a time line for revising the VRA regulations and for updating OPM's web site. OPM committed to issue revised regulations, to update VetGuide, and to update VetsInfoGuide by April 2003. OPM currently estimates that the required web site updates will be completed by May 2003. Plans are underway to update the VETS web site links to the VetGuide and the VetsInfoGuide in the OPM web site after OPM completes its updates.

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### **MAJOR MILESTONES:**

- Confirm that OPM issues the proposed revised regulations by February 2003.
- Confirm that OPM issues the final revised regulations by April 2003.
- Update VETS' links to the OPM web site by May 2003.

### **3. WORK PLAN TITLE: State Employee Performance Incentive Awards**

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**SCOPE:** The State Employee Performance Incentive Awards Work Plan focuses on the following areas of concentration:

1. Establish eligibility criteria for performance incentives awards.
2. Consult with representatives of States, political subdivisions of States, and service providers on how to incorporate improved integration of veterans' programs within the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) service delivery system as a key criterion for performance incentives awards.
3. Develop guidance on expenditure and use of award money.

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**PROGRESS TO DATE:**

VETS has formed a stakeholder work group consisting of DVETs, Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff, Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists, and representatives of the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) as well as the National Association of Counties (NACo) [invited]. Through meetings and correspondence that are planned for February – March 2003, this advisory work group will provide VETS' Executive staff with recommendations for policy guidance concerning issues such as eligibility criteria for receipt of awards, internal coordination among a State's employment and training programs through the Wagner-Peyser Act and WIA, timelines for State's distribution of awards, alternatives to cash awards, involvement of VETS' staff in the awards process, and implementation of awards in Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 and beyond.

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**MAJOR MILESTONES:**

- Develop white paper regarding VETS' proposals for incentive awards by February 2003.
- Develop stakeholder advisory work group's recommendations for policies and guidance concerning performance incentive awards by March 2003.
- Develop policy guidance regarding performance incentive awards for inclusion in the draft of the Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) for the State Veterans' Services Plan by March 2003.
- OMB approval of the State Veterans' Services Plan TAG by December 2003.
- Implement performance incentive awards by FY 2004.

#### **4. WORK PLAN TITLE: Developing State Plan**

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**SCOPE:** The Developing State Plan Work Plan involves the following areas of concentration:

1. Identify the approval criteria and subject matter to be addressed in the State Veterans' Services Plan.
2. Develop guidance regarding levels of integration in Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff, Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists in the employment service delivery system of a State.
3. Determine the veterans' population to be emphasized for each individual state's employment service delivery system of a State.
4. Determine how the terms and conditions of a new grant or modification should be affected based upon the results of past reviews and performance of the State.
5. Develop guidance for States on submitting reports that pertain to hiring non-veteran individuals as DVOP specialists or LVER staff.
6. Develop guidance for the States on describing coordination of employment and training services provided to veterans and eligible persons under the Workforce Investment Act and the Wagner-Peyser Act.
7. Establish guidance for the States to determine what will be a "sufficient" number of DVOP specialists and LVER staff for them to assign.

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#### **PROGRESS TO DATE:**

A State/Federal Work Group was formed by VETS to develop approval criteria and subject matter for the State Veterans' Services Plans described in the Jobs for Veterans Act. After National Office review and approval of work group's objectives, the work group developed a work plan that addresses four major areas: (1) developing language regarding DVOP/LVER integration levels in employment service delivery points; (2) developing language regarding emphasis on and services to special populations of veterans; (3) coordinating with the funding formula workgroup so that relevant information can be incorporated into the States' grant application instructions; and (4) developing language regarding States' reporting of non-veteran individuals hired as DVOP specialists or LVER staff.

Nearly half of the work plan tasks have been completed, including the preliminary, organizational, and definitional work in the four areas. The analytical, developmental, and review tasks are in progress. Instructions for approval criteria, proposed subject matter for the State Veterans' Services Plans, and language for DVOP/LVER integration levels have been developed and distributed for preliminary review among work group members and VETS National Office. Additionally, an outline for the Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) for developing the State Veterans' Services Plans has been proposed for review.

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**MAJOR MILESTONES:**

- Incorporate funding methodology for DVOP and LVER grants into State's grant planning instructions by March 2003.
- Submit proposed language for State Veterans' Services Plan instructions to National Office by April 2003.
- Completion of State Veterans' Services Plan instructions and grant application guidance, with notation of pending OMB approval, by May 2003.
- OMB approval of the State Veterans' Services Plan and grant application TAG by December 2003 for use in FY 2005 grants to States.

## **5. WORK PLAN TITLE: Establishment Of Funding Formula**

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**SCOPE:** The Establishment of Funding Formula Work Plan involves the following areas of concentration:

1. Identify the quantitative criteria and data sources that best embody the approach established in Public Law 107-288 for allocating funds to States.
2. Project initial changes and subsequent variations in the patterns of allocating funds to States by applying the three-year phase-in period and by testing criteria to implement the minimum funding level and hold-harmless provisions.

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### **PROGRESS TO DATE:**

VETS' staff met with representatives of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to confirm the identity of the best available sources of data at the state level on "veterans seeking employment" and to request current and historical data. The following points were confirmed: (1) the best data on the number of veterans in the civilian labor force is available from the Current Population Survey (CPS); (2) the best data on unemployment is available from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS); and (3) the number of "veterans seeking employment" can be estimated with the greatest degree of accuracy by including data from both these sources in the new funding formula. In addition, it was agreed that BLS would provide state level data for calendar year 2001 as soon as possible and would provide further information on the time required to produce historical (1997-2000) and current (2002) results. Based upon the 2001 data, a preliminary illustration of the potential impact of the new funding formula on state allocation levels was developed and criteria for implementing the statutory provisions regarding a three-year phase-in period, minimum funding levels, and hold-harmless rates also were tested.

Based upon these preliminary results, VETS convened the first meeting of the stakeholder advisory group, shared with the group the progress achieved to date and the planned next steps, and requested comments and suggestions from the participants. Subsequently, VETS prepared a memorandum with supporting technical documentation for the Department of Labor's Policy Planning Board (PPB) to initiate the regulatory process that may be required to achieve full implementation of the new funding formula.

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### **MAJOR MILESTONES:**

- Submit memorandum with supporting technical documentation to the PPB by March 2003.

- Complete consideration of additional data sources potentially suitable for inclusion in the new funding formula (e.g. State level data on the number of Transition Assistance Program workshops) by February 2003.
- Complete preparation of implementing guidance for the new funding formula by March 2003.
- Publish proposed regulations (if required) implementing the new funding formula by June 2003.

## **6. WORK PLAN TITLE: Performance Standards, Outcome Measures, & Corrective Action**

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**SCOPE:** The Performance Standards, Outcome Measures, and Corrective Action Work Plan involves the following areas of concentration:

1. Develop a performance accountability system to measure the performance of Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff, Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists, and the public labor exchange services to veterans.
2. Develop a system of weighted performance measures that provides special consideration for placement of veterans requiring intensive services.
3. Define intensive services with cross-references to the definition of intensive services under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).
4. Determine levels of performance that will be identified as deficient and require a Corrective Action Plan (CAP). Develop recommendations for next steps required following the implementation of a CAP.

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### **PROGRESS TO DATE:**

In 2002, VETS convened a Performance Measures Work Group consisting of representatives from the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA), Employment and Training Administration (ETA), DVOP specialists, LVER staff, DVETs, and the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI). Over the course of five meetings in 2002 and 2003, the work group has addressed performance measurement issues of the DVOP and LVER grants. In January 2003, VETS developed a white paper that outlined the key issues and proposed options for weighting schemes. The work group developed a proposal for a weighted measurement system that is consistent with the legislative emphasis on disabled veterans, newly separated veterans, and intensive services. The work group met January 27-28, 2003 to discuss the proposal and reached consensus on specific recommendations, which will be presented to VETS' Executive staff by February 2003.

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### **MAJOR MILESTONES:**

- Develop policy guidance regarding CAPs, grant-based performance measures, and the weighting of those performance measures for inclusion in the grant application and planning instructions for FY 2004 grants by March 2003.
- Disseminate the grant application instructions for FY 2004 by May 2003.
- Disseminate a Veterans' Program Letter (VPL) regarding grant-based performance measures by June 2003.
- States implement grant-based performance measures by July 2003.

- OMB approves State Grant Application/Instruction Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) by December 2003.

## **7. WORK PLAN TITLE: Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) Roles and Responsibilities**

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**SCOPE:** The DVOP and LVER Roles and Responsibilities Work Plan involves the following areas of concentration:

1. Develop roles and responsibilities for DVOP specialists and LVER staff.
2. Provide clarification on the principal duties of DVOP specialists and LVER staff.
3. Develop policy and guidance regarding part-time DVOP specialists and LVER staff.
4. Provide guidance to the States on veterans' preference in the appointment of DVOP specialists and LVER staff.
5. Define the minimum contents of the statutorily required quarterly report of the LVER to the local office manager and the DVET.

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### **PROGRESS TO DATE:**

Policy guidance on roles and responsibilities for DVOP specialists and LVER staff was issued on September 16, 2002 in VPL 11-02. On January 27-28, 2003, VETS' Performance Measures Work Group, which developed recommendations for the DVOP and LVER roles and responsibilities, convened a sixth meeting to develop recommendations regarding: (1) minimum time requirements for part-time DVOP specialists and LVER staff; (2) veterans' preference in the appointment of these staff; and (3) LVER quarterly reporting requirements, as established in P.L. 107-288. Recommendations for LVER quarterly reporting requirements have been developed in consultation with the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management (OASAM) and will be presented to VETS' Executive staff by February 2003.

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### **MAJOR MILESTONES:**

- Develop policy guidance regarding assignments of DVOP specialists and LVER staff, part-time staffing issues, veterans' preference in hiring DVOP and LVER staff, and contents of the quarterly LVER report for inclusion in States' Grant Application/Instruction Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) by March 2003.
- Implementation by States of roles and responsibilities for DVOP specialists and LVER staff by July 2003.
- OMB approval of States' Grant Application/Instruction TAG by December 2003 for FY 2005 grants to States.

## **8. WORK PLAN TITLE: Transition Services**

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**SCOPE:** The Transition Services Work Plan focuses on the following areas of concentration:

1. Delete “Vietnam Era veterans” from VETS’ web sites, printed documents, and reporting systems and insert “veterans who served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized.”
2. Determine the means for registering Transition Assistance Program (TAP) participants.
3. Establish a data collection and reporting system to capture TAP participants, as well as the services provided to “transitioning service members.”
4. Review the current TAP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with all partners and determine the need for revisions.
5. Provide guidance to the field on the preferred approach to staffing TAP workshops.
6. Clarify assistance that can be provided to spouses participating in TAP by DVOP/LVER.

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### **PROGRESS TO DATE:**

VETS is working on deleting all references to “Vietnam Era veterans” on the VETS’ web site, as well as on printed VETS’ fact sheets. VETS is working with the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) to modify the ETA 9002 Report by replacing the term “Vietnam Era Veteran” with the term “Transitioning Service Members.” VETS completed its review of the draft MOU between VETS and the Departments of Defense, Transportation and Veterans Affairs regarding TAP. VETS has indicated a preference for handling any further revisions to the MOU by developing and agreeing to addenda to the MOU, rather than by further revising the MOU itself.

VETS is forming a stakeholder work group that will include representatives from DOD, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA), and the Department of Transportation to discuss delivery of employment services on military bases. This group will consider alternative methods of registering active duty members during the transition process. All registrations would be voluntary and could be updated annually to accommodate the two-year eligibility period for recently separated veterans. VETS also will issue guidance to the field concerning the preferred approach for staffing TAP workshops.

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**MAJOR MILESTONES:**

- Issue new MOU by March 2003
- Finalize deletion of Vietnam-Era references from web sites and printed materials by March 2003.
- Complete activities under the Transition Services Work Plan by April 2003.

## **9. WORK PLAN TITLE: Administrative Costs**

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**SCOPE:** The Administrative Costs Work Plan focuses on the following areas of concentration:

1. Clarify and issue any revised definitions required regarding administrative costs.
2. Identify and clarify those reasonable expenses incurred by Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff that are to be considered direct costs, as distinct from those incurred expenses that are to be considered administrative costs.

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### **PROGRESS TO DATE:**

VETS reviewed numerous methods for defining and determining administrative costs and narrowed the choice to those methods contained in the DVOP/LVER Information Management System, the Workforce Investment Act, and the Wagner-Peyser Act. The alternative methods for calculating administrative costs were summarized in an issue paper that was circulated within the VETS' National Office for review and comment. Based upon these activities, VETS intends to provide to the State/Federal Work Group all the documentation produced to date on this issue. This work group will be requested to review this material and to respond with its recommendation. Following the completion of these activities by the work group, VETS intends to consider the work group's recommendation in light of the provisions of P.L. 107-288 and to issue clear guidance on this subject.

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### **MAJOR MILESTONES:**

- Submit documents detailing the three alternative methodologies, with VETS' comments, to the State/Federal Work Group by February 2003.
- Convene a conference call in February 2003 to discuss the alternative methodologies and the key implications to be considered by VETS in making a final decision on this issue.
- Modify the affected procedures and guidance in accord with VETS' final choice of an approach to this issue.

## **10. WORK PLAN TITLE: Electronic Veterans' One-Stop**

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**SCOPE:** The Electronic Veterans' One-Stop Work Plan focuses on researching and designing a central employment web site that will provide the following four platforms: transition and job readiness, resources, job fair and employer support, and on-line access to case managers for veterans.

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### **PROGRESS TO DATE:**

VETS has formed an advisory work group to provide recommendations for an Internet-based, One-Stop system for services to veterans. Members of the work group include representatives from the Army Career Alumni Program, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Assistant Secretary for Policy, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA), and VETS' field staff. An initial work group meeting was held on January 23, 2003.

Development for a web site for the Veterans' Electronic One-Stop is in the early planning stage. VETS anticipates that web site will draw heavily from the services and content provided in the suite of tools of the CareerOneStop portal. To ensure easy access to available services, the Electronic Veterans' One-Stop may also use the functionality developed for the CareerOneStop Coach.

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### **MAJOR MILESTONES:**

- Brief VETS' Executive staff by February 2003.
- Conduct additional work group meeting to solicit additional recommendations by March 2003.
- Conduct web site demonstration to the VETS' Executive Staff by October 2003.
- Launch web site by December 2003.

## **11. WORK PLAN TITLE: National Threshold for Entered Employment Rate**

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**SCOPE:** The National Threshold for Entered Employment Rate Work Plan involves the following areas of concentration:

1. Initiate regulatory action for establishment of national threshold for Entered Employment Rate for veterans, as required by P.L. 107-288.
2. Formulate and disseminate a draft regulation on a national threshold for Entered Employment Rate for veterans.
3. Complete required procedures for Departmental and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval of draft and final regulations.
4. Draft the final regulation.
5. Publish the final regulation.

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### **PROGRESS TO DATE:**

VETS is in the process of exploring different methodologies that may be used to establish in regulation a national threshold for the entered employment rate, as required by P. L. 107-288. Internal meetings with the Office of the Solicitor and with VETS' Executive staff have been conducted to discuss advantages and disadvantages of the different methodologies.

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### **MAJOR MILESTONES:**

- Submit VETS' plans to initiate regulatory action to the Department of Labor's Policy and Planning Board by February 2003.
- Obtain Regulation Information Number by March 2003.
- Develop draft text of proposed Interim Final Rule approval by April 2003.
- Obtain Departmental clearance for publication of Interim Final Rule by May 2003.
- Publish Interim Final Rule regarding national threshold for Entered Employment Rate by September 2003.
- Conduct post-promulgation public comment period by January 2004.
- Publish Final Rule by June 2004.

## 12. WORK PLAN TITLE: President's National Hire Veterans Committee

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**SCOPE:** Public Law 107-288 Section 6 directs the formation of the President's National Hire Veterans Committee. The Committee's duties include (1) furnishing information to employers regarding the training and skills of veterans and disabled veterans, as well as the advantages of hiring them, and (2) facilitating employment of veterans and disabled veterans through participation in America's Career Kit national labor exchange and through other means. The Secretary of Labor will appoint the committee membership and the chairman as provided by law.

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**PROGRESS TO DATE:** We have conducted national office deliberations, including discussions of the initial steps necessary for the establishment of the committee. Included was a review of the P.L.107-288. Because of its functional similarity, we also reviewed the organization and functions of the National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Committee in the Department of Defense. The mission focus of the National Hire Veterans Committee is to establish a more effective bridge between the supply of qualified members leaving the military and the supply of jobs available in the civilian sector. The committee and its state and local affiliates, in conjunction with this agency, the Veterans Service Organizations (VSO), business, organized labor and industry, will play an instrumental role in building that bridge.

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### MAJOR MILESTONES:

- Define duties and functions (ongoing).
- Identify potential staffing requirements by February 2003.
- Using membership criteria develop a potential membership list by February 2003.
- Draft charter by February 2003.
- Select and solicit members by February 2003.
- Hire staff (determine whether FTE or contract)
- Determine chair (est. criteria and length of term) by March 2003.
- Staff develop detailed plans of action and milestones
- Develop office space plan
- Set initial meeting date
- Post Federal Register Notice
- Develop and post meeting schedule
- Conduct progress report and obtain input from the Advisory Committee for Veterans' Employment and Training (ACVET).
- Conduct progress report and obtain input from the Regional Administrators and State Directors.
- Dismiss committee sixty days after the end of calendar year 2005 (February 2006).

