DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
CHARTER OF THE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON GULF WAR VETERANS

A. OFFICIAL DESIGNATION: Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans

B. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITY: The Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans will advise the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the full spectrum of health care and benefits issues that confront veterans who served in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the 1990 - 1991 period of the Gulf War. The Committee will pay particular attention to issues that are unique to these veterans.

C. PERIOD OF TIME NECESSARY FOR THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO CARRY OUT ITS PURPOSE: The Committee will complete its work within 18 months of the date of its first meeting.

D. OFFICIAL TO WHOM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS: The Committee will report to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

E. OFFICE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SUPPORT TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE: The VA Office of Policy and Planning is responsible for providing support to the Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans.

F. DUTIES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE: The duties of the Committee are to examine the health care and benefits needs of those who served in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the 1990 - 1991 period of the Gulf War and to advise the Secretary on the issues that are unique to these veterans and how these issues can best be addressed by VA. To carry out these duties, the Committee is expected to assess both the effectiveness of existing benefits and services and to determine the need for new initiatives and/or policies that relate exclusively to this population of veterans.

The Committee will hold meetings, invite testimony, and receive information it considers necessary to carry out its purposes, including information from VA, the Department of Defense, and any other Federal department or agency. The Committee will submit to the Secretary a report not later than 18 months after the date of its first meeting.

The Committee will be comprised of approximately 12 members. The majority of members will be Special Government Employees. Committee members shall be appointed by the Secretary and shall serve as objective advisors, not as representatives of any organizations for which they may otherwise be serving. Members will be selected from among knowledgeable experts, veterans, and others with special competence to evaluate the particular needs of veterans who served during the 1990 -1991 period of the Gulf War. Members will include Gulf War

veterans, medical professionals with expertise in Gulf War veterans' illnesses, environmental health experts, veterans service organization officials, and other appropriate individuals. Ex-officio members will include representatives from the Offices of the Under Secretaries for Health, Benefits, and Memorial Affairs.

G. ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS IN DOLLARS AND STAFF-YEARS: The estimated annual operating cost of the Committee is $250,000 which includes the cost of 1.5 staff years. Members will receive travel expenses and a per diem allowance in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation for any travel made in connection with their duties as members of the Committee.

H. ESTIMATED NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS: The Committee will meet as needed in order to provide a final report and recommendations to the Secretary. The Designated Federal Officer (DFO), a full time VA employee, will approve the schedule of Committee meetings. The DFO or designee will be present at all meetings and each meeting will be conducted in accordance with an agenda approved by the DFO. The DFO is authorized to adjourn any meeting when he or she determines it is in the public interest to do so.

I. COMMITTEE TERMINATION DATE: The Committee will terminate not later than 18 months from the date of its first meeting.

J. DATE CHARTER IS FILED:

Approved: _____ Date: 4/19/08
Secretary of Veterans Affairs