

REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
MINORITY VETERANS

Annual Report
July 1, 2003



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Activity Report

The Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans (ACMV) is in its ninth year as a standing committee. Congress tasked the committee with providing advice to the Secretary with respect to the administration of benefits for veterans who are minority group members.

The committee met twice during this reporting period. The committee convened in Washington DC, 20 – 22 November 2002, for its annual administrative meeting. Its annual field trip was taken 12-16 May 2003 in Harlingen, Texas. The committee met its legislated obligations with these two meetings.

The reporting period was marked by the departure of nine members of the committee whose terms had expired. The resulting turnover of almost fifty percent of the committee included the departure of the Chairman.

Washington, DC Meeting

The first meeting of the reporting period, held in Washington, DC was primarily administrative in nature. Major events of the meeting were the appointment of the new Chair, Mr. Joey Strickland, by Secretary Principi and the review of the Department's responses to the committee's recommendations from their 2002 annual report. The committee members received briefings from the department heads responsible with responding to each of the committee's recommendations. The major outcome of the meeting was a consensus to focus future field trips taken by the committee on the delivery of benefits to veterans residing in primarily rural areas, many of which are minorities. Additionally, the committee would continue to evaluate the Department of Veteran's Affairs performance in the following areas that were major topics of concern in the 2002 Annual Report:

1. The Department's development and implementation of cultural sensitivity training with an emphasis on empathetic treatment of minority veterans. The increased awareness of cultural differences among veterans should lead to an increase in the hiring of persons of different ethnicities and bilingual capabilities.
2. How the Department enables effective and efficient enrollment of minority veterans as first time entrants into the VA healthcare system. Again, part and parcel of this enhanced enrollment process should include the hiring of persons of different ethnicities and bilingual capabilities able to relate to the diverse veteran population.
3. How the Department ensures its employment practices develop diverse staffs throughout the agency, with special emphasis on ensuring diversity at the upper management and executive leadership levels.

4. How the Department ensures the improvement of delivery of benefits to minority veterans, especially with regard to outreach to minority veterans on available benefits and claims filing.
5. The continuation of the Native American Direct Home Loan Program with an emphasis on making the application process easier and ensuring funds are available.
6. Ensuring that travel funds are provided for the Committee to visit field sites so that they may better evaluate the above-mentioned priorities.

With regard to item six, the committee was able to travel to a remote site to begin its long-term focus on the delivery of benefits to rural veterans. The Department made available the requisite funds for the committee to engage in a regular program of travel that currently projects two site visits a year with an additional third administrative meeting to be held in Washington DC.

Harlingen, Texas Meeting

The committee met with senior VA officials tasked with management of VA benefits and services delivery to South Texas veterans, local healthcare providers, veterans' service organizations and veterans.

The field visit to Harlingen, Texas 12 –16 May is the first in what the committee hopes to be a series of field visits to rural areas of the country over the next few years. The intent is to learn about the challenges and obstacles rural minority veterans face when accessing benefits and services from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The committee met with several stakeholders concerned with the delivery of VA Healthcare and Benefits to the veterans residing in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV). Participants from the Department of Veterans Affairs included Dr. Frances Murphy, Deputy Undersecretary for Health Policy Coordination; Thomas R. Wagner, Director VA Regional Office, Houston and his acting Veteran Service Counselor Manager John Ballenger; Thomas J. Stranova, Director VA Heart Of Texas Health Care Network (VISN 17) and his Business Development Manager Mike Dunfee; as well as John Mendoza, Chief Business Office/Medical Administration Service and Vicki Hannigan, M.D., Associate Chief of Staff for Ambulatory Care, both from the South Texas Veterans Health Care System.

Discussed were initiatives taken by VISN 17 and the South Texas Veterans Health Care System to increase access to VA medical care for the veterans of the Lower Rio Grande Valley to include the opening of community based outpatient clinics (CBOC) and the implementation of the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV) Ambulatory Surgery and Inpatient Program. The LRGV Ambulatory Surgery and Inpatient Program was created in April of 1998 to serve veterans receiving primary care services from the McAllen VA Outpatient Clinic (MCOPC) or Brownsville Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC). This program alleviates the need of the veteran to travel long distances to San

Antonio for routine, non-urgent ambulatory procedures. Since the program's inception, there have been over 5,000 referrals. Only veterans receiving primary care from a VA contract or staff physician at either the Brownsville CBOC or MCOPC are eligible for this program and a referral from their VA primary care physician is required for these services.

The McAllen VA Outpatient Clinic, established in 1972, began as an outpatient facility housed in a trailer. In 1978, the clinic relocated, from the trailer, to a structure of approximately 5,000 square feet. After continuous workload increase and the need for more space, a new facility was built and leased to the VA for use by the clinic. This facility, consisting of approximately 27,000 square feet, opened in August 1991. It is located 250 miles from the parent facility, Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital, located in San Antonio, Texas. The clinic area of availability encompasses the seven southern counties of Texas and is comprised of approximately 40,000 veterans. During the winter, the veteran population increases significantly due to the influx of winter visitors to the area.

Primary Care Services are provided at the clinic. These services include medical, psychiatry, psychology, geriatric endocrinology, urology, surgical, podiatry, gynecology and flexible sigmoidoscopy. Ancillary services provided at the clinic are pharmacy, physical therapy, laboratory, radiology, social service and dietary. Additionally, the Clinic in conjunction with the South Texas Family Practice Residency program in McAllen and with the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio participates in teaching family practice residents. This program includes third and fourth year medical students.

In addition to the above, The South Texas Veterans Health Care System (STVHCS) began contracting with local primary care providers in 1997 to improve the access to health care services for veterans closer to their home or work. These clinics were established to provide primary care to the veteran in their community and are contract Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs). These clinics are by enrollment only. The following are the contract community-based outpatients clinics in South Texas: Alice, Texas (established September 1998), Beeville, Texas (established September 1998), Brownsville, Texas (established October 1998), Kingsville, Texas (established September 1998), Uvalde, Texas (established January 1999).

Enhanced services are also provided through Telecare and Telemed. Telecare - Telephone Liaison Care (Telecare) provides telephone medical advice to veterans of the South Texas Veterans Health Care System. The service has bilingual capability and provides prompt, reliable and courteous answers to patient's questions. Veteran-patients and their family members can access the service via a toll-free number. Telemed – is a 24-hour telephone refill service, also accessible via a toll free phone number.

In work at the time of the meeting is a plan to replace the Brownsville contract CBOC with a new health service contract provider located in Harlingen Texas. This would put the health care service in a more central location

providing closer care for both Harlingen and Brownsville veterans and potentially reducing the patient load on the McAllen CBOC.

For major surgeries and clinical specialties not offered at the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV) CBOCs, veterans must travel to the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital, located in San Antonio, Texas. This represents a three to four hour drive in one direction for veterans, many of whom do not have transportation or funds for overnight lodging should their appointment schedule require it. This is especially difficult for the veterans of advanced age and with disabilities.

Of equal interest were the initiatives undertaken by the Regional Office of the Veterans Benefits Administration in Houston, Texas. The Houston Regional Office (RO) is the fourth largest of 58 Regional Offices based on number of personnel. The jurisdiction of the Houston RO includes the 90 counties in the southern half of Texas, the Republic of Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. The regional office serves as the regional loan center responsible for loan origination, loan administration in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Arkansas. The approximate number of veterans served is 788,000. The Regional Office has additional staff based at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, the VA outpatient clinic in Corpus Christi and the VA outpatient clinic in McAllen. Specifically McAllen has one veteran service representative, one counseling psychologist, and one vocational rehabilitation counselor. Corpus Christi's out-based regional office is staffed with one veteran service representative, two vocational rehabilitation counselors and one loan service representative.

Houston Regional Office has implemented several performance initiatives that have directly impacted the turnaround time for benefits claims. Currently, Houston RO claims adjudicators average 127 days to turnaround veterans claims, well below the VBA established goal of 165 days. Ten percent of veterans appeal their ratings. Director, Regional Office Houston recently received President's Quality Award for his superb stewardship.

The committee spoke to Veteran Service Organizations and held a town hall meeting with area veterans. Both groups voiced similar concerns which are easily defined into two major issues: (1) Transportation to the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital, located in San Antonio, Texas and to the community based outpatient clinics in the Lower Rio Grande Valley Area and (2) A desire for future planning by VHA to incorporate increased access to healthcare services using commercially available healthcare providers in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in lieu of referral to the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital. The committee discussed these concerns with the representatives from VISN 17 and the South Texas Veterans Health Care System.

Issue 1: *Transportation to the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital, located in San Antonio, Texas and to the community based outpatient clinics in the Lower Rio Grande Valley Area*

Currently there is no transportation system available in the Lower Rio Grande Valley service area for the transporting of ambulatory or disabled veterans to and from local area VA outpatient clinics. The current Disabled American Veteran's (DAV) transportation networks are solely for transporting valley veterans to the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital (ALMMVH) in San Antonio. This service is only available twice a week and the 15-passenger van is not outfitted for transporting disabled veterans. It is upwards of 600 miles roundtrip to ALMMVH making this an extremely arduous journey for ailing veterans, especially the many elderly veterans currently in their 60s, 70s and 80s who are frequent users of the DAV transportation network. Veterans accessing the McAllen and Brownsville CBOCs for their primary care may have to travel up to 120 miles. Public transportation in the LRGV is inadequate to nonexistent for reliable use by veterans wishing to travel to the available CBOCs thus making personal transportation a requirement for consistent access to local VA healthcare services.

The Rio Grande Valley Veteran's Transportation Committee is addressing the lack of local transportation. The committee is striving for the development of a non-profit transportation corporation dedicated to providing point-to-point transport of veterans from their homes to their VA healthcare appointments in the local area. John Mendoza, Chief Business Office/Medical Administration Service from the South Texas Veterans Health Care System, provides a VA presence on the committee. Other members of the committee includes members from Congressman Ortiz's local office, local business organizations, veterans groups and other stakeholders seeking avenues for improving access to VA local health providers for veterans residing in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Issue 2: A desire for future planning by VHA to incorporate increased access to healthcare services using commercially available healthcare providers in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in lieu of referral to the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital

Many of the veterans indicated that a more robust VA presence in the LRGV was the only way to address the identified healthcare access issues. Replacing Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital (ALMMVH) in San Antonio, as the preeminent healthcare provider for LRGV veterans medical needs with local healthcare providers, was the resounding desired resolution among LRGV veterans. VISN 17 has begun to address these concerns by negotiating a contract for health services with the Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC), which is an extension campus of the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio for the Lower Rio Grande Valley, located in Harlingen, Texas. The establishment of a CBOC affiliated with the RAHC will provide a more centralized health provider that will augment the McAllen CBOC primary care facility. Current plans are to close down the Brownsville CBOC, which is not favored by the mostly Hispanic veteran population living in the Brownsville area. With contractual specifics for the CBOC at Harlingen still in work, there may be an opportunity to keep the Brownsville CBOC open pending review of the veteran population's healthcare needs.

Other opportunities exist for providing expanded healthcare delivery in the Lower Rio Grande Valley through the Dolly Vinsant Hospital (which currently is contracted for limited ambulatory care by the South Texas Veterans Health Care System) and the Valley Baptist Medical Center (VBMC) which is the primary referral hospital for comprehensive and subspecialty care in South Texas. This 450-bed general hospital and Level III Trauma Center provides state-of-the-art medical, surgical, obstetric, and pediatric care. Capabilities include medical, cardiovascular, surgical, neurological, and newborn/pediatric intensive care; air ambulance transportation; cardiac catheterization with interventional and electrophysiology capabilities; active cardiovascular, general, neurosurgical, ophthalmic, orthopedic, plastic, and urological surgery services; pulmonary and gastrointestinal endoscopy; hemodialysis; outpatient multispecialty diabetes care; wound care services; and hospice care. VBMC's rehabilitation facility provides inpatient and outpatient physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech/language therapy. Radiology services include CT, MRI, sonography, nuclear medicine, interventional radiology, and radiation therapy. It is associated with the RACH as well. Clearly this facility could provide most of veterans' specialty care needs thus precluding the need for grueling five hour drives to San Antonio for care.

Conclusions

VISN 17 has begun to address the pressing healthcare needs of the LRGV veterans. The overall concern for veterans is access to quality healthcare. We strongly urge VISN 17 to aggressively pursue agreements and joint ventures with local healthcare providers that would provide easily accessible healthcare for the growing LGRV veterans. In the interim, continuing to collaborate with the Rio Grande Valley Veteran's Transportation Committee for a short-term solution addressing veterans' transportation needs is paramount. We encourage the Director of the South Texas Veterans Health Care System to continue to support the efforts of this committee to ensure adequate access to quality healthcare for all veterans under his jurisdiction.

Appendix A

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MINORITY VETERANS BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Allen, Renae J. African American

Ms. Allen is a disabled Gulf War veteran of the 47th and 528th Support Battalions where she served as a supervisor in personnel administration from 1988-93. She has worked in the U.S. government for over nine years including the Criminal Investigation Division, Human Resource Directorate-Fort Bragg, Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Currently, Ms. Allen serves as a representative of Veterans of Foreign Wars in Washington, D.C. She resides in Woodbridge, Virginia.

Alvarado-Ramos, Lourdes E. Hispanic American

Ms. Alvarado-Ramos is the Assistant Director of the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs. She retired from the US Army as a Command Sergeant Major after 22 years of active duty service. Ms. Alvarado-Ramos experience is in medical facility and human resources management and she is a licensed nursing home administrator. In her current job, she is responsible for department operations, the State Veterans Homes Program and Minority and Women Veterans Outreach. She resides in Olympia, Washington.

Archuleta, Bob J. Hispanic American

Mr. Archuleta is a Combat Veteran; 82nd Airborne Division and a public servant with more than 12 years of experience in community and municipal involvement. He has served the city of Montebello, California in the detective police division and has served as the City Commissioner of Traffic and Safety. In 1989, Mr. Archuleta became involved with the Los Angeles County Veteran's Advisory Commission of Military and Veteran Affairs where he served as liaison to more than 900,000 veterans. Presently, Mr. Archuleta is the General Manager for Dynamic Brokerage firm. He resides in Montebello, California.

Chung, David O. Asian American

Mr. Chung is of Chinese descent. He is a disabled Vietnam veteran who served in the U.S. Air Force. He is a life member with Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). He has served on VA's National Committee on Minority Affairs and as the State Chairman for Minority Affairs, for the State of Indiana. He assisted in a thirty-one-city whistle stop tour of the Vietnam Women's Memorial National Monument from Santa Fe, New Mexico to Washington, DC. He has hosted a veteran's forum on a public access TV talk

show that he produced and directed—the City of Chicago from 1987 to 1990 sponsored the show. Mr. Chung resides in Saint John, Illinois.

Cochran, Sr., Jerry African American

Mr. Cochran served as an Aviation Boatswain's Mate in the United States Navy from 1971 to 1975. He founded the Jerry Cochran Veteran's Outreach Foundation in 1987. Mr. Cochran is currently the Executive Director of Mission Outreach Centers, Inc. where his duties include administrative and managerial functions, daily operations and implementation of social service programs. He is also the Pastor and Founder of New Jerusalem Pentecostal Church of God in Christ, Inc. He has past experience as a Retail Store Owner. Mr. Cochran currently resides in Albany, Georgia.

Cohen, H. Mara American Indian – Oglala Sioux

Ms. Cohen is a retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel aero medical nurse. She served in numerous aero medical support operations to include the Jonestown cleanup in Guyana, Grenada; Operation Just Cause, Panama; and Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, South West Asia. Ms. Cohen runs a consultancy and has received numerous accolades for her work in organizational management to include a Federal Silver Hammer for Acquisitions Reform; recognition for her service as a Baldrige Examiner for commerce; and acknowledgement of her work on the Environmental Streamlining Permitting Law which was used as the national model for President Bush in his recent NEPA/USDOT executive order. She is an enrolled Oglala Sioux Tribal Member and is a member of the traditional Lakota Women Warrior 's Society, the Katela. Ms. Cohen currently resides in Lakewood, Washington.

Cooper, Ralph D. African American

Mr. Cooper is a Vietnam-era veteran who served in the United States Air Force. He is currently the Executive Director of Veterans Benefits Clearinghouse, Incorporated (VBC), a non-profit agency in Roxbury, MA. The agency provides a wide range of services to veterans, predominantly veterans of color and their family members. Mr. Cooper is a member of the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans; the Congressional Black Caucus's Veterans Brain Trust; Senator John Kerry's Committee on Black Veterans' Affairs; and the Minority Developers Association. Mr. Cooper earned his Masters in Education in Community Psychology from the University of Massachusetts, and his Bachelors of Arts in Psychology from Boston State College. In 1995, Mr. Cooper was nominated to serve on the Advisory Committee for Minority Veterans by Congressman Joseph P. Kennedy II. His nomination is endorsed by the Center and Brigadier General George B. Price, Chairman of the Advisory Committee. He resides in Roxbury, Massachusetts.

Davila, Antonio

Hispanic American

Mr. Davila has served as the Director, Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs since 1991. He has experience as an EEO specialist in Worchester Public Schools, Worchester, MA. He taught English, History and Spanish in several school systems. He is a U. S. Air Force veteran who served on active duty from 1964 -1968. He has also served in the Massachusetts Army NG (1977-1980), and the USAR (1980 to present). He currently resides in Magnolia, Delaware.

Holden, Terry R.

African American

Mr. Holden is a U.S. Army veteran. He is the Human Resource Director with the Office of Family Support in New Orleans, LA. He is on the Board of Directors for Goodwill Industries of Southeast Louisiana, where he works with disabled and homeless veterans. He is also a member of the Friends of the Library Board of Directors, where he has focused attention on the needs of veterans with literacy problems. Mr. Holden is active in the New Orleans community and is the recipient of the 1999 Charles E. Dunbar Award for his achievements in community services. Mr. Holden is interested in developing communication vehicles that will reach minority veterans. He has been involved in veterans' issues for the past 12 years. He currently resides in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Jefferson, John D.

African American

Mr. Jefferson currently serves as the African-American Outreach Coordinator for the Farm Service Agency at USDA. His work experience includes serving in the Bush Administration at the Department of Education (2001-2002), as well as working for the American Legion's Washington, DC office as an Assistant Director and Lobbyist with the National Legislative Commission (1995-2001). Mr. Jefferson is a Vietnam Era Veteran who served in the U.S. Army (1970-72). He was stationed in Berlin, Germany from 1971-72, and currently resides in Silver Spring, Maryland with his wife and two children.

Loudner, Don

American Indian - Sioux

Mr. Loudner is a 7/8-degree Hunkpati Sioux. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean conflict (1950 to 1952) and has 32 years of service in the Army Reserves as a Chief Warrant Officer (CW4). He has worked at the Bureau of Indian Affairs as the Agency Superintendent at the Yankton Sioux Indian Reservation, and served three years as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for South Dakota. He is currently a Commissioner on the South Dakota State Veterans Affairs Commission. He currently resides in Mitchell, South Dakota.

McDowell, Clifford D.

African American

Mr. McDowell is a Disabled Veteran of the U.S. Army. He served in Operation Desert Storm as a Communications-Electronics Officer. He is currently the Associate Director of Sports and Recreation for the Paralyzed Veterans of America where he also served as Media Relations Manager in Communications. He served on the Board of Directors for Programs for Accessible Living. Mr. McDowell is a Distinguished Military Graduate for UNC-Charlotte. He currently resides in Silver Springs, Maryland.

Pignatiello, Kim M.

Caucasian

Ms. Pignatiello is an Army Gulf-era veteran. She has extensive experience counseling veterans and dependents about veterans' benefits and services. She has worked with homeless veterans on such issues as housing, employment, schooling, and health care. She managed the administration and registration of military personnel and their dependents entering the master's degree program at the University of Oklahoma. In the military, Ms Pignatiello was a Signal Intelligence Analyst. She is proficient in Spanish and Korean, and has served as an interpreter and analyst of intercepted military messages. Ms. Pignatiello resides in Hartford, Connecticut.

Ross, Carson

African American

Mr. Ross is a U.S. Army Combat Infantry Vietnam Veteran. Currently, he is the Missouri Veterans Commissioner, appointed by Missouri Governor Bob Holden in 2003. Additionally, Mr. Ross completed seven terms in the Missouri House of Representatives in 2002. His numerous awards include the Department of Missouri Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Legislator of the Year Award (2000), the American Legion Legislator of the Year Award (2000), and the National Guard Association's Charles Dick Medal of Merit Award (1998.) He was elected vice chairman of the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus in 1998. Mr. Ross is also President of Graves and Ross Investments. Mr. Ross has experience in Municipal, Legislative, and Community Service, including being appointed to the Missouri Air Conservation Commission by Missouri Governor John Ashcroft in 1986. Mr. Ross currently resides in Blue Springs, Missouri.

Strickland, Joey*

Native American

Mr. Strickland is a retired Army Lt. Colonel with 28 years of service to America, including two combat tours of duty in Vietnam and service in the Army Airborne Infantry and Armor assignments. He serves as a Colonel in the Army National Guard. For five years he served on the Louisiana Governor's staff. Currently, Mr. Strickland is the Executive Director for the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs and Indian Affairs where he serves as a liaison to over 400,000 veterans and advises policy and programs to the Governor on all aspects of Tribal Affairs. Mr. Strickland currently resides in Walker, Louisiana.

Walton, William L. African American

Mr. Walton is a retired Commander and a former naval aviator. He is a disabled veteran. He is active in the National Naval Officer's Association (NNOA) and served on the Commander of U.S. Navy Air Forces (CNAF) Executive Committee on Diversity. His civilian career includes working with the 1st California Mortgage Company as a new homebuilder mortgage banker (1987-1993); President and COO of Lin Walton & Company which consulted to mortgage banks on low-to-moderate income and ethnic markets. Mr. Walton is a board member of the San Diego Senior Sports Festival; a former chair of a local non-profit specializing in affordable housing and remains involved with The Black Wings, assisting the U.S. Navy with its force diversification. He currently resides in San Diego, California.

Zapanta, Al Hispanic American

Mr. Al Zapanta is a Vietnam War veteran. He received over 35 awards for his outstanding military service. Mr. Zapanta was appointed as the Assistant-Secretary of the Interior for Management from 1976-77. He has also served as a member in the Department of State's Advisory Committee on International Trade, Technology, and Development. His private-sector experience includes 18 years as an executive with ARCO and he retired in 1993 as Director for Governmental Affairs. Presently, Mr. Zapanta is the President and CEO of the United States-Mexico Chamber of Commerce in Washington, D.C. He resides in Annandale, Virginia.

* Denotes Chairman

Appendix B

Center for Minority Veterans (CMV)
Meeting Agenda
Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans (ACMV)

20 – 22 NOVEMBER 2002

Wednesday, 20 November

- 0830 - 0845 *Mr. Francisco Ivarra*, ACMV Chairman
Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance (Mr. Loudner acted as
Chair in Mr Ivarra's absence)
- 0845 - 0900 Remarks
Mr. Charles Nesby, Director, CMV
- 0900- 0930 Administrative Remarks
Ms. Ruby Miller, Deputy Director, CMV
- 0930 - 1000 Break
- 1000 - 1045 *Ms. Laura Miller*, Deputy Under Secretary for Health for
Operations & Management
Dr. Frances Murphy, Deputy Under Secretary for Health
Policy Coordination
- 1045 - 1100 Break
- 1100 - 1230 Committee Discussions/Updates** (*Closed Session*)
- Annual Focus Recommendations
 - MVPC
 - Rural Vet
 - Native American Home Loan
 - VR&E
 - VBA Benefits (Education, VA Home Loans,
Claims Processing)
 - Review VA Advisory Committee Reports for
inclusion of minority veteran concerns
 - Committee Restructure
 - Chairman Appointee
 - Reduction in size
 - Restructuring sub-committees
 - Annual Report
 - Bi-annual periodicity

- Committee authorship
- Limit Recommendations to 3
- Budget Constraints
 - Continuing Resolution (CR) @2002 levels
- Travel Concerns
 - Local Trip visits vice Major Travel
- Start 2003 Report Recommendations and format
 - Include the biannual report periodicity

1230 - 1400	Lunch
1400 - 1430	<i>Mrs. Aleta Copeland</i> , CMV Administrative Assistant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Honoraria Paperwork – Travel Claims
1430 - 1445	Break
1445 - 1530	<i>Mr. Scott Denniston</i> , Director, Small and Disadvantage Business Utilization <i>Mr. Tyrone Lassiter</i> , Office for Veterans Enterprise
1530 - 1615	<i>Mr. Keith Pedigo</i> , Director, Loan Guaranty Program
1615 - 1700	Committee Discussions

Thursday, November 21

0830 - 0855	Administrative
0900 - 0930	<i>Dr. Leo Mackay</i> , Deputy Secretary (Photos)
0930 - 0945	Break
0945 - 1100	Brief on CMV site visits and findings
1100 - 1145	<i>Ms. Ventris Gibson</i> , Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management
1200 - 1330	Lunch
1345 - 1415	<i>Ms. Lisa Pozzenbon</i> , Veterans Benefits Administration Education Service Demand Management Staff

1415 - 1430 Break

1430 - 1630 Committee Discussions

Friday, November 22

0830 – 1130 Committee Discussions

1130 – 1300 Lunch

1300 – 1600 Committee Discussions/Wrap up

** Indicates Closed Session

Appendix C

Center for Minority Veterans (CMV)
Meeting Agenda
Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans (ACMV)

12 – 16 MAY 2003

12 May, Monday

TRAVEL DAY

13 May, Tuesday

Marriott Courtyard – Business Meeting Room

0800 – 1000	Breakfast Meeting/Administrative Tasks
1000 – 1015	Break
1015 – 1215	DVA Panel Discussion – CARES, Future Growth Initiatives, Benefits Delivery, Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Dr. Frances Murphy, MD (VACO)– VISN 17 Director, Tom Stranova, Mike Dunfee– VAMC San Antonio, Jose Coronado– VA Regional Office, Houston<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ John Wagner, Director VBAHOU○ John Ballenger, Acting VSC Manager○ Ann Alvarez○ Arnaldo Perez
1215 – 1415	Lunch
1430 – 1630	Panel Discussion – Veteran Service Officers/Congressman Ortiz Staff
1630 – 1700	Break
1700 – 1900	Reception (Magnolia Grill) – Committee Members/Panel Participants <i>Reception hosted by Harlingen Hispanic Chamber</i>

14 May, Wednesday

0800 – 0830	Meet in Business Room, Admin Time
0930 – 1200	Veteran's Town Hall meeting, University of Texas, Brownsville – Conference Hall
1200 – 1300	Lunch
1300 – 1315	Travel to Brownsville, CBOC, Director, Dr Lorenzo Pelly
1345 – 1415	Travel to San Benito
1415 - 1500	Tour Dolly Vinsant Hospital (Contracted for ambulatory care)
1500 – 1540	Travel to McAllen
1540 - 1630	Tour McAllen CBOC
1630	Daily Session End

15 May, Thursday

0800 – 0845	Breakfast
0845 – 0900	Travel to Regional Academic Health Center, Harlingen
0900 – 1100	Field Trip to Valley Baptist Medical Center/Dr. Vela Brief on potential for VA services coordination
1100 – 1230	Lunch
1230 – 1600	Work on 2003 Report (Marriott Meeting Room)
1600	Meeting Adjourned

16 May, Friday

TRAVEL DAY