

REPORT OF THE GOVERNOR'S TASKFORCE

FOR

VIRGINIA VETERANS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

FINAL REPORT

AUGUST 25, 2008



“VIRGINIA AND VETERANS WORKING TOGETHER”

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Dear Secretary Marshall,

We are pleased to transmit this report defining ways to improve workforce development for Virginia's veterans. This report represents the activities and findings of our Taskforce. The Taskforce consisted of representatives from several secretariats, state legislators, federal and DoD officials, and high level corporate business officials – many of which are active duty, guard or reserve, veterans, and retired military members. The results published here represent the extensive efforts over the past seven months and include our recommendations to improve the employment and business posture for veterans in Virginia.

Our charge was to develop recommendations to provide veterans with opportunities for new careers by connecting employers with veterans. I am pleased to report that all participants in the Taskforce worked collaboratively to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the key elements of services to veterans, identified gaps between availability of services and their effective delivery, and developed a recommended solution containing short and long term goals and actions designed to increase the number of veterans, and disabled veterans, successfully placed in jobs after their transition from active duty.

Virginia is considered a national leader in Veterans' Care and Benefits – our Department of Veterans Services serves as a model for other states. The Commissioner and his staff provided critical information and support throughout the analysis. This taskforce is another example of the deep commitment Virginia has made to the men and women who dedicate themselves in service of their country.

It has been a privilege and an honor to serve on this Taskforce, and we trust you will find our recommendations to be comprehensive, efficient, and ones that can fulfill the basic tenets of our charter.



Alfredo J. Sample, Sr, Chairman

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November 2007, Secretary of Public Safety John W. Marshall, on behalf of the Administration and pursuant to Executive Order 19 titled “Serving Virginia Veterans”, created the Veterans Workforce Development Taskforce (VWDT). The purpose of the Taskforce was to analyze the current workforce development options available to veterans in Virginia, and to develop recommendations for improving the availability and delivery of training, education, and employment opportunities to veterans within the Commonwealth.

Secretary Marshall’s charter was issued to the Department of Veterans Services Commissioner, Vincent M. Burgess. Mr. Alfredo J. Sample, Sr was appointed Chairman of the Taskforce. Membership consisted of Federal, Defense, and Virginia state officials, as well as representatives from business and industry. The Taskforce had 6 months to successfully execute the following charge:

The Taskforce shall develop recommendations for a comprehensive workforce development initiative for veterans in Virginia, with special emphasis on those with disabilities and those returning from the Global War on Terror. The goals of the Taskforce shall be to develop recommendations to (1) effectively match veterans with employers and positions; (2) encourage public and private employers to hire veterans; (3) encourage public and private sector employers to hire veterans with disabilities; and (4) develop a more comprehensive technological approach to better inform veterans on where and how to obtain job and training opportunities in the private sector. The Taskforce shall present a comprehensive report on or before September 1, 2008.

The Taskforce divided its members into Tiger Teams representing the following key areas of analysis:

- Workforce Analysis
- Workforce Requirements
- Placement Strategies
- Training, Education, and Retooling Strategies
- Technology and Accessibility
- Budget and Legal Strategies

Among the data collected and analyzed were hundreds of websites, statistical data from the Census, the Veterans Administration, Congress, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Military Transition Assistance Programs (TAP), Virginia Department of Veterans Services, the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), Virginia is for Heroes Program, Wounded Warrior Program, other states' veterans services departments, colleges and universities, trade schools, not-for-profit organizations, and industry.

The basic strategy employed was the development of the most accurate possible assessment of the current state of available veterans' services, and to analyze why employment for veterans (especially GWOT veterans) is at its current rate. From this analysis, the Taskforce assembled recommended solutions/actions for increasing successful employment and retention rates. Our recommended solutions include suggestions for organizational and process improvements, suggestions for legislative actions, and recommended budgetary and resource strategies. Lastly, we developed a timeline for the implementation of short and long term goals.

After thorough analysis of each of the key areas, we have reached the overall conclusion that Virginia has tremendous resources available for veterans. We also recognize and affirm that many of our resources are individually managed by dedicated people who have the best interests of our veteran in mind. Many of these resources and people, however, are pursuing solutions that are "stove-piped" and often duplicative, and could be consolidated and realigned to better target existing funds while simplifying existing job/training search processes for the veteran.

Our statistical analysis shows us that the current employment outlook in Virginia is very good with respect to Veterans. The greatest preponderance of jobs is within the government (federal, state, and local). Our analysis of job trends shows that the types of jobs available in Virginia are consistent with national employment outlook trends. The largest numbers of job opportunities exist in areas of the Commonwealth where military populations are also the greatest. All of these factors provide fertile ground for the development of a comprehensive solution for improvement of services to veterans.

In the current environment, there are federal and state programs that conduct assessments of veterans' skills sets, translate them to industry-relevant experience and qualifications and assist with the procurement of education and training, resume writing, and job searches. There are also many commercial and not-for-profit organizations that do the same thing. Some are fairly rudimentary, others are quite comprehensive. We have identified some "best in class" service offerings in both government and industry. These serve as models upon which our recommended solutions are based.

Our recommendations center around the following key characteristics: easy access for all veterans (including transitioning service members and disabled vets); cost savings through consolidation of similar services and elimination of redundant services; increased services

through technology improvements; utilizing savings to design, implement and manage new programs for veterans and their families.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the collective research and analysis of the Taskforce members, we have developed what we believe to be a comprehensive solution for the improvement of veterans' workforce services. The solution centers on collaborative agreements between levels of government, industry, and education, the consolidation of duplicative services and service locations, and the augmentation of the new service package by a comprehensive website mirroring the new organization. We have concluded that there are many services and locations currently in place that can be reused or recycled into our recommendations at low cost. Our recommended solution has three interrelated solution components, each with a set of targeted recommendations.

SOLUTION 1: Develop a collaborative environment of existing programs such as those that exist within the VEC, WIA One-Stop, TAP, and VCCS in order to enhance a seamless delivery system on behalf of our wounded warriors, veterans and their families.

Recommendations:

- Increase the capability and capacity of the One-Stop Centers to serve veterans, in part by utilizing the recent decision to transfer Workforce Investment Act responsibility to the Virginia Community College System and enhance their role in workforce development.
- Co-locate to the extent possible the independent service providers at the One-Stop Centers including (but not exclusively limited to):
 - DOL/VETS Transition Assistance Programs
 - Veterans Administration Representatives
 - Dept of Veterans Services Representatives
 - Virginia Employment Commission/One-Stop Programs
 - Virginia Community Colleges
- Conduct a thorough examination of service offerings and processes of the participating entities, eliminate redundancies and conflicting policies and practices, and determine cost saving consolidation of processes, eliminate unnecessary or antiquated processes, and create new innovative approaches.
- Establish strategically developed and coordinated Service Level Agreements, Memorandums of Agreement, or Memorandums of Understanding, designed to define shared and complimentary services and responsibilities within the consolidated organization.

- Assign the Virginia Military Advisory Committee (VMAC) the task of identifying and refining existing agreements and developing any new agreements necessary.
 - Develop a “Master Set” of agreements, and determine a regular review and update process.
- Consider locating satellite service offices in regional veterans’ hospitals throughout the Commonwealth.

SOLUTION 2: Augment the organization with a technology solution based upon a virtual environment that mirrors the new organization structure.

Recommendations:

- Establish a dynamic portal environment that provides both the veteran and potential employer a centralized meeting place
- Leverage the existing capabilities of the Virginia Workforce Connects web tool and explore enhancements
- Enable veterans to sign up and manage their personal account on the website. (Determine the greatest number of services that can be delivered remotely)
- Electronically place the virtual solution at every One-Stop Center and TAP Office in Virginia
- Institute a media marketing and outreach program at military installations and VA offices in Virginia

SOLUTION 3: Create a follow-on “Virginia Veteran Workforce Development Implementation Team” to develop and execute a Strategic Plan, identify goals and tasks, establish a timeline, assign task authority and responsibility, and ensure on-time completion of agreed upon goals such as those listed below. Critical elements of the Strategic Plan should include:

- Service Agreements
- Funding allocation and collaboration
- Timeline for determining collocation sites

- Selection of prototype sites in high density veteran/employment areas
- Shared strategy for facilities, utilities, equipment, staffing, etc.
- Timeline for start-up by location
- Timeline for implementation of technological augmentation solution
- Strategic and tactical marketing plans
- Strategy for potential employer participation programs
- Paid and volunteer work allocation
- Cost benefit analysis for each aspect of the solution

Possible Contributors and/or Reviewers for the Plan:

- Virginia Department of Veterans Services
- Virginia Board of Veterans Services
- Virginia Employment Commission
- Virginia Community Colleges
- TAP Officials/DOL/VETS
- Virginia Military Advisory Committee
- Representative Industry Partners
- Veterans Administration
- Selected legislators
- Technology solution vendor (as appropriate)
- Workforce Investment boards (WIBs) and One Stop Centers

Other Recommendations for Considered Inclusion in the Strategic Plan:

- Establish a consolidated industry partnership for fund drives, training/retraining opportunities, mentor/protégé programs, and job placement
- Take advantage of veteran service organizations membership for volunteering and counseling services associated with the new organization
- Develop a robust marketing plan to ensure maximum use of the new program
- Develop legislation to enhance funds streams from various sources to contribute to overall funding for organization and associated programs
- Improve VEC and TAP exit surveys and follow up surveys to improve measureable outcome data and accurately assess effectiveness

- Establish incentive program for employers hiring veterans.

RECOMMENDED LEGISLATION

In addition to our recommended solutions, the Taskforce also recommends the following be considered/discussed for possible legislative measures to enhance service delivery or further enable the successful execution of our solution.

- Legislation to fund a full time position housed in DHRM, VEC or DVS to promote the oversight of veterans' workforce issues exclusively
- Legislation to establish a dedicated funding source for the recommendations in this report, including the technological solution
- Legislation to establish a tax incentive for companies who institute and utilize a formal veteran hiring preference system within the company
- Legislation to provide tax and/or procurement incentives for GWOT veterans who start businesses in Virginia
- Legislation to provide "bonus" budget funds to agencies whose "veteran" employee population exceeds a given threshold
- Legislation to change the Enterprise Zone credit to include a credit for hiring disabled veterans
- Legislation to offer tax incentives for businesses who implement formal on-site training programs for veterans (particularly GWOT veterans and their families)
- Legislation to establish tax incentives for businesses who accommodate tele-work for disabled veterans
- Legislation to establish a veteran "contribution" section on state tax forms similar to the election campaign contribution option on federal forms
- Legislation to earmark some state lottery proceeds for education and/or training programs for veterans

BUDGETARY AND RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategic partnerships, budgetary and resource planning and strategy are among our top priorities. Without a sound strategy for obtaining and maintaining funds and resources, our

solution will be at risk. We can utilize existing funds and resources with careful planning and coordination to initiate a transition to our new organization. But we must also continuously look for ways to infuse our project with additional funds. By thinking innovatively, we can enlist the help of several organizations in this regard. Below are a few of the possibilities.

- **Existing Funding Streams**

Should our recommendations be accepted, new cost efficiencies will be realized. Some of the possibilities for savings here include facilities costs, technology costs, equipment and material costs and staffing costs. Once we have identified and reached agreement on the most effective lines of business, we can collectively redirect our funds toward additional sites, technology infusions, and marketing. This is not to imply that such a process will be easily accomplished, but there are precedent setting initiatives that have overcome these types of stove-piped fund streams for the betterment of the collective group. The primary considerations for collaborative funding solutions are:

- DOL/VETS TAP Programs
- Virginia Workforce Connection website
- One-Stop Centers (services funded through a variety of federal and state sources)
- Department of Veterans Services
- VA

- **Federal Program Dollars**

As we work closely with our identified federal partners, we can market our solutions and vie for program dollars from other Federal agencies and programs. Possible alliances with Congressional committees may bear some results in receiving federal subsidy for our project.

- **State Funds**

Through our state agency alliances, such as the VEC, VCCS, and DHRM, we may be able to receive some funds for incorporating their services into our program.

- **Collaborative Efforts with Other States**

There may be opportunities to collaborate on parts of our solution if we share the resulting benefits (and costs) with other state Veterans Services organizations

- **Industry Relationships**

There are several innovative ways to obtain industry contributions for our effort. Industry can fund mentorship programs, provide tax-deductible donations, and scholarship funds, to name a few methods. The primary question is not “if”, but rather “how”.

Resources

By combining our functions we can also pool our existing resources. Facilities sharing, common equipment, services, and staffing can reduce the delta between what we have on hand and

what we need to be successful. Each of our partners can contribute to the resource pool, and with the elimination of redundant processes can redirect excess resources to new locations. Staffing dollars can be reduced through the establishment of a well-coordinated volunteer program.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS OR RELATIONSHIPS

To be successful, a network of collaborative partnerships and trusted relationships is essential. Listed below are an initial set of partners, and associates to get the project underway to a significant extent. Since there may be unforeseen challenges, this list is not intended to be all inclusive. We may discover additional organizations and benefactors along the way that would be beneficial.

Partnerships

Federal

- **The Veterans Administration**
The VA must be a close partner to our efforts. Their value is evident – they provide many interconnected services, and can serve as champions of any pilot program we wish to execute. They also provide the direct link to veterans themselves, particularly GWOT veterans. They can establish MOU's with regard to the VA Adaptive Training Program and the GI Bill, if needed.
- **US Department of Labor (DOL)**
The US Department of Labor provides funding connected to several legislative initiatives with which we will be required to work. Of immediate consideration is the Veterans Employment and Training Service, which provides funds for state workforce initiatives. This program is essentially our link to the One-Stop System which is an integral part of our solution. DOL is also the funding authority for the Workforce Investment Act and the "Hire Vets First" website.
- **Office of Personnel Management (OPM)**
OPM owns the federal job bank, USAJOBS, which can be a significant contributor to our job search programs, particularly considering the preponderance of federal government jobs in Virginia (and the DC area). This organization can also provide guidance in establishing policy for veterans' preference in hiring, as their hiring point system can be used as a model.

- **Department of Defense (Military Services)**

DoD should be brought in as a partner in our efforts, to capture the transitioning veterans prior to turn in of identification cards and return to their respective civilian communities. DoD can provide a wealth of information for our use, from lists of transitioning veterans who are Virginia residents, lists of transitioning residents who are moving to Virginia directly upon discharge, and access to the TAP program, an integral part of our solution. We may wish to establish MOU's with DoD to consolidate redundant processes and data, and to create lines of business to save money.

- **US Census Bureau**

The US Census Bureau provides an enormous amount of statistical data that can be used not only to set up our initial infrastructure, but to adjust our services and staffing strength in the future.

- **US Congress**

In addition to our Senators and Representatives, who have an outstanding record of serving the needs of both active duty and veterans, there are a few Congressional Committees we may need to enlist the support of for our pilot program. Just a few of the committees we may need to champion our cause include Committees on Veterans Affairs, Committees on Armed Services, Committees on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, Committees on Education and Labor, House Ways and Means, and Joint Economic Committee.

Virginia State

- **Virginia Department of Veterans Services**

DVS will be the primary contributor and partner for this effort. As the state's leading expert on veterans' issues of every caliber, DVS is the natural choice to take a leadership role in the strategic planning and the execution of this project.

- **Virginia Employment Commission (VEC)**

The VEC will be a primary contributor and partner in our overall solution. In addition to having a working presence in our new organization, the VEC provides a tremendous amount of statistical data for our use. It is essential that we get "buy-in" for our pilot program and new organizational structure. The VEC also helps to maintain portions of the Virginia Workforce Connection website, which we recommend be expanded and used for this project.

- **Virginia Community College System (VCCS)**

VCCS has recently been assigned oversight of the Workforce Investment Act in Virginia, which includes the framework for one stop centers. Since the One-Stop Centers are a prime partner in our recommended solution, partnership with VCCS is essential. VCCS may also serve at the provider of our physical locations. Lastly, VCCS can provide a lion's

share of the educational venues made available to veterans, not only through degree programs, but through financial aid programs, certification programs, and general educational seminars.

- **Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM)**

DHRM has a wealth of expertise in recruitment, hiring, and retention, as well as employment law (both state and federal). They also operate the Veterans Outreach Services mentioned in this report. Partnership with this agency will be of great benefit to the project overall. (This agency would be an ideal provider of an oversight position for all workforce development issues related to the execution of our solution. See “Recommendations”.)

- **Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA)**

Some type of partnership with VITA will likely be required in order to execute the technology portion of our solution. Whether it involves funding, compatibility, or security, it is likely we will need to work closely with this organization, and possibly with its sister organization, the Virginia Center for Innovative Technology (VCIT).

Relationships

In addition to the formal partnerships we must forge to move our solution forward, there are a number of relationships we must foster along the way. While they may not be stakeholders, their support and guidance may keep us on the road to success. Some of these relationships include:

- City, County and Tribal Governments/Organizations
- Other State Veterans Service Departments
- Veterans Service Organizations
- Top 25 Businesses in Virginia
- Chambers of Commerce
- SCORE
- Veteran Entrepreneurs Associations
- Employment Agencies
- Recruiting Companies
- Commercially Operated Trade Schools
- Unions
- Health Care Organizations

Summary

The genesis of our recommendations and overall solutions comes from the extensive work done by the members of this taskforce. The members of the taskforce included veterans, active duty and retired military personnel. Also included were state representatives from various secretariats, state legislators, the Commissioner of DVS and industry partners (all of which are veterans). It was from this expertise and “walking the pavement” experience that these recommendations were fostered. Members of the Taskforce teamed very effectively to collect a tremendous amount of data within their assigned areas of research and analysis. The pages that follow contain the data and analysis from each of the Tiger Teams, as well as conclusions drawn by the members of the Team.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

According to the Background Paper associated with the establishment of the Taskforce, “Virginia is currently the home to over 800,000 veterans. Although the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) posts impressive results in employment and retention rates, VEC data indicates that in FY '07, only 37,582 veterans registered with the VEC seeking employment. Of these veterans 272 were reported as Transitioning Service Members, within no more than 24 months of transitioning out of military service, depending on whether they were retiring or leaving service for other reasons. Another 24%, or 8,965 individuals, separated from the service within the last 3 years. About 15% were disabled. The VEC tracks the numbers of individuals referred for employment, and statistical data available show that the Entered Employment Rate is 68% for veterans and eligible persons, and the Employment Retention Rate at six months. In addition, 68% of the veterans registered with the VEC entered employment after being provided a Staff Assisted Service.”

The Background paper further states; “...there is a compelling need for education of the general public and a coordinated and statewide approach to developing the levels of outreach needed to encourage veterans to seek employment assistance, to establish partnerships with public and private sectors, and to explore innovative solutions with the private sector particularly in the use of technology.”

On June 16, 2006, Governor Kaine issued Executive Order 19, which among other tasks, “directs(s) all state agencies to identify opportunities to partner with the Department of Veterans Services on ways to offer new, expanded, or customized services that meet the educational, health care, and social service needs of Virginia’s veterans. Agencies will identify the resources required to implement the new, expanded, or customized services for veterans...” EO 19 also tasks DVS to work “with all appropriate state agencies, to give special attention to opportunities for improving services to disabled veterans...”

Although it is widely recognized that there are many separate and distinct venues available to veterans in search of job opportunities and other veterans’ benefits, there is also a sense of “disconnectedness” regarding the full scope of services. In April 2007, VA Secretary James Nicholson presented a report to President Bush from the Task Force on Returning Global War on Terror Heroes that in essence confirmed our findings. This taskforce submitted 25 recommendations, many of which addressed increased collaboration among Federal agencies in service delivery, expanded data collection and analysis, and improved access to benefits for veterans and their families.

To address the range of issues that impact workforce development for veterans, our taskforce divided its membership into Tiger Teams to collect targeted data, conduct an analysis, and present a summary of the current environment from their assigned perspective. As mentioned, the Tiger Teams focused on the following:

WORKFORCE ANALYSIS	WORKFORCE REQUIREMENTS	BUDGET & LEGAL STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine current state of workforce with respect to vets and disabled vets • Determine greatest needs • Determine greatest return on investment (ROI) for program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine “vet supportive” industries & job types • Determine government opportunities • Determine regional opportunities and challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research possible avenues for financial support • Provide research on legal issues for all teams as requested
TECHNOLOGY AND ACCESSIBILITY	TRAINING, EDUCATION & RETOOLING STRATEGIES	PLACEMENT STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine technological possibilities for information exchange, applications, job postings, access for disabled vets, services available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research & identify training programs available for vets and disabled vets • Research sponsorship for training • Research custom development training available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research types of agreements possible with industry for placement of vets • Compile a list of government and industry entities willing/ready to participate • Research strategies to use placement options as a funding mechanism for the program in the future

Team members conducted internet research, report searching and analysis, interviews with public and private organizations, government, and industry as well as with veterans themselves to compile the data required for comprehensive analysis.

This report is a consolidation of the data collection, analysis, and recommendations of the entire Taskforce. Each Tiger Team presented written and oral reports on their findings and recommendations. Because some of the focus areas are naturally interrelated, there was some overlap of both findings and recommendations from each team. The material presented herein is, therefore, a true collaboration of effort, ideas, and recommendations from the entire team.

2. CURRENT STATE

The current state of workforce development for veterans is very robust. There are many fine organizations, in both government and private industry, who continue to develop programs and provide assistance to veterans. The field is so plentiful, in fact, that it can create a conundrum for veterans, and be very perplexing for those veterans whose disabilities make concentration and focus difficult. Our initial research was divided into large, logically grouped sets – veteran workforce characteristics (demographics); workforce requirements, or the general outlook on opportunities for veterans in Virginia; placement – a compilation of existing programs available to help connect veterans with jobs; training and education available to help veterans transfer skills to civilian fields; and technology and accessibility, the team that attempted to capture the existing technological tools available for matching veterans to job opportunities. Some states have more robust and well organized veterans’ workforce initiatives than others. Virginia stands out as one of the states with the most prolific opportunities.

To discover the current state of workforce development as it pertains to veterans, our Tiger Teams collected data and conducted analysis in several relevant areas. The information collected was pulled from many sources; many statistics were difficult to compare because of the disparity in defined characteristics of the sampled groups – an “apples to oranges” comparison vice “apples to apples”. First, it was essential to attempt to discern the numbers of veterans in Virginia along with some categorical characteristics that would drive their needs. Our Workforce Analysis Team collected statistical data from a number of sources, then categorized veterans into distinct groups whose needs define the type of challenges they face, and the types of workforce solutions might help them. The data provided in this report refers primarily to veterans who are transitioning at the present. It does not address those veterans who have been discharged and back in the civilian workforce for a long period, although our solutions can just as easily be applied to these “older generation” veterans as well.

The requirements team collected a very comprehensive set of data regarding employment in Virginia, and from their data we can see that the employment outlook is very optimistic. The placement team listed a healthy number of programs at federal, state and local government levels, as well as some promising best practices in private industry. Training and education analysis provided a collection of venues available to veterans, all greatly enhanced by the passage of the new GI Bill in July 2008. Irrespective of the new GI Bill, however, which does not address the training and education needs or opportunities for older veterans, the available resources can be accessed by veterans of all ages through one or more programs.

The technology team reached beyond the borders of Virginia in its search for technology based solutions for veterans and their families. In addition to a state-by-state comparison of veteran websites, the team reviewed a number of commercially available job search engines designed specifically for veterans. Because technology knows no geographical border, the opportunities were so plentiful as to be overwhelming. The team therefore elected to include a

representation of several most interesting and/or comprehensive sites. Again, however, it is in this area that a veteran with special needs may actually be most challenged. There is enough information as to become confusing, and the need to dissect and logically assimilate this data in a “user (vet) friendly” environment is great.

In this section, we have aggregated the data collection and analysis of the Taskforce Tiger Teams to convey a comprehensive portrait of the current state of the environment in which veterans seek and find new careers and opportunities as they transition from military to civilian life.

2 a. VETERANS DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2007, President Bush established a Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors. The Commission, co-chaired by Senator Dole, and former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, captured a variety of statistical data which was presented in their final report in July 2007. Statistics from their report indicate that:

- 21 percent of demobilized reserve component and 31 percent of retired/separated service members are enrolled in an educational program leading to a degree.
- 33 and 36 percent of these groups are "very" or "somewhat" satisfied with VA employment services.
- 33 percent of active duty, 22 percent of reserve component, and 37 percent of retired/separated service members report that a family member or close friend relocated for extended periods of time to be with them while they were in the hospital.
- 21 percent of active duty, 15 percent of reserve component, and 24 percent of retired/separated service members say friends or family gave up a job to be with them or act as their caregiver.

None of the report statistics tell us the number of Virginia veterans falling into these categories, nor do they tell us the number of veterans relocating their home and families to Virginia to be closer to the care provided at Walter Reed and Bethesda or other Virginia facilities. One more significant statistic, which cannot be quantified, but must be considered, came from the Dole Report:

56 percent of active duty, 60 percent of reserve component, and 76 percent of retired/separated service members say they have reported mental health symptoms to a health care provider.

Current State of Workforce with Respect to Veterans and Disabled Veterans

The Workforce Analysis Tiger Team determined that for the purposes of this effort Virginia's veterans can be categorized in four distinct groups, each with their own distinct employment needs and challenges:

- First Term Transitioning Veterans are those who have served for six or less years.
- Mid-Term Transitioning Veterans are those who have served greater than six years but less than 20 years.
- Careerist Transitioning Veterans are veterans who have served 20-plus years

- Veterans with Special Considerations are Reserve or National Guard veterans who have been called to active duty who experienced short and/or long term difficulties regaining civilian employment.

Each of the categories listed above can be further divided by three distinct characteristics that determine employment potential: Education, Skills, and Disabilities.

Using the categories above, the following matrix can be used to determine employment potential:

VETERAN GROUP	EDUCATION	SKILLS	DISABILITIES
First Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None • GED • HS Graduate • Associate Degree • BA/BS Degree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 in 5 have PTSD or TBI • 1 in 9 have combat related injuries* <p>*estimate only</p>
Mid Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GED • HS Graduate • Associate Degree • BA/BS Degree • MA/MS Degree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical skills (MOS/AFSC) • Leadership • Maturity • Goal Oriented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 in 5 have PTSD or TBI • 1 in 9 have combat related injuries* <p>*estimate only</p>
Careerist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GED • HS Graduate • Associate Degree • BA/BS Degree • MA/MS Degree • PhD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical skills (MOS/AFSC) • Leadership • Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 in 5 have PTSD or TBI • 1 in 9 have combat related injuries* • Age-related ailments <p>*estimate only</p>

Note: The above table represents a general discussion among active duty and retired military members of the Taskforce, and does not represent any specific set of statistics collected from a given agency.

Special Consideration Veterans

Veterans who are in the Special Considerations grouping face other challenges:

- Employed prior to active duty call, but upon release from active duty find the employer is no longer in business
- Employed prior to active duty call, but upon release from active duty are not rehired as required by Federal law.
- Self-employed prior to active duty call, and unable to regain client base or market share to the same level as before deployment.
- Loss of professional certifications
- Disparity of pay between civilian and military compensation

In addition to the category-specific challenges identified above, each group also faces self-imposed challenges of employer expectations and job satisfaction.

SAMPLE WAGE & BENEFIT COMPARISON

ANNUAL WAGE & BENEFITS COMPARISON			
First Term Transitioning Vet: Sample first term vet, E-4, married with 2 children, active duty pay while deployed.		Civilian Job Opportunities: This data would vary significantly by region and career type. We used a median of \$14.50/hr, derived from BLS statistics for retail and manufacturing jobs.	
Pay Item:	Amount:	Pay Item:	Amount:
Base Pay	\$ 24,573.60	Base Pay	\$ 27,445.60
Housing Allowance	\$ 7,653.60	*Bonuses - 2%	\$ 548.91
Subsistence	\$ 3,533.16	*Social Security - 5%	\$ 1,372.28
Clothing Allowance	\$ 529.20	*401K/403B - 4%	\$ 1,097.82
Family Separation Pay	\$ 3,000.00	*Disability - 1%	\$ 274.46
Hazard Duty Pay	\$ 1,800.00	*Healthcare - 9%	\$ 2,470.10
Hostile Fire Pay	\$ 3,000.00	*Pension - 3%	\$ 823.37
*Healthcare	\$ 5,000.00	*Time Off - 9%	\$ 2,470.10
TOTAL ANNUAL	\$ 49,089.56	TOTAL ANNUAL	\$ 36,502.65
*Healthcare amount used is the same as industry for this exercise, but military healthcare includes entire family.		*Benefits above total an average of 33% addition to base salary, and include healthcare, retirement, time off, and social security. Does not include family healthcare rates. Statistics taken from ADP, Inc., a nationwide payroll processing company	

Note: Statistics for military benefits derived from DFAS. Statistics on comparative civilian jobs were derived from ADP, on on-line nationwide payroll processing company. ADP uses a national average percentage for each of the benefits available to an employee.

Challenges

The greatest challenge facing all groups is the disparity between active duty and civilian compensation. Most veterans are accustomed to salary and benefits (quarters and subsistence allowance, special/hazardous duty pay, medical, etc.) that are higher than positions of similar scope and skills qualifications as their military experience. This is most particularly true of first-term veterans, as illustrated in the chart above.

Conclusions

Generally speaking, demographics on the veterans themselves cannot be considered in a single set of characteristics. They can, however, be logically and reasonably grouped into major categories in terms of education, experience, and special needs. Veterans' demographics have taken on new characteristics as a result of the Global War on Terror. There are a significant number of veterans using their educational benefits, although that number could be improved upon, and may well increase given the new GI Bill passed in July of this year. The extended medical care for wounded veterans has created an environment in which family members are setting up temporary but fairly long-term households to support and care for their veteran family member undergoing extended treatment or therapy. This, along with the often extensive amount of time required to assist a wounded vet in daily activities, changes the employment outlook for the spouse of a wounded veteran and sometimes puts the only remaining household income at risk.

There is a continued discrepancy between military pay and benefits and those being offered by civilian entities that creates an additional challenge to transitioning veterans. Veterans have traditionally believed their service and sacrifice to their country will pay off later in higher wages after separation from the military, only to be surprised by the dip in salary and benefits awaiting them after transition.

2 b. EMPLOYMENT DEMOGRAPHICS

This section addresses the employment outlook in Virginia for veterans, disabled veterans and their families. It is interesting to note that occupational areas of growth in Virginia mirror those in the country as a whole.

Veteran Supportive Industries and Job Types

Military personnel have skill sets that match most of the job types in the civilian work place. The military has transportation sector personnel (railroad, maritime, aeronautical, and motor vehicle), Medical Sector (field EMT and hospital), veterinarian, communications, food service, logistics, and a great deal of other types of personnel, so most industries and job types have military corollaries. Further, military people can be retrained to work in new fields, and so most job types are veterans supportive from the skill set perspective.

Workforce Projections

To understand the industries and job types to which veterans will migrate for employment, one should take a brief look at the overall Virginia workforce projections. The two documents referenced are: the Virginia Employment Commission, Economic Information Services Division, Virginia Community Profile (VCP), last updated 4/5/2008; and the Virginia Employment Commission, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections (IOEP) 2002-2012, Virginia Statewide, released by the Economic Information Services Division.

The population of Virginia is projected to increase from 7,104,078 in 2000 to 8,010,342 by 2010, and 8,917,575 in 2020. This represents an increase of 1,813,497 people, or 25.5%, increase over 20 years.

The VCP lists the 50 Largest Employers in Virginia (*their source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 3rd Quarter (July, August, September) 2007*). See next page for the list.

Fifty Largest Employers in Virginia

1. U.S. Department of Defense
2. Wal Mart
3. Fairfax County Public Schools
4. Postal Service
5. Newport News Shipbuilding
6. Food Lion
7. County of Fairfax
8. Sentara Healthcare
9. Inova Fairfax Hospital
10. University of Virginia / Blue Ridge Hospital
11. City of Virginia Beach Schools
12. Prince William County School Board
13. Booz, Allen and Hamilton
14. Science Applications International Corp
15. Target Corp
16. VDOT
17. Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension Office
18. Lowes' Home Centers, Inc.
19. U.S. Department of Homeland Security
20. U.S. Department of Commerce
21. Loudoun County Schools
22. Chesterfield County School Board
23. Capital One Bank
24. Virginia Commonwealth University
25. Kroger
26. First Union National Bank
27. City of Virginia Beach
28. The Home Depot
29. 7-Eleven
30. Henrico County School Board
31. Riverside Regional Medical Center
32. United Parcel Service, Inc.
33. Virginia Electric & Power Company Inc.
34. University of Virginia Medical Center
35. MCV Hospital
36. Norfolk City School Board
37. Chesapeake City Public School Board
38. Lockheed Martin
39. George Mason University
40. City of Norfolk
41. Bon Secours Richmond Health System
42. Bank of America
43. Verizon Virginia, Inc.
44. Giant Food
45. Philip Morris U.S.A., Inc.
46. United Air Lines
47. Red Lobster & The Olive Garden
48. Farm Fresh
49. Roanoke Memorial Community Hospital
50. Ukrops

The VCP lists “Employment by Industry” and presents the top five industries as:

1. Government 644,285 (Federal (156,691), State (146,667), and Local (340,927)),
2. Retail (425,416),
3. Professional and Technical Services (358,032),
4. Health Care and Social Assistance (338,328), and
5. Accommodation and Food Services (305,927).

For the third quarter of 2007, the Labor Market Statistics, Covered Employment and Wages Program reported the following.

Industry Group	Establishments	Employees
Total, all industries	223,467	3,674,818
Retail Trade (44 & 45)	26,813	432,367
Health Care and Social Assistance	19,500	396,862
Professional, Scientific & Technical Svc	31,927	366,118
Education Services	2,868	307,813
Accommodation and Food Services	14,748	307,495
Manufacturing (31-33)	6,047	286,246
Construction	26,721	255,566
Public Administration	4,041	225,719
Admin., Support, Waste Mgmt, Remediation	12,109	221,958
Finance and Insurance	12,031	132,467
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	23,337	132,029
Transportation and Warehousing (48 & 49)	6,461	130,423
Wholesale Trade	12,835	121,729
Information	3,998	96,077
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,776	77,017
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,831	76,318
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	9,386	60,128
Utilities	494	18,576
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1,629	14,572
Mining	315	9,049
Unclassified establishments	3,600	6,289

Source: Labor Market Statistics, Covered Employment and Wages Program

In the VCP, the government, as a whole, is noted as the major employer in the State. The government on all levels makes efforts, and has initiatives, to help Veterans.

The VCP identifies “New Hires by Industry”, with the top five industries as:

1. Accommodation and Food Service (121,473),
2. Retail Trade (105,086),
3. Administrative and Waste Services (91,342) (this category includes Employment Agencies),
4. Health Care and Social Assistance (51,623), and
5. Construction (46,871).

New hires by Industry can indicate both growth and/or turnover of personnel. The VCP specifically lists “Turnover by Industry”, with the top five industries being: Accommodation and Food Services (18.8%); Administrative and Waste Services (18.6%), Retail Trade (13.4%); Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (12.7%); and Construction (12.2%). This means that Health Care and Social Assistance is a growth industry that isn’t subject to a large volume of turnover.

The IOEP reported the top five projected growth industries as:

1. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services;
2. Health Care and Social Assistance;
3. Administrative and Waste Services (this category includes Employment Agencies);
4. Educational Services; and
5. Retail Trade.

The IOEP projected that the following industries would lose employees:

1. Manufacturing;
2. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting;
3. Mining; and
4. Utilities.

The following chart from VCP shows expected Total Employment by Major Occupation Group. The industries highlighted in pink are those that are expected to lose personnel requirements. Those highlighted in green are the top five expected to increase personnel requirements. The yellow highlight shows the cumulative total.

	Employment			Openings		
	Estimated 2004	Projected 2014	% Change	Replacements	Growth	Total
Total All occupations	3,871,342	4,531,580	17.05%	91,498	68,608	160,106
Management Occupations	165,801	195,982	18.2%	3,115	3,018	6,133
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	213,319	267,901	25.59%	3,692	5,459	9,151
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	174,514	250,361	43.46%	2,213	7,585	9,798
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	80,480	97,015	20.55%	1,817	1,656	3,473
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	39,816	48,723	22.37%	963	894	1,857
Community and Social Services Occupations	40,058	51,564	28.72%	772	1,151	1,923
Legal Occupations	35,513	41,947	18.12%	406	643	1,049
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	208,884	253,754	21.48%	4,366	4,487	8,853
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	61,761	73,246	18.6%	1,159	1,149	2,308
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	162,094	206,110	27.15%	3,080	4,402	7,482
Healthcare Support Occupations	69,654	95,562	37.2%	1,128	2,593	3,721
Protective Service Occupations	85,950	101,805	18.45%	2,501	1,586	4,087
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	267,198	329,189	23.2%	10,621	6,201	16,822
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	151,643	179,641	18.46%	3,026	2,800	5,826
Personal Care and Service Occupations	113,668	137,035	20.56%	2,689	2,339	5,028
Sales and Related Occupations	462,951	518,330	11.96%	14,884	5,685	20,569
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	594,579	653,609	9.93%	13,774	7,077	20,851
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	50,191	48,932	-2.51%	1,358	50	1,408
Construction and Extraction Occupations	246,449	278,283	12.92%	4,985	3,228	8,213
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	169,785	193,189	13.78%	3,886	2,355	6,241
Production Occupations	222,564	222,802	.11%	5,340	891	6,231
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	254,470	286,600	12.63%	5,723	3,362	9,085

The following chart from VCP shows expected Growth Occupations. The industries highlighted in yellow are Health Care related. Those highlighted in green are Information Technology related.

	Employment			Average Annual Openings			Average Annual Salary
	Est. 2004	Projected 2014	% Change	Replacements	Growth	Total	
Network Systems and Data Communications Analysts	14,562	24,633	69.16%	171	1,007	1,178	\$78,746
Home Health Aides	10,207	16,549	62.13%	134	634	768	\$19,330
Computer Software Engineers, Applications	30,397	48,392	59.2%	301	1,800	2,101	\$88,424
Computer Software Engineers, Systems Software	24,250	38,464	58.61%	240	1,421	1,661	\$100,427
Medical Assistants	6,258	9,738	55.61%	116	348	464	\$27,414
Physician Assistants	815	1,253	53.74%	13	44	57	\$60,169
Dental Hygienists	3,372	5,162	53.08%	29	179	208	\$69,739
Dental Assistants	6,993	10,647	52.25%	196	365	561	\$31,095
Database Administrators	4,341	6,574	51.44%	45	223	268	\$77,202
Astronomers	***	***	***	***	***	***	\$116,596
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	14,101	21,297	51.03%	156	720	876	\$74,460
Physical Therapist Assistants	1,269	1,914	50.83%	21	65	86	\$43,776
Industrial-Organizational Psychologists	130	195	50%	3	7	10	\$93,511
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	1,438	2,141	48.89%	19	70	89	\$29,906
Marriage and Family Therapists	426	633	48.59%	10	21	31	\$43,269
Personal and Home Care Aides	10,319	15,287	48.14%	165	497	662	\$17,094
Biomedical Engineers	92	135	46.74%	2	4	6	\$103,579
Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	1,035	1,515	46.38%	18	48	66	\$73,581
Arbitrators, Mediators, and Conciliators	232	336	44.83%	3	10	13	\$115,179
Occupational Therapist Assistants	534	773	44.76%	7	24	31	\$46,044

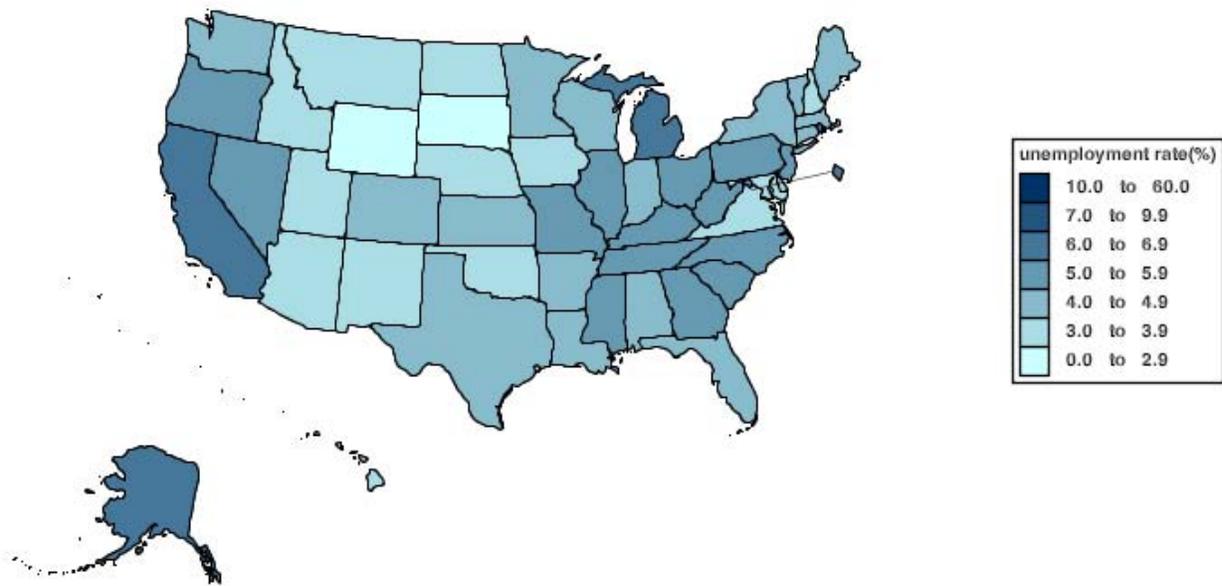
The following chart from VCP shows expected Declining Occupations. The industries highlighted in yellow are manufacturing related. Those highlighted in green are railroad related.

	Employment			Openings		
	Est. 2004	Proj. 2014	% Change	Replacements	Growth	Total
Shuttle Car Operators	117	59	-49.57%	3	0	3
Textile Knitting and Weaving Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	1,857	942	-49.27%	21	0	21
Railroad Brake, Signal, and Switch Operators	***	***	***	***	***	***
Textile Winding, Twisting, and Drawing Out Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	3,140	1,864	-40.64%	59	0	59
Meter Readers, Utilities	1,256	751	-40.21%	40	0	40
Credit Authorizers, Checkers, and Clerks	1,993	1,227	-38.44%	38	0	38
Textile Bleaching and Dyeing Machine Operators and Tenders	1,152	754	-34.55%	29	0	29
Roof Bolters, Mining	278	182	-34.53%	5	0	5
Radio Operators	***	***	***	***	***	***
Rail Yard Engineers, Dinkey Operators, and Hostlers	***	***	***	***	***	***
Mail Clerks and Mail Machine Operators, Except Postal Service	5,768	3,902	-32.35%	172	0	172
File Clerks	5,015	3,410	-32%	149	0	149
Telephone Operators	821	566	-31.06%	21	0	21
Photographic Processing Machine Operators	1,751	1,249	-28.67%	43	0	43
Fabric and Apparel Patternmakers	220	157	-28.64%	10	0	10
Extruding and Forming Machine Setters, Operators,	912	661	-27.52%	18	0	18
Computer Operators	3,460	2,510	-27.46%	74	0	74
Coil Winders, Tapers, and Finishers	352	259	-26.42%	8	0	8
Chemical Plant and System Operators	1,260	932	-26.03%	39	0	39
Wellhead Pumps	***	***	***	***	***	***

Regional Opportunities and Challenges

Virginia currently has an unemployment rate of 3.5%, while the United States has a rate of 4.8% (per the April 2008 figures from the LAUS Unit and Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, as found on <http://www.bls.gov/>). This places Virginia in a better situation than much of the nation and as a regional leader in employment.

Unemployment rates by State, seasonally adjusted, April 2008

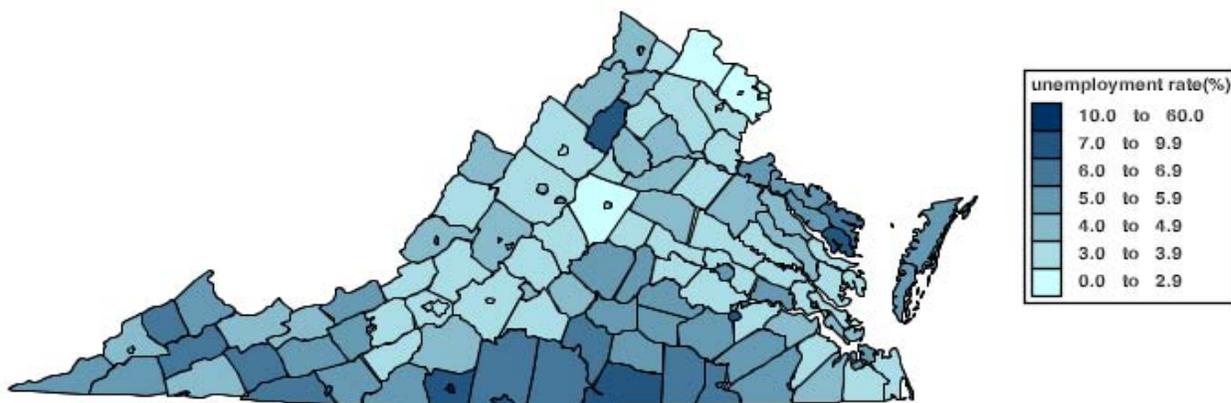


Source of map and data is from the <http://data.bls.gov/> website

General Regional Opportunities

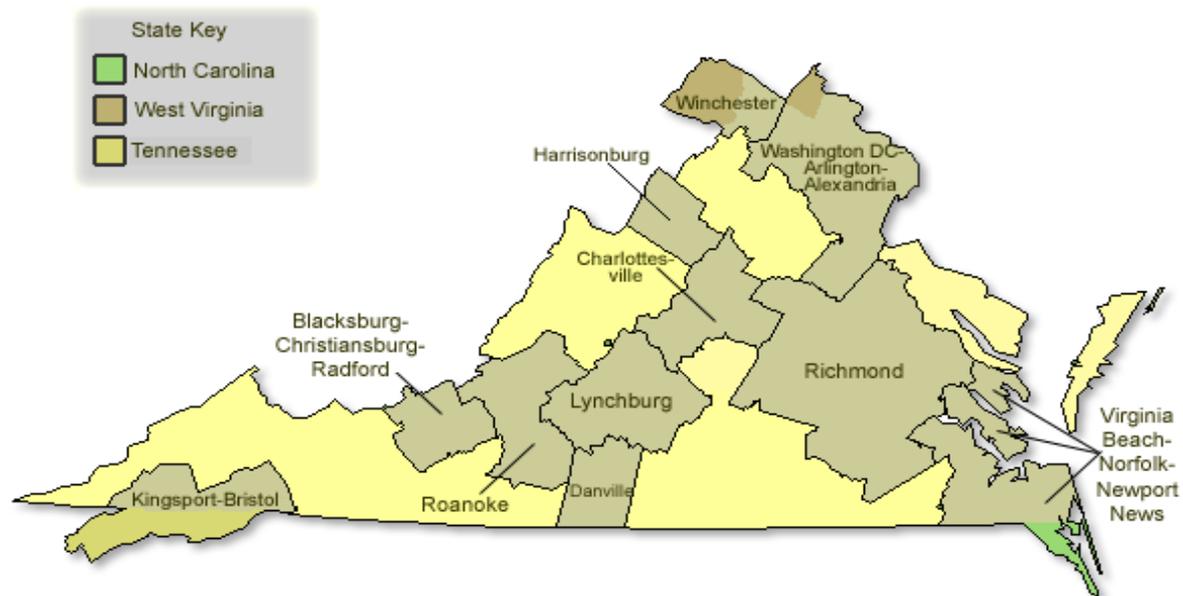
While Virginia as a whole is doing well with employment, there are regions of the state that have high unemployment.

Unemployment rates by county, not seasonally adjusted, Virginia March 2008



Source of map and data is from the <http://data.bls.gov/> website

Virginia Metropolitan Statistical Areas



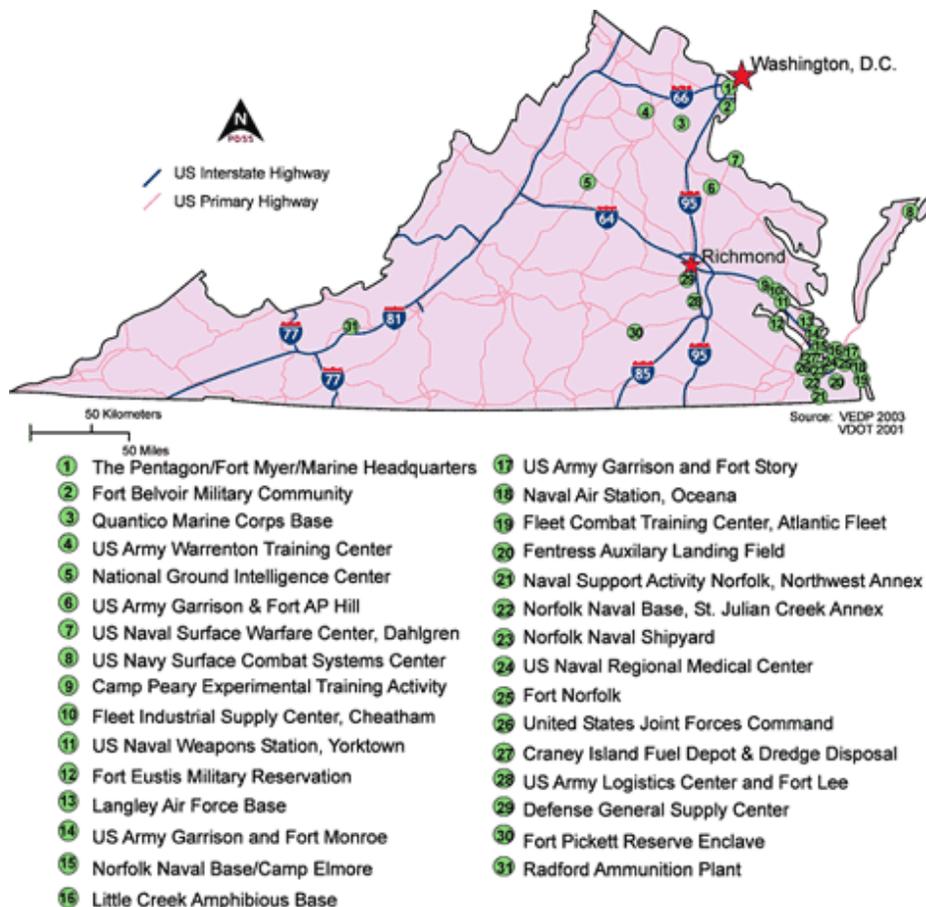
Source of artwork is <http://www.vawc.virginia.gov> website

Employment is generally higher in the Metropolitan Statistical Areas of Virginia.

Military Regional Opportunities

Virginia has a number of military bases that employ civilians and have businesses that cater to the military personnel on the base. These bases provide opportunities to the veteran community.

Virginia's Military Bases



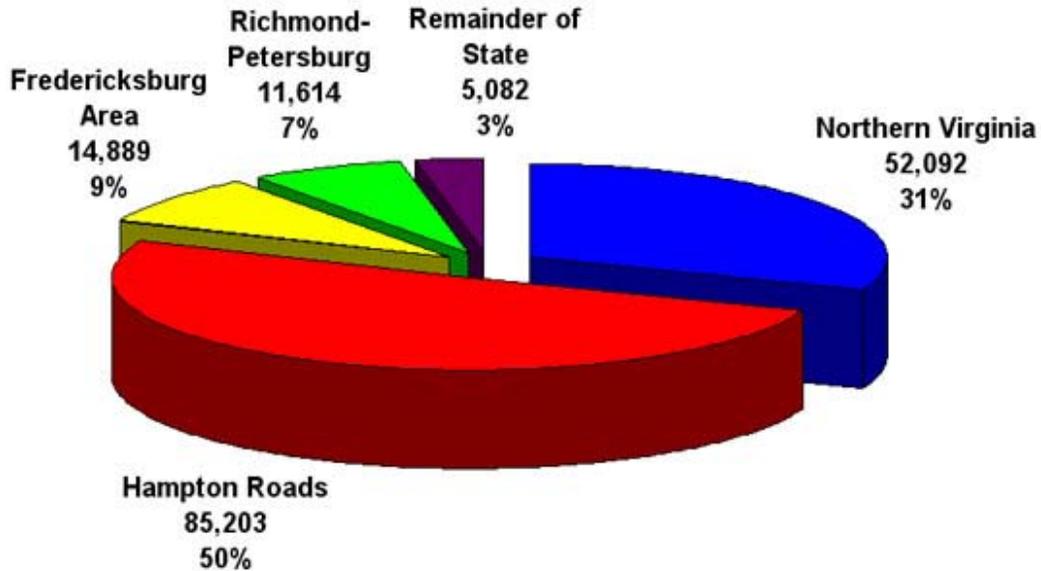
Source of graphic is Virginia Commission on Military Bases website
http://virginiaallies.org/VCOMB_bases.html

Regional Demographics

The chart below indicates DoD affiliated population by installation (or surrounding city)

INST./CITY	Total MIL Personnel	AR CIV	N/M CIV	AF CIV	ODA CIV	SUB CIV	TOT DoD
Alexandria	4,455	2,828	37	31	556	3,452	7,907
Arlington	9,951	4,192	1,832	2,248	6,974	15,246	25,197
Chantilly	159	3	36	0	36	75	234
Charlottesville	262	639	1	0	7	647	909
Chesapeake	420	1	138	0	0	139	559
Dahlgren	720	0	3,660	52	61	3,773	4,493
Fairfax	213	4	1	1	36	42	255
Falls Church	305	294	28	32	1,937	2,291	2,596
Fort Belvoir	2,522	4,827	20	67	3,032	7,946	10,468
Fort Eustis	5,336	2,448	4	3	137	2,592	7,928
Fort Lee	6,140	1,648	4	0	901	2,553	8,693
Fort Myer	1,685	515	0	0	107	622	2,307
Fort Story	571	64	0	0	0	64	635
Hampton	4	78	3	2	53	136	140
Langley AFB	8,304	20	1	1,909	166	2,096	10,400
Manassas	3	0	7	0	146	153	156
Nansemond	0	0	224	0	0	224	224
Newport News	106	8	375	1	35	419	525
Norfolk	56,271	347	1,112	34	777	2,270	58,541
Portsmouth	3,309	25	437	0	78	540	3,849
Quantico	7,836	2	2,543	0	308	2,853	10,689
Radford	0	102	0	0	4	106	106
Richmond	494	127	13	10	2,769	2,919	3,413
Rosslyn	78	71	0	90	285	446	524
Sandston	0	108	0	201	0	309	309
Springfield	0	27	0	0	423	450	450
Suffolk	82	9	316	1	2	328	410
Virginia Beach	16,509	6	5,111	1	306	5,424	21,933
Wallops Flight Ctr	77	0	52	0	0	52	129
Williamsburg	59	3	77	0	0	80	139
Winchester	3	307	0	0	0	307	310
Woodbridge	3	7	112	0	3	122	125
Yorktown	1,661	0	144	0	14	158	1,819
Other	977	2,537	19,294	80	597	22,508	23,485
Total	128,515	21,247	35,582	4,763	19,750	81,342	209,857

Total Defense Employment by Region, FY 2004



Source: DoD Distribution of Personnel by State and by Selected Locations, Washington Headquarters Services Directorate for Information, Operations and Reports (DIOR) Does not include Virginia totals for Reserve and National Guard or Navy and Marine Corps military personnel afloat.

As found on Virginia Commission on Military Bases website
http://virginiaallies.org/VCOMB_economic_impact.html

The 2005 military Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission will have an effect on the regional civilian employee population and the civilian commercial community surrounding the bases.

Base Located County	BRAC Bases Impacted in Virginia
Fairfax	Fort Belvoir
Hampton	Fort Monroe
James	Fort Eustis
Portsmouth	Naval Medical Center Portsmouth
Virginia Beach	NAS Oceana
Arlington	Henderson Hall
Prince William	Quantico
Prince George	Fort Lee

Military bases provide opportunities both as a direct civilian hire opportunity, as well as opportunities to provide services to the base and its personnel.

Government Opportunities

As the statistics confirm, the government (Federal, State, and Local) is a major employer in Virginia. All levels of government provide preferential hiring for veterans, and have some positions set aside for Veterans. Some of these set asides are for wounded veterans. Further, Virginia is the home of a wide variety of military installations and commands, including the Pentagon, Quantico Marine Corps Base, Langley Air Force Base, Naval Station Norfolk, and Fort Lee Army Base. The Department of Defense spending in Virginia exceeds \$34 billion annually.

Federal Opportunities

The Federal Government has a number of programs to help Veterans find work.

Per the Office of Personnel and Management

(<http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetsinfo.asp>), Veterans hold a higher percentage of jobs in the Government than they do in private industry. A factor in this has been laws providing Veterans' preference and special appointing authorities for veterans. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) administers entitlement to veterans' preference in employment. Virtually all Federal jobs, competitive or excepted service, have Veterans Preference applied to them. The government has also set aside special noncompetitive appointments for veterans.

The Office of Personnel Management operates the Federal Government's Employment Information System, USAJOBS (<http://www.USAJOBS.gov>). USAJOBS lists Federal job vacancies, employment information, and job applications. Vacancies can be searched for by location (i.e. Virginia).

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) supports the Veteran, the widow(er), and the orphan. The VA provides education and training assistance, as well as transition assistance for seriously injured service members, while they transition from military to civilian life. The VA has a Transition Assistance Program (TAP) which includes job search, employment and training information, and VA benefits information. There is also a Disabled TAP. The VA provides Verification of Military Experience and Training (VMET), which can be used to verify previous experience and training to potential employers, to help negotiate academic credits at schools, and to obtain certificates and licenses. The VA also has programs to help Veterans form or expand Small Businesses. The VA Veterans Enterprise Web Portal (<http://www.vetbiz.gov/>) is set up to help Veteran owned businesses.

The Department of Defense (DOD) also has programs to help the Veteran. The Operation Transition website (<http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/ot>) posts job want ads for separating/retiring military and federal civilian personnel and their spouses. The DOD also has the DoD TransPortal (<http://www.dodtransportal.dod.mil/>) to help with the transition to civilian life. Transition Assistance Sites are located at 14 sites in Virginia and are branch specific (USMC -- Henderson Hall (Arlington), and MCCDC Quantico; USAF -- Langley AFB (Hampton); USA -- Fort Belvoir, Fort

Eustis (Newport News), Fort Lee (Richmond), and Fort Myer (Arlington); USCG -- ISC Portsmouth (Portsmouth); USN -- Dahlgren, Damneck, Little Creek, Norfolk, Oceana, and Yorktown).

The DOD Military Homefront (<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/>) works to help improve the quality of life for troops and their families. The Heroes to Hometowns initiative is designed to help service members who can no longer serve in the military because of severe service related injuries. This program establishes networks at the national and state level to identify the reintegration needs of injured service members before they return home. Part of this program helps with finding jobs and providing educational assistance for the severely injured service member.

The Department of Labor (DOL) operates "Career One-Stop", which lists jobs by State. The site has a Military Transition section which helps service members, military spouses, businesses interested in hiring veterans, and workforce professionals (those who help Veterans find employment).

Additionally, DOL is making resources available to current or potential employers to help them better understand the mental health issues some veterans may face. It has established a web site, "America's Heroes at Work", <http://www.americasheroesatwork.gov/> and has created a toll-free number, 800-526-7234, for employers with questions.

HireVetsFirst (<http://www.hirevetsfirst.gov/>) is a DOL site. It helps both the employer and Veteran job seeker in the employment process. It also has military job fair listings.

The Troops to Teachers (TTT) (<http://www.odu.edu/educ/education/ttt/index.htm>) is operated by the Department of Defense, but has program funding and oversight from the U.S. Department of Education. This program offers eligible military personnel a \$5,000 stipend toward any approved teacher program in exchange for three years service teaching in a high need school district. Currently 23% of Virginia school districts qualify as high need school districts. There is a Virginia Office of TTT.

State Opportunities

Virginia helps job seekers with job search resources, educational resources, and other resources.

Virginia law gives veterans preferential hiring in State and local government employment. Virginia Law § 2.2-2903 and 15.2-1509 amended says:

Veterans; hiring preference -- Requires the state in its employment selection practices to give additional consideration to veterans who have a service-connected disability rating fixed by the United States Veterans Administration. The bill also requires local governing bodies to give a preference to veterans in their employment policies and practices. HB 2428; CH. 413.

Job Search Resources

The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) (<http://www.vec.virginia.gov>) helps Veterans with their job search, job placement, vocational counseling, and case management. Veterans may talk to an employment representative on a first come, first served basis. There may also be additional job workshops for Veterans, beyond the normal employment workshops. The VEC staff may make referrals to other state agencies, such as the Department of Social Services. The VEC has a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER). The VEC operates nine Transition Assistance Program (TAP) on-site centers for all branches throughout the Commonwealth. The VEC has programs to encourage service disabled veteran businesses.

The Virginia Workforce network (www.vwn.virginia.gov) is a statewide system of One-Stop Career Centers, which focuses on job training, education, and employment. It also provides wage data, skill requirements, and industry and occupational trends. This system is funded through a variety of federal and state sources. The Virginia Community College System (VCCS) has recently assumed responsibility for WIA program oversight and management, which makes it a key resource in improving one-stop efforts.

The Rapid Response Program is an “early intervention service” for Virginia residents that is designed to transition workers to the next employment opportunity. The VCCS has assumed responsibility for this program as well. For the employment population at large, this program assists both employers and workers faced with layoffs, coordinates with the WIA One-Stop program, and can include layoff aversion strategies for employers. As part of this program, the VEC has also instituted rapid response services to military units returning from overseas. The concept was initially tested on the Virginia Army National Guard (VANG) 237th Engineer Company upon their return from deployment in Iraq to Fort McCoy, Wisconsin on 17-20 July 2008, with very positive results. In this pilot, a number of VEC representatives traveled to Fort McCoy and provided counseling and employment referral services to veterans and their family members. The event garnered such positive feedback from the veterans that the program will continue.

The Virginia Workforce Connection (<https://www.vawc.virginia.gov>), run by the state of Virginia, is a very useful site to match workers with workforce requirements. It also provides wage data, skill requirements, and trends in industry and occupational fields. The site also provides information on potential training opportunities. It's Veteran Services section links to many other Veteran oriented web pages.

Veterans Outreach Services (<http://www.dhrm.state.va.us/veterans.htm>), operated by the Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM), seeks to provide information about services and assistance related to employment. They have a Veteran Outreach Council that works to develop and implement an active recruitment program, targeting the employment of

qualified veterans in state government. DHRM, and other state agencies, actively participate in career fairs targeted toward military personnel.

Virginia Jobs has a section set aside for Veterans (<http://jobs.state.va.us/emplforveterans.htm>). This site lists comprehensive employment resources to include job listings, internships, and resume assistance.

Other State Resources

The Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) Wounded Veterans Internship Program was launched in September 2006. This program is intended for veterans who find they are not suited physically or emotionally to a former job, or because the job is no longer available. In this program veterans revise old job skills or develop new ones. VDOT tries to locate the internships close to where the veterans are receiving rehabilitation or currently live. The Federal Highway Administration provides grant money and partners with VDOT in this program. Internships last from six months to two years, depending on both the needs of the veterans and the VDOT office where they are placed. Veterans receive an hourly rate based upon the skill sets involved and the position filled by the veteran.

Regarding veterans with disabilities, Virginia Easy Access <http://www.easyaccess.virginia.gov> is a website with information to help seniors and adults with disabilities find the information, equipment, and materials they need for success. One of the features of this website is that it contains links to VEC, Virginia Connects, and DVS.

Virginia Dominion Power

In December 2007, the Reserve Officers Association ranked Dominion the third most Reserve-friendly among Fortune 500 companies.

In July 2008, Dominion was selected to receive the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award – the highest recognition given to employers for outstanding support and dedication to employees serving in the Guard and Reserve.

City, County, and Tribal Resources

Local governments (City, County and Tribal) have programs in place to help Veterans. As mentioned above, under Virginia law, local governments provide preferential hiring to Veterans. There are programs to help Veterans access benefits that were provided by higher level governments (State and Federal). Local governments also encourage small, woman-owned, minority-owned, and service disabled veteran businesses. There are also Homeless Veteran employment and assistance programs.

An example of a local government program is the Capital Area Training Consortium (CATC) operated by Henrico County to provide workforce services to employers, youth, adults, and dislocated workers. This is a federally funded program.

Matching Veterans to Work

Employers use a number of methods to meet workforce requirements. They use social and business networks, job fairs, advertising, recruiters, and employment agencies.

The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) assists veterans with job referral, job training and job placement assistance. Their main emphasis is with those veterans who are disabled, minority, female, homeless, and/or culturally or economically disadvantaged, as the Assistant Secretary of Labor for VETS has designated these groups to receive special assistance. The VEC maintains a statewide network of Field Operations offices and the Veterans Services Staff (DVOP and LVER), whom are assigned to most of the VEC offices in Virginia. The VEC assists between 35,000 and 37,000 veterans annually. The Transition Assistance Program, operated by the VEC, has a presence on nine military bases in Virginia, to include Fort Lee, Fort Eustis, and the Norfolk Naval Base. The TAP program is a job-search workshop that prepares exiting military personnel for the private sector job search process. Approximately 16,000 active military personnel use the Transition Assistance Program annually.

Networking

The Employment Histories Report (September 28, 2007, assembled by ABT Associates Inc.) states that many veterans find work through social networking. Networking is useful to entrepreneurs and franchisees, as well as the more traditional corporate employer, as well. Trade and Industry has a system of established professional organizations and associations for support. Unions also are a form of professional networks. These organizations tend to have shows that showcase new technology which update both the trade members and their customers. These shows also usually have employment fairs, which in addition to the traditional hiring fair environment, allows people to meet people in industry in a less formal atmosphere and build contacts and network, and possibly build mentorship programs. Schools also have networks that use graduates and friends of the school to help find students positions in the workplace and offer mentorship. Veteran organizations are also useful in building network connections. The development of contacts with these organizations will benefit the placement and development of Veterans. Networks reduce the flood of information a potential employer faces, and help vet candidates. Networks are “trusted” by both the candidates and employers.

Job Fairs

Job Fairs are useful to both the employer and the prospective employee. Job fairs that are posted in terms of the nature of work represented at the fair are more effective, as prospective employees can better focus their job searches and resumes to the opportunities. It also helps the employer by narrowing the attendees to those who are truly interested.

Recruiters, Employment Agencies, and Web-based services

Employers and recruiters search for candidates through advertising, which is conducted in trade magazines, newspapers, through the internet, the radio, and television. They also use social networks to look for talent. Commercial websites can act as employment facilitators and job posting sites.

Some civilian web sites that may be of use to the Veteran are:

- MilSpouse.org is a resource for military spouses;
- Military OneSource (<http://www.militaryonesource.com>);
- Job sites (Career Builder, Monster, The Riley Guide, Career Magazine, Career Journal, College Recruiter, Computer Jobs.com, and www.coolworks.com)
- On-line newspaper classified postings.

2 c. EXISTING PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

There are a myriad of products and services available to veterans and their families to assist in the transition from active service to civilian life (as well as all veterans regardless of when they were discharged from active service.) Federal, state and local governments fund programs that provide an array of services from career counseling and resume writing to job boards. Business and industry is largely committed to providing the veteran with the best possible career options that are mutually beneficial to the veteran and to the organization. We have divided these products and services into three major categories: Educational and Training Services, Placement Services, and Technology (Support) Services.

Educational and Training Services

In researching the availability of training, education, and retooling opportunities available to veterans and disabled veterans, the Tiger Team divided the information into major categories. In each major category listed below, there are a number of offerings in a broad spectrum of subject areas, including professional, technical, and administrative fields. To best categorize these offerings, we used the following categories:

- Federal Programs
- Military Programs (although this is part of the Federal category, we addressed this significant category separately)
- Virginia State Programs
- Other State Programs (Benchmarks)
- Not-for-Profit Organizations
- Veterans Services Organizations
- Colleges and Universities
- Trade Schools
- Industry Sponsored Programs

In the following pages, we provide a representative sampling of the opportunities in each category. The offerings are so numerous, however, that the ability to provide a comprehensive listing is nearly impossible. Access is a significant issue, and one that speaks to the charter of this Task Force. For a veteran, or a disabled veteran, to find the program that best suits his or her specific needs is a daunting task. Some organizations are available to help narrow the search (such as the military TAP programs) but almost no program provides individually assigned counselors who work with each veteran to weigh and decide what program is best, assist in clearing the financial hurdles, and help the veteran think through the myriad of associated issues unique to each veteran when enrolling in a training or education program. Such issues may include work/school balance, family member support, transportation and living arrangements, subsistence for full time students, and follow on job placement.

Training Programs Currently Available for Vets and Disabled Vets

Federal Programs

The following are examples of Federal Programs that are designed for, or include training availability for veterans.

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) does not have a training program geared specifically for veterans; however, they do serve as the focal point and management entity for a number of adult education and training programs that veterans can utilize. Several of these programs are addressed throughout this report. All DOL programs are required to provide priority of service to veterans.

Employment and Training Administration (ETA) provides funds through the Workforce Investment Act that can be accessed by adults 18 years of age and older for possible training opportunities through their One-Stop Career Centers. The One-Stop Centers are locally managed with federal and state funding support beyond WIA. Virginia has several regionally located One-Stop Centers. Statewide oversight is provided by the Virginia Community college System. .

DOL Registered Apprenticeship Website is part of a 70-year old DOL apprenticeship program that offers tools for employers and individuals to connect to apprenticeship funding and opportunities in a wide variety of identified high-growth industries.

Career Voyages is a joint website sponsored by DOL and the Department of Education. Career Voyages offers a broad range of opportunities, from on-the-job training, apprenticeships, associate, bachelors, and master's degrees in several industry specific career fields. The opportunities listed include:

- **Advanced Manufacturing**
- **Aerospace**
- **Automotive**
- **Construction**
- **Financial Services**
- **Energy**
- **Health Care**
- **Homeland Security**
- **Hospitality**
- **Retail**
- **Information Technology**
- **Transportation**
- **Biotechnology**
- **Geospatial Technology**
- **Nanotechnology**

Each career field addressed on the website has subsets, and includes information on what is required in each area with respect to personality traits for success, training, education levels, etc. Each area also has further links to education opportunities related to the specific field, from union links, to community colleges.

Job Corps is a no-cost education and vocational training program for people between the ages of 16 and 24. It is funded by Congress and managed by the Department of Labor. High school graduates are accepted, and the chief discriminator is that the program is geared toward low-income individuals. The program is “in-residence” and teaches both technical and general workplace skills, places the individual after training, and monitors the progress of the individual through counseling and continued outreach. This program may not be for all veterans, but could be a viable option for veterans under the age of 24 with no usable skills sets and a family to support.

Veterans Administration

VA Adaptive Training Program provides training on adaptive equipment for veterans with disabilities. Although this type of training is not directly connected to placement, it provides skills basic to full functionality in the workplace.

The GI Bill is the most significant contribution made by the VA toward education and training

2008 Post 9/11 GI Bill

President Bush has signed into law the new GI Bill for veterans serving on active duty after 9/11. For veterans serving at least 26 months (or 30 days for those with a service connected disability) the VA will provide up to \$7,000 in tuition to an in-State public college, monthly housing allowance equivalent to E-5 with dependents, and up to \$1,000 annually for books and supplies. These benefits may in certain cases be transferred to the veteran’s spouse or children.

for veterans and disabled veterans. The GI Bill does not provide training programs directly; however, they do provide tuition assistance for a wide variety of training venues.

The Department of Veterans Services Work Study Program employs students at minimum wage while students attend college. Students tend to drop out of the program because they

cannot live on the wage provided. Colleges may pay the difference between the amount the VA pays and the amount the school normally pays other work-study students doing the same job, but finding is often not available.

Military Transition Programs

As a part of the military Transition Assistance Programs (TAP) and Disabled Transition Assistance programs (DTAP) DOL/VETS and its partners provide a variety of connections to training programs for transitioning active duty veterans. Military installations host TAP programs, some more robust than others. TAP provides an initial introductory program to transitioning active duty that contains a variety of subjects from finding the right training program, the right job, to resume writing and interview techniques. The TAP Program works from an Individual Transition Plan (ITP), using a DD Form 2648, in which the individual uses a checklist to annotate areas of interest. The form is then used by TAP counselors to guide the veteran to the resources best suited to achieve the expressed goals in the ITP. Transition Programs often include an office location containing access to training (and job) listings, computers, periodicals, and counselors.

Virginia State Venues

The Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) is designed to help people with disabilities find and keep a job. DRS manages a variety of programs that include training and retooling venues, including vocational training and medical interventions that help people with disabilities qualify for jobs and live more independently.

The Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitative Center (WWRC) is the first state-owned and operated comprehensive rehabilitation center in the country, and has helped over 70,000 people with disabilities prepare for entry (or re-entry) into the workforce. It was the first rehabilitation center in the nation to offer computer programmer training to people with disabilities, and established the first head trauma program in Virginia. It also offered the first computer assisted drafting training in the State.

The Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) offers a full complement of courses designed to assist people with blindness to actively participate in both educational programs and in the workplace. Courses such as “Adult Basic Education” and “College Logistics” help students to be successful in educational environments. Personal Skills training help the blind to successfully navigate daily activities including caring for their home, cooking, and working their budget.

The Virginia Employment Commission, while not offering specific training, does maintain partnerships with organizations that may offer on-the-job training and other training venues associated with specific careers.

State Council on Higher Education is not an agency that provides training or education, but rather helps policymakers, college administrators, and other concerned leaders work cooperatively to advance educational excellence. Their role would be to assist in the development of programs for veterans at higher education institutions.

Virginia Career Education Foundation (VCEF) does not provide training opportunities, but it has tools and statistical data available that can help veterans make informed decisions while searching for a career.

Virginia Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) sponsors the Virginia Registered Apprenticeship, a program designed to establish apprentice relationships with participating companies. The employer qualifies for a tax credit when actively participating in this program.

Not-for-Profit Organizations

We could find no not-for-profit organizations that offered training for veterans.

Veterans Service Organizations

We could find no veterans service organizations that provide training for veterans. Some organizations posted links to training venues already listed in this report.

Colleges and Universities

The Virginia Department of Veteran Services (<http://www.dvs.virginia.gov/>) is the State approving agency for Veterans education. It qualifies and approves post-secondary courses and programs, operating in Virginia, to determine eligibility for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs financial assistance programs to veterans, war orphans, and widows.

The Virginia National Guard (<http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/>) provides information on educational programs.

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services

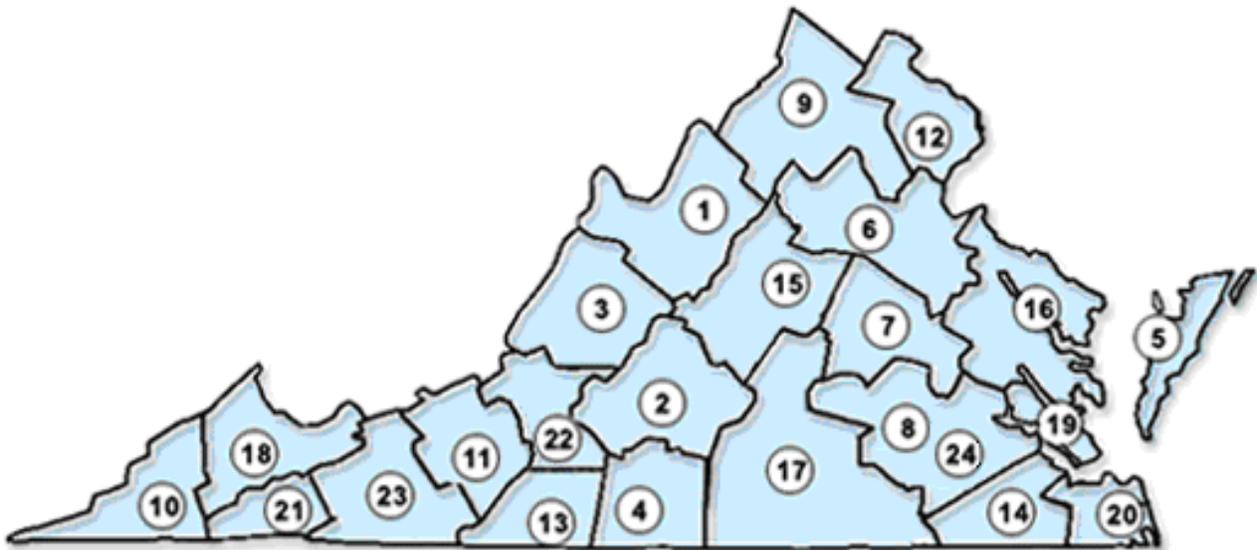
(<http://www.dvs.virginia.gov/statebenefits.htm#Education>) provides the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (MSDEP). This program provides education benefits to spouses and children of military service members killed, missing in action, taken prisoner, or who became at least 90 percent disabled as a result of military service in an armed conflict. This program may pay for tuition and fees at any Virginia state-supported college or university for up to four years. There are Virginia citizenship requirements tied to this program.

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services operates benefits service field offices across the state.

Executive Order 61

Governor Kaine issued E.O. 61, Chief Workforce Development Officer Coordination of Workforce Development and Accountability, Cross-Cabinet Collaboration and the Role of the Virginia Community College System, this year. The Order, among other provisions, transfers oversight of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and associated One-Stop Centers from the Virginia Employment Commission to the Virginia Community College System (VCCS).

Virginia has 24 community colleges that provide on-going education, which both active duty service members and veterans utilize. These schools are well dispersed across the state. The illustration below shows the location of the state’s community colleges – as can be seen; their number and broad disbursement may make them a tremendous resource for our solution(s).



- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Blue Ridge Community College | 13. Patrick Henry Community College |
| 2. Central Virginia Community College | 14. Paul D. Camp Community College |
| 3. Dabney S. Lancaster Community College | 15. Piedmont Virginia Community College |
| 4. Danville Community College | 16. Rappahannock Community College |
| 5. Eastern Shore Community College | 17. Southside Virginia Community College |
| 6. Germanna Community College | 18. Southwest Virginia Community College |
| 7. J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College | 19. Thomas Nelson Community College |
| 8. John Tyler Community College | 20. Tidewater Community College |
| 9. Lord Fairfax Community College | 21. Virginia Highlands Community College |
| 10. Mountain Empire Community College | 22. Virginia Western Community College |
| 11. New River Community College | 23. Wytheville Community College |
| 12. Northern Virginia Community College | 24. Richard Bland Community College |

Artwork is modified from original at Virginia's Community Colleges (<http://www.vccs.edu/>)

Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Consortium colleges and universities (<http://www.soc.aascu.org/>) help service members and their families get college degrees. Courses are offered to military students in their off-duty hours on or near military installations and on Navy ships. The consortium is nationwide and a number of Virginia schools participate.

Virginia SOC Participants	
Argosy University/Washington, DC	Lord Fairfax Community College
Art Institute of Washington	Marymount University National College
Averett University Blue Ridge Community College	New River Community College Norfolk State University
Bluefield College	Northern Virginia Community College
Bryant & Stratton College - Virginia Beach	Old Dominion University
Central Virginia Community College	Patrick Henry Community College
Dabney S. Lancaster Community College	Paul D. Camp Community College
DeVry University - Crystal City Campus	Piedmont Virginia Community College
DeVry University - Tysons Corner	Regent University Richard Bland College
Eastern Shore Community College	Southside Virginia Community College
ECPI College of Technology	Southwest Virginia Community College
George Mason University - Bachelor of Individualized Study	Stratford University
Germanna Community College	Thomas Nelson Community College
Hampton University - College of Continuing Education	Tidewater Community College
ITT Technical Institute - Chantilly	University of Management and Technology
ITT Technical Institute - Norfolk	University of Virginia's College at Wise
ITT Technical Institute - Richmond	Virginia Intermont College
ITT Technical Institute - Springfield	Virginia State University - Bachelor of Individualized Studies
J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College	Virginia Western Community College
James Madison University - Adult Degree Program	World College
John Tyler Community College	Wytheville Community College
Liberty University - Distance Learning Program	

Many of these SOC schools are also part of the Virginia Community College program. The SOC program starts while the service member is still in uniform, and then the local schools take over when the service member departs the military. The service member may also pursue an education while serving in uniform on active duty, and as a Guard member or Reservist. Currently there is no coordination between active service education and intermediate or post service education programs, outside of individual effort by the service member and the school or schools that have been attended.

Colleges in the Peninsula region have several manufacturers as well as several allied health employers seeking exiting military in advanced positions. At this writing discussions are underway with Canon and Riverside to develop certificates that target exiting military.

The NVCC has managed a disabled Vet On-line Call Center program for the past two years that has been very successful. They have partnered with the VA and the Purple Heart Association for

access to the Veteran population. There is a current effort underway to develop an in-house (NOVA Distant Learning) on-line Help Desk program for spouses of disabled veterans.

Northern Virginia has established an education and training program specifically for veterans who start their own businesses within Region III, called E² = Opportunity. This program for entrepreneurial development is based on partnerships with small business owners, chambers of commerce, workforce development boards, state and federal procurement officials, and business mentors.

A Certificate Program for Job-Specific Studies is under consideration. The premise is to create certificate programs with basic refresher courses in math, English, speech and technology to respond to the needs of specific employers and positions. These certificates could be completed while the veteran is employed at the specific worksite for which the certificate is designed.

Trade Schools

There are many trade schools throughout the country that accept tuition via the GI Bill. Trade schools include programs designed to help veterans become certified in a trade, such as electrical technician, auto mechanic, heavy equipment operator, pipe-fitter, etc.

Commercial/Industry Training Programs

Many businesses offer preferential hiring for veterans, and many offer on-the-job training programs associated with their job offers to veterans. There are a few companies who specifically hire veterans and/or disabled veterans with the intent of training them to fill positions. One such company, located in Virginia, is TecAccess.

TecAccess is an SBA 8(a) certified, small disadvantaged business (SDB). A Virginia SWAM woman-owned company with international reach, TecAccess is a leading employer of veterans with disabilities. TecAccess' award-winning DVET program is designed to ensure that veterans receive the support, job training and recognition they have heard through service and sacrifice. The DVET initiative is driven by the dynamic teaming of public and private partners. This first-of-its-kind program uses a telecommuting model so that returning soldiers can participate in training from their home, business, rehabilitation facility or hospital bed. DVET implements Assistive Technology (AT), such as screen readers and voice activated controls, for unique training opportunities for disabled veterans.

Conclusions

Currently there are a number of federally sponsored training programs that, while not specifically designed for veterans, are available for veterans to use. The state has several organizations that assist with policy making and statistical data with regard to formal education and workforce training. Community colleges, and state universities and colleges are abundant, and while not offering veteran-specific programs, accept tuition from the various GI Bills, and active duty tuition assistance. Trade schools exist in the Commonwealth; some have become qualified to accept GI Bill and tuition assistance. Lastly, the publication of E.O. 61 provides opportunities for the creative provision of educational and workforce development solutions to veterans.

Placement Services

Federal-state agreements and relationships

The U.S. Department of Labor (DoL) and the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) operate under a number of agreements pursuant to PL 107-288, the Jobs for Vets Act. The following is a summary of the major agreements that are currently in place.

The U.S. DoL, Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) offers employment and training services to eligible veterans through a non-competitive, "Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program". Under this grant program, State Workforce Agencies receive funds directly proportionate to the number of veterans seeking employment within their state. The grants support two principal staff positions: Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPs) and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs).

This grant provides funds exclusively for veterans, other eligible persons, transitioning service members, their spouses and, indirectly, employers. The grant also gives the state the flexibility to determine the most effective and efficient distribution of staff resources based upon the distinct roles and responsibilities of the two positions.

DVOP and LVER staff provide services to all veterans that Title 38 indicates are eligible for their services. Their efforts are concentrated, according to their respective roles and responsibilities, on outreach and the provision and facilitation of direct client services to those identified as most in need of intensive employment and training assistance. DVOP and LVER staff, through outreach with employers, develop increased hiring opportunities within the local work force by raising the awareness of employers to the availability and the benefit of hiring veterans.

DVOP specialists provide intensive services to meet the employment needs of disabled veterans and other eligible veterans, with the maximum emphasis directed toward serving those who are economically or educationally disadvantaged, including homeless veterans, and veterans with barriers to employment. DVOP specialists actively engage in outreach efforts to increase program participation among those with the greatest barriers to employment. This effort may include but is not limited to: outplacement in Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program offices and DVA Medical Centers; routine site visits to Veterans' Service Organization meetings, Native American Trust Territories, Military installations, and, other areas of known concentrations of veterans or transitioning service members. The case management approach, taught by the National Veterans' Training Institute, is an accepted method to use when providing vocational guidance or related services to eligible veterans identified as needing intensive services.

LVERs conduct outreach to employers and engage in advocacy efforts with hiring executives to increase employment opportunities for veterans, encourage the hiring of disabled veterans, and generally assist veterans to gain and retain employment. LVER staff conducts seminars for employers and job search workshops for veterans seeking employment, and facilitate priority of service concerning employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans by all staff of the employment service delivery system. To meet the specific needs of veterans, particularly veterans with barriers to employment, DVOP and LVER staff are thoroughly familiar with the full range of job development services and training programs available at the State Workforce Agency One-Stop Career Centers and Department of Veterans' Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program locations. Applications for funds under the Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program are only accepted from the designated administrative entity that operates the employment service delivery system within the state.

A number of programs are a result of the federal/state agreements, including the Transition Assistance Program and agreements under VA Employment and Training Component, Chapter 31—reemployment for disabled veterans. Agreements exist with the Regional VA offices in Roanoke and DC. The Virginia Employment Commission has relationships with employers all over the Commonwealth, particularly those that are on mandatory lists for federal contracts.

The Virginia Workforce Connection, Virginia Employment Commission

www.vawc.virginia.gov:

The VEC Workforce Connections Systems is an interactive web-based comprehensive source of information for both employers and prospective employees. It is designed to improve the information exchange for users. The website facilitates greater opportunity for job placement by providing military friendly employer a means to connect directly with veterans, and provides veterans' access to military friendly employers who would otherwise be unknown to the veteran.

Virginia Workforce Network Policy on Priority of Services for Veterans

On August 14, 2007, Daniel G. LeBlanc, Senior Advisor to the Governor for Workforce, and Dolores A. Esser, Commissioner, Virginia Employment Commission issued a bulletin to all Virginia Workforce Network Agencies detailing the Virginia Workforce Network (VWN) policy on providing priority of service for U.S. military veterans.

The policy states that Virginia's One-Stop System (described in detail in the next section) will continue to provide universal access to employment, training, and related services for veterans and covered individuals.

The policy is clear that veterans must be given priority in program participation if they meet that program's eligibility requirements. "It is the responsibility of every staff member, not just

[the DVOPs and LVERs] to ensure that U.S. Veterans are given priority of service in all employment and training services delivered in any VWN location.”

The policy defines veterans and eligible persons as follows:

1. Veteran as defined by U.S.C. Title 38:
 - a. Served on active duty for more than 180 days and was discharged with other than a dishonorable discharge;
 - b. Was discharged (regardless of length of service) because of a service-connected disability; or
 - c. Was a member of a Guard or Reserve Unit, called to active duty during a war (regardless of the length of time served) or in an operation where a campaign badge was authorized and was discharged with other than a dishonorable discharge.
2. Spouse of any of the following individuals:
 - a. A veteran who died of a service-connected disability;
 - b. Any member of the armed forces listed as missing for more than ninety days;
 - c. Any member of the armed forces forcibly detained by a foreign government or power for more than ninety days; or
 - d. Any veteran who died while a disability so evaluated was in existence.

One-Stop Career Center

One-Stop Centers bring together employment and training program services to work with all people in one place and to make it easier for job seekers and employers to use these services. One-Stop Centers are part of Virginia’s Workforce Network and are a critical component of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) signed in 1998. This law has several main principles that influence services.

- **Universal Access.** Any individual should be able to go into a One-Stop and receive services called core services, to assist in making decisions about what career to pursue and in the actual job search.
- **Streamlining services.** Employment and training programs for all people should be brought together, and be easily accessible via One-Stop Centers.
- **Increased accountability.** The One-Stop system is being evaluated based on how many people get jobs and the satisfaction of the customers.
- **Empowering individuals.** Customers should be given more information about services in order to make informed choices and have more control of their services.
- **State and local flexibility.** Local One-Stop systems can set up services in different ways to respond to the needs of their local community.

Everyone, including veterans, is eligible to use services provided by the One-Stop system. There are three levels of services available and customers can move from one level of service to the next depending on their needs. The first level of service, called core services, is usually self-directed. Core services include intake and orientation, work skills exploration, resource library services, job search and training resources, internet access, resume development, networking skills development, etc. For individuals who try core services but have not become employed, intensive services may be available, if the One-Stop Center determines that core services are not sufficient to obtain employment. Intensive services include comprehensive skills assessment, individual employment and career planning, customized screening and assessment, intensive career counseling, and case management. Training services are available to individuals who meet eligibility criteria, and have used core and intensive services, but still are unemployed. Training services include occupational skills training, on the job training, job readiness training, adult education and literacy, and customized training for employers. Additionally, support services may be provided to people receiving any service, so that the services an individual receives are effective.

Services are also provided to employers, such as assistance in finding qualified workers, labor exchange, interview facilities, state and/or federally generated Labor Market Information (LMI), state and /or federally generated information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), information on and referral to business start-up, retention and expansion services, information on and referral to sources for developing customized training programs, information on and referral to career preparation activities, rapid response to mass layoffs and plant closings, information about training incentives, such as, on-the-job training programs (based on worker eligibility) and state and/or federally generated information on tax credits for new hires.

Required One-Stop Partner Program Services

The One-Stop delivery system must include at least one comprehensive physical center in each local area that must provide the core services specified in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and must provide access to other programs and activities carried out by the One-Stop partners. Such programs include access and referral to:

- Title I WIA programs
- Wagner-Peyser
- Title II Adult Education & Literacy Activities
- Parts A & B of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Title V Senior community service employment activities
- Postsecondary vocational education activities under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act.
- Trade Adjustment Assistance and NAFTA Transitional Activities
- Veterans' employment representatives and disabled veterans outreach programs.
- Community Services Block Grant employment and training activities

- Department of Housing and Urban Development employment and training activities
- Unemployment compensation programs
- TANF & Food Stamps Employment and Training programs

The Wounded Veterans Internship Program, Virginia Department of Transportation:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds the Wounded Veterans Internship Program initiated by the Virginia Department of Transportation. The first wounded veteran intern was enrolled in the program on March 5, 2007. VDOT expects internships to last between 6 and 18 months. As of February 19, 2008 there were 19 enrollments; with a maximum number of enrollments allowed at 23. To date the program has accomplished the following:

- Four (4) Wounded Veterans have graduated from the program:
- Two accepted full-time positions in the private sector
- One was promoted to a full-time position with VDOT
- One returned to college on a full-time basis

Wounded Veterans are recruited at Job Fairs and by referrals from VEC Veterans Representatives, Department of Veterans Services, VA Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, veterans, and others. VDOT also reviews the resumes of Wounded Veterans for a possible placement at a VDOT facility near their residence. VDOT designs Internship positions to meet the desires of the Wounded Veterans. Wounded Veterans receive assistance from VDOT in seeking full-time positions within VDOT, other state agencies, or the private sector.

A Best Practice: Partnership between the Wounded Veterans Internship Program and Colonial Williamsburg:

A unique partnership has been established between VDOT and Colonial Williamsburg to provide jobs with Colonial Williamsburg for individuals trained in the Internship Program.

The Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts

The Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts operated in conjunction with the Workforce Development program is a pilot program targeting active duty military spouses who are looking for a “portable” career. Military spouses must often relocate and change jobs due to the military requirements. This program assists spouses interested in developing portable careers, and reduces the difficulty of changing careers by providing training and support in career areas common to most locations.

Employment for Spouses of Disabled Veterans

If a veteran is 100% disabled the spouse can use the spousal preference for employment to gain employment preferences with the federal and state government. However, if the disability is less than 100%, the spousal preference does not transfer and potential employers have no direct hiring authority. The 30% compensable hiring authority is set by federal statute and should be considered for modification to allow transfer to a spouse or primary caregiver.

Recommendations for Consideration and Further Review:

Recommendations to expand the services of the One-Stop Centers to include veteran-specific employment services and referral to other services for veterans and their families.

- Establish one point of entry.
- Establish an infrastructure of support for interagency collaboration.
- Facilitate connections between businesses/employers and veterans seeking employment.
- Demonstrate the Virginia Workforce Connection (VWC) and market it to employers and veterans.
- Disseminate information to veterans and their families about existing opportunities.
- Continuous review of job programs and training/education venues for inclusion in program (best practice reviews).
- Consider the inclusion of job coaching services for employees with disabilities.
- Establish ways to provide support to employers willing to hire veterans with PTSD or TBI.
- Provide for the education of employers who are willing to hire veterans with PTSD or TBI on dealing with associated issues/risks in the workplace.
- Provide education for supervisors in supporting employees with physical or cognitive disabilities, and training for employees to work with and support employees with disabilities.
- Provide information and training for employers on how to connect with appropriate community services.
- Determine ways to find and prep veterans without degrading the rapid-fill requirements of many employers.
- Research how government contractors find employees for awarded contracts so quickly – use as a possible model.
- Consider as part of the marketing strategy a campaign to advertise on Armed Forces Network, public television, local news channels, Virginia magazines and publications.

Conclusions

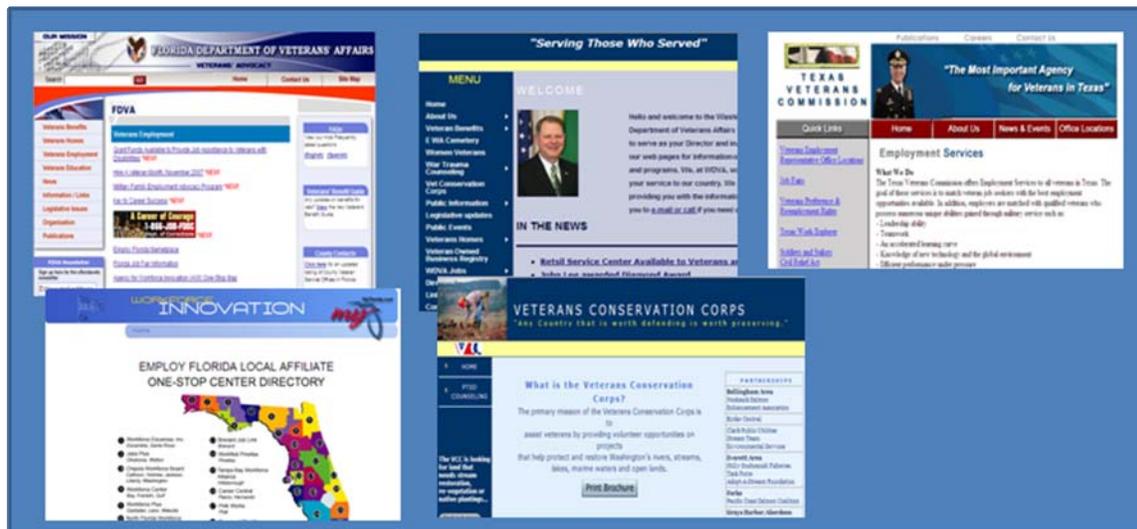
Federal mandates, funding, and programs collaborate with state agencies to provide a good foundation for placement services. The fact that state operated agencies such as the One-Stop Centers already have a funding source is a great benefit to our needs. A great deal has already been accomplished by these entities. If these programs could be further enhanced by collaborative arrangements with a number of other available resources, such as private companies, trade schools and other organizations, and well as a robust marketing program, they may serve as a viable part of our recommended solution.

Technology and Accessibility Services

Each state has a website associated with its Department of Veterans Services. Additionally, there are many federal websites, not-for-profit organizational websites, and commercial websites that offer a range of services for workforce development targeted specifically for veterans. There are hundreds of websites available. Some link to each other in collaborative arrangements. Some offer job and resume searches, and others offer news articles and links to other informational sites. Each military service branch has veteran-specific information, such as pay and finance, healthcare access, and other information, although these sites cater to veterans who still hold DoD identification cards. The following is a summary of the types of websites found.

State Venues

Each state has a veterans services organization of some type. Some are more robust than others, and the range of offerings is very broad. All of these sites at a minimum provide links to the Federal websites mentioned in this report, and to the state's Employment Commission. (For many states this is the extent of the services on the site.) Some sites have very comprehensive veterans services programs that include considerable information and extend their capabilities through links to other organizations. Of particular note during our search were the states of Washington, Texas, and Florida, all of which had excellent veterans' services websites. By comparison, Virginia's Department of Veterans Services has a very robust site as well.



A common characteristic of the state sites, is that not much of the information on the site is actually “owned” by the organization. Rather, the sites most often contain links to other

sites. The general result with respect to the user is a journey through many links, which can become quite daunting.

Federal Venues

The three primary Federal sites that address Veterans and prospective jobs are the Dept of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Labor, and the Office of Personnel Management. The Department of Veterans Affairs offers job search information only for jobs within the VA, but does offer information about entitlements, to include employment entitlements. The VA also has a portal for veteran entrepreneurs.

The Dept of Labor, in response to the Workforce Investment Act, has created and funds a job search engine called “Hire Vets First”, www.hirevetsfirst.gov. This website is available nation-wide, and includes pages for both employers and for job-seeking veterans. It also offers information on job fairs, resume writing, and other areas.



The Office of Personnel Management sponsors a Federal Jobs search engine called “USAJobs”, www.usajobs.gov, which provides access/application services for Federal government jobs, which include a veteran’s preference feature. All Departments and Agencies in the Federal Government post their position openings on this site.

In a unique partnership between the Veterans Administration and the commercial job search website Monster, a new website has been created to help disabled veterans and employers connect. The site is called Monster Government Solutions. Under their agreement, Monster and the VA’s Center for Veterans Enterprise allow veteran-owned small businesses to post job openings for veterans, including service-disabled veterans at a discounted rate. Job postings will remain active for 60 days, twice as long as for other employers. The program will enable employers to find qualified veterans as well as veteran suppliers and service contractors.

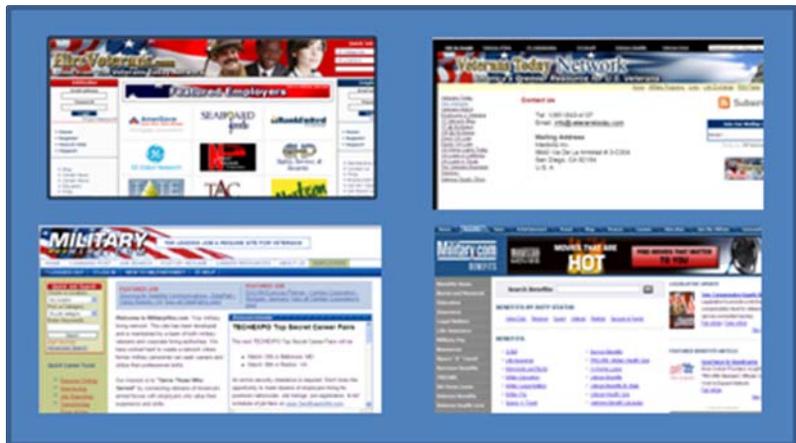


Non-Government Venues

The non-governmental sites we researched were of two basic categories – “.org” sites, and “.com” sites. The “.org” sites included veterans’ organizations and non-profit organizations, such as “Helmets to Hardhats”, a federally funded program for matching transitioning veterans to commercial construction, or “Hire Heroes USA”, dedicated to placing returning veterans with disabilities, and operated entirely through private and corporate donations. These sites have varying forms of job search engines, and include both employer entry as well as veteran entry. “Helmets to Hardhats” offers the direct translation of military skills against available positions. Unions advertise on this site as well.

Other “.org” sites include the traditional veterans support organizations, such as AMVETS, American Legion, Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Veterans of Foreign Wars, (VFW), National Native American Veterans Association, and many others. Most of these sites do not feature employment opportunities, although they offer a broad range of other types of assistance to their members. Some do contain links that take the vet to other job search engines.

As is probably not surprising, the most robust sites for veteran job seekers can be found among the “.com” websites. These commercial sites include, “Military.com” www.military.com, Veterans Today Network, www.veteranstodaynetwork.com, and “Military Hire.com”, www.militaryhire.com and Transition Assistance Online, www.taonline.com. These sites offer targeted job searching opportunities and tools. Transition centers, blogs, resume writing tips, interviewing tips, skills translators, and salary calculators are some of the types of information to be found on these sites.



Initial Assessment of Single Point of Access Theory

The overall assessment of technology and accessibility is that there is a flood of information and assistance available through technology sources, through government, non-profit, and commercially sponsored websites. The majority of government and non-profit sites are fairly flat in that they offer basic links to other sites. The commercially available sites offer the most robust services, including job search engines, blogs, application forms for a variety of services, training sessions, and other active tools.

There are so many links and threads that it could be overwhelming for a veteran to wade through all the material available without getting lost. The overwhelming amount of information can be even more staggering for those wounded veterans whose injuries make it difficult to concentrate or to search for extended hours on the internet. Additionally, many of the sites have a focus or theme, meaning a veteran could miss an ideal opportunity because the site only targets a segment of the veteran population.

After much consideration, the notion of a single, robust point of access for Virginia veterans, sponsored by the state and including government and industry jobs, training opportunities, mentorship, and other pertinent features would be an ideal way to bring the myriad of service offerings under one umbrella. If the site could do much of the work for the veteran as well, narrowing the fields based upon an initial questionnaire, it would have a definite advantage for veterans the other sites don't offer.

Best In Class Sites

There were two sites that stood out among all the sites we examined. One site was previously mentioned in this report – Military.Com. This site is very comprehensive and offers a wealth of information for both employers and veterans, from legislation, to trends, to workshops. It also has a job search engine where employers can post job offerings, and vets can search for positions.

We reserved the other “best in class” website for last. Virginia launched a website in November, called “Virginia Workforce Connection”, www.vawc.virginia.gov. This site is a robust job search engine, which has features for employers, job seekers, labor market information and the Virginia Workforce Centers. It has added a Veterans Services section to its offerings as well. There are several good features about this site. It actually reserves job postings for veterans only for the first 48 hours they are posted. It also has reporting features on the back end to keep track of service statistics. It does not contain other types of information we found at some sites, like Military.com, but it could be configured to do so.

This site currently receives federal funding through WIA. It is commercially developed, using proprietary COTS software and the company offers a modular purchasing system – modules could be added as needed. It is not known at this point whether the company would develop some custom areas/features on the site, but is worth further examination. This site may be the basis of a very comprehensive veteran job search site shared by VEC and DVS.

VIRGINIA WORKFORCE CONNECTION VaWorkConnect.com

"Your doorway to employment and labor market information in Virginia"

- Comprehensive job matching between job seekers and employers
- Finding information on that perfect job; wage data, skill requirements, as well as industry and occupational trends
- Information on potential training opportunities

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Employers: Job Seekers:

EMPLOYER

- > [Post a Job](#)
- > [Unemployment Insurance](#)
- > [Education and Training](#)
- > [File / iReq Employer Tax Filing New Registration](#)
- > [WARN/Rapid Response Information](#)
- > [More Services](#)

JOB SEEKER

- > [Create a Resume](#)
- > [Education and Training](#)
- > [Career Information](#)
- > [Unemployment Insurance](#)
- > [More Services](#)

VETERAN SERVICES

- > [Hire Vets First](#)
- > [Helmets to Hardhats](#)
- > [Transition Assistance](#)
- > [Troops to Teachers](#)
- > [More Services](#)

2 d. OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE SERVICES

The volume and range of data collected and analyzed by the Taskforce was tremendous. The Tiger Teams not only compiled information on the current status of the focus area they were assigned, they recorded immediate and obvious ways to improve the level of service with respect to workforce development for veterans. Without attempting to put these observations in any priority (this will be addressed in Section 3, Recommended Solutions) we have recorded the observations made in each major category, or focus area. Some teams, while assessing the information in their assigned area, saw improvement opportunities from other assigned areas that would positively impact the overall level of service to our veterans. To the greatest extent possible, we have consolidated here the improvement opportunities by focus area.

Veteran Demographics:

The veteran demographics we studied had some inherent flaws based upon initial data collection. In some cases, sample sets cannot be proven to be representative of the population. For example, VEC employment statistics are based upon two basic factors: they are a reflection of those veterans who self-identify as veterans, and are based upon those who register for assistance. There is no current mandate that veterans must indicate on any form whether they are in fact a veteran. While it is logical they would, there are probably some who did not “check the box” when registering at the VEC. This probably skews the data slightly. More importantly, however, are the number of veterans who never check in with the VEC or collect unemployment. Many veterans rely on their own network to find jobs – among their own former peers. Thus, we don’t know the true number of veterans who are seeking employment in Virginia. Often they rely on resume search engines, like Monster (who no longer spotlights veterans), or recruiters, particularly in IT, security, and healthcare fields. Another flaw in statistical analysis in this area lies in the definition of targeted populations (and their representative samples), which varies among Federal and state organizations. There are a few ways we can improve the accuracy of statistics and the quality of recommendations derived from them:

- The VEC could include a required/mandatory field in the VEC application, to identify veteran status.
- The VEC could receive monthly or quarterly reports from military installations (or a consolidated entity such as a headquarters personnel organization) of those transitioning veterans who declare Virginia their legal residence, and those who have requested their personal goods to be moved to Virginia.
- The VEC could receive a list of veterans discharged from regional hospitals but remaining in the Virginia area for long term outpatient care.
- Virginia state tax forms could be modified to include a “veteran” check box, and statistics could be collected from the Commissioner of the Revenue

- TAP, One-Stop, and the VEC could be collocated at every Community College throughout the state, and utilize a standardized data collection system.
- Employers could submit quarterly statistics compiled by their Human Resources departments of those employees who are veterans, along with how long they have been employed (for retention statistics).

(Note: these suggestions have not been vetted by this taskforce for feasibility or for the level to which they could improve the quality of services provided by the Commonwealth. To determine the value of each of these suggestions, a data collection/survey process may be warranted.)

Employer Demographics:

There is currently a wealth of employment opportunities of many types available to veterans within the Commonwealth of Virginia. With the largest number of those being government jobs, there are several opportunities for improvement through government programs. Some, such as establishing a hiring preference for veterans that mirrors the federal government, or instituting a tax incentive for companies who have a formal hiring preference policy, will require legislation. Others, such as establishing Memorandums of Understanding between government entities to combine services, or between the state and not-for-profits to provide one-on-one employment counseling or mentoring programs, can be explored. Below are our observations:

- Create/pass legislation establishing a “point system” for giving veterans a hiring preference for state jobs similar or identical to the federal policy.
- Create/pass legislation to provide a tax incentive for companies who institute (and utilize) a formal veteran hiring preference system.
- Develop a shared government job board to increase veteran hires across levels of government (federal, state, local) and across agencies within each level.
- Develop industry networking and mentoring programs associated directly with this effort. Consolidate existing industry job networks.
- Develop a Veteran-Owned Small Business network for entrepreneurs using existing models
- Enlist unions, schools and veterans organizations to contribute to networking and mentoring programs
- Offer business start-up incentives to GWOT veterans, with training and education in starting small businesses
- Meet with State FHWA Administrator to explore opportunities for veteran owned small businesses (now by law part of SWAM) to be considered during the bidding process for state highway construction projects.
- Review the Enterprise Zone credit in Virginia and consider the addition of a credit for hiring disabled veterans.

- Consider the development of mentoring programs for veteran- owned small businesses. Look at sole-sourcing. Consider options similar to SWAM for veterans.

Education and Training Programs:

With the existence of VA training programs and the GI Bill, there are services available to help veterans obtain the training and/or education they need to retool their skills sets to be more competitive in industry and government.

- Offer tax incentives to industry for implementing training programs for veterans – especially GWOT vets and their families
- Search and apply for grants to fund training programs for government agencies, such as the Wounded Veterans Internship Program in VDOT.
- Use the Community Colleges partnership with One-Stop Centers as a foundation for consolidating the management of education and training opportunities – have these centers actively manage enrollment statistics and success rates for continuous improvement

Placement Strategies:

Many of the recommendations with regard to placement strategies are duplicative of the employer demographics recommendations with good reason. Both address the issue from the employer side of the equation.

- Demonstrate the Virginia Workforce Connection and market it to employers and veterans.
- Facilitate connections between businesses/employers and veterans.
- Expand the services of the One-Stop Centers to include veteran-specific employment services and referral to other services for veterans and their families.
- Review existing job programs, training, and incentives that can help veterans such as, disabled/combat wounded and their spouses. Explore training opportunities/partnerships with community colleges—existing job-training programs.
- Consider revision of the 30% compensable hiring authority for military spouses.
- Review incentives for employers to hire veterans—tax incentives—other.
- Disseminate information to veterans and their families about existing opportunities.
- Provide information to employers on how they can be active participants in the agreements with the federal/state programs.
- Recommend ways to provide support for employers to hire veterans with post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) and traumatic brain injuries (TBI).
- Provide training for employers who are willing to hire veterans with PTSD or TBI.
- Consider the provision of job coaches for employees with disabilities.

- Provide training focused on the supervision and support of employees with physical or cognitive disabilities, and on training other employees to work with and support employees with disabilities.
- Provide information and training for employers on how to connect with appropriate community services. This could be a joint effort of the Workforce Development Taskforce and the Wounded Warrior program.

Technology and Accessibility:

Technology can be the single most useful tool available to veterans, particularly GWOT veterans and those with disabilities. We can use technology to enhance the services available through TAP, VEC, and One-Stop Centers by using the internet to allow veterans access to these services remotely. Colleges and universities have been offering on-line degree programs for more than a decade. These programs can be used as models for reaching veterans who do not have the mobility (transportation, physical ability, location) to use on-site services.

- Use the Virginia Workforce Connection as a foundation for a full-service website on the scale of some commercial models, such as Military.com.
- Consolidate services of TAP, VEC and One-Stop Centers virtually through Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) between agencies.
- Under a "shared services" environment, eliminate redundant services and activities by consolidating offerings within a single website (not just links to other websites).

Budget and Legal:

Recommendations regarding budget and legal strategies are a composite of recommendations from all the Tiger Teams. As issues arose regarding placement, employer strategies, or technology, for example, those items were added to this section.

- Consider legislation to provide tax incentives for companies who hire veterans/disabled veterans.
- Consider legislation to change the Enterprise Zone credit in Virginia to add a credit for hiring disabled veterans.
- Consider adding set-aside procurement policy to Virginia's procurement system, similar to federal policy, with tracking by agency.
- Consider instituting formal mentor-protégé program credits for large businesses that mentor small veteran-owned businesses in Virginia.
- Consider entering into Memorandums of Understanding with other governments (federal and local) to combine like services and create "line of business" processes to save money.

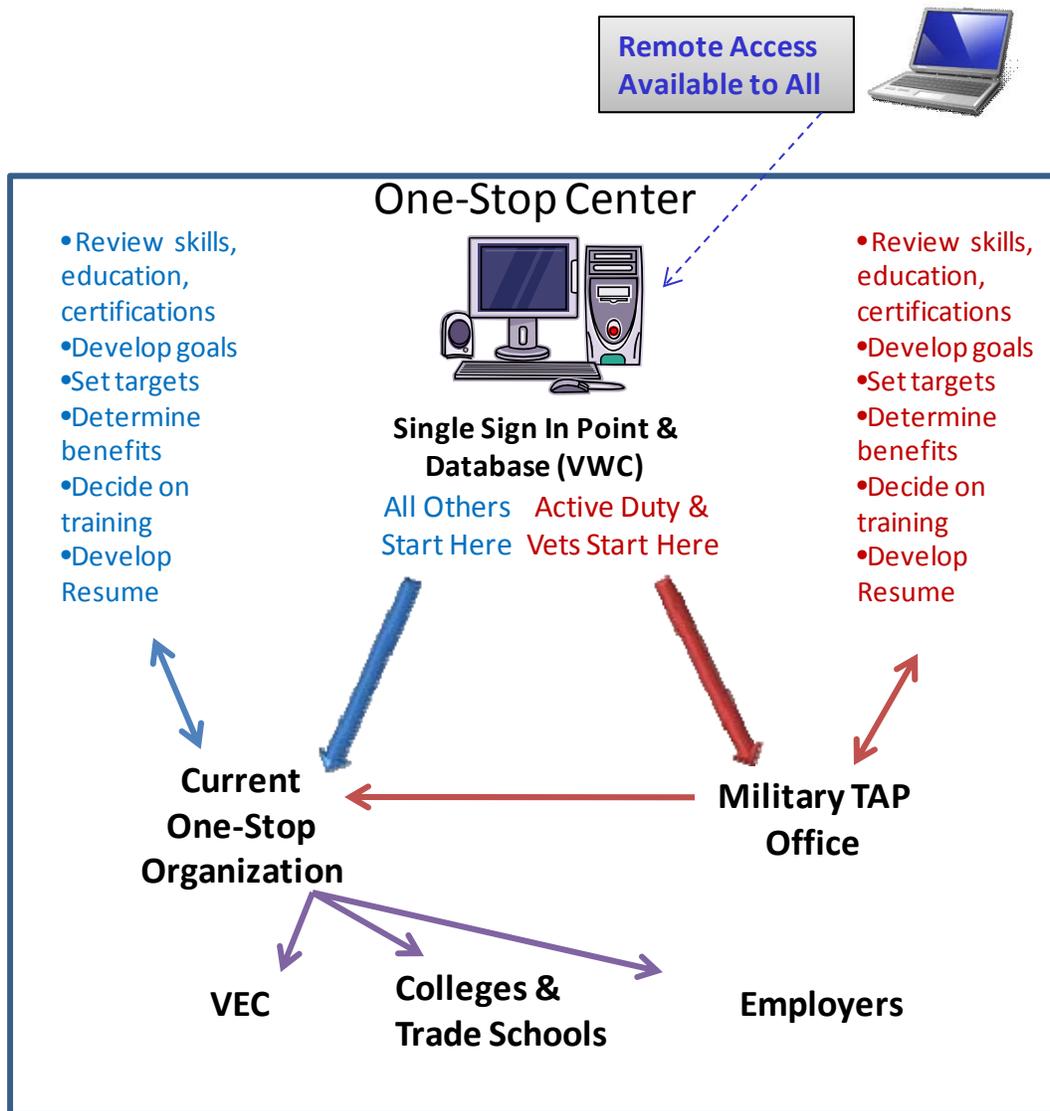
- Establish a committee to continuously look for grants and scholarships.
- Consider using funds saved through consolidation of services to upgrade and improve functionality of Virginia Workforce Connects – add veteran specific pages and services.
- Review existing federal mandates associated with state allocated funds – recommend innovations/new solutions for federal approval as a pilot program for all states to emulate.
- Consider establishing a committee to recruit grants/gifts from Virginia industry to assist veterans in retraining to industry specific skills sets (similar to college grant departments).
- Consider legislation to add a veterans “contribution” section to state tax forms, similar to election campaign contribution option on federal tax forms – funds to be used to support veterans workforce programs.
- Establish/improve system of tracking Return on Investment (ROI) for funds allocated and used.

3. RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

Our recommended solution centers around the use of resources collaboratively and to develop a centralized resource tool for veterans. We recommend a combination of a web-based tool and a physical location (such as the One-Stop Centers) that are managed as a single entity. As an example, we refer to the web-site “military.com” in which a broad range of resources are managed at a single site. We have a good foundation for this tool in the Virginia Workforce Connection website. This site has already been established and is a comprehensive job seeking website along the lines of Monster. Some of its features are excellent, and the site can be expanded through the purchase of “plug and play” standard modules. Other desired features can be custom built by the contractor. This head-start on a technical solution will save the state considerable money and time in executing an improved access solution for veterans.

The site should not be managed in isolation from the other physical service sites available to Virginia’s veterans. Currently, these face-to-face operations exist for the Virginia populace at large. The Virginia Employment Commission and One-Stop Centers are available to all, which by implication includes veterans. The military TAP offices operate independently and are available to active duty, but end when the veteran turns in his or her ID card. If these entities developed a collaborative worksite that served veterans exclusively, the existing funds may provide the majority of services in a seamless environment – the active duty serviceman (or woman) would transfer his/her needs from the TAP counselors to the One-Stop counselors without a break in service offerings. When the recommended technology tool is added, the service to veterans becomes exponentially greater.

The illustration below is a rough depiction of a possible collaborative solution. In a collaborative environment, the flow between participating agencies would be seamless – the customer would not be able to discern any difference, except in level of expertise for his or her particular needs.



This illustration depicts a centrally located facility for the VEC, One-Stop Center, and for TAP offices. By consolidating the three organizations under one roof, redundant actions can be eliminated, and the veteran can receive a seamless transition to service offerings from active duty to civilian organizations. To provide a single data repository for all three organizations, the Virginia Workforce Connection website can be used as an entry tool for both employees (including veterans) and employers. Below is an illustration of how the Virginia Workforce Connects (VWC) tool can be used in this venue.

We recommend the VWC be recast as a single point of entry tool for the new organization, with clients signing in when they visit the new consolidated facility, or on-line. The prospective

VIRGINIA WORKFORCE CONNECTION VaWorkConnect.com

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- Finding information on that perfect job; wage data, skill requirements, as well as industry and occupational trends
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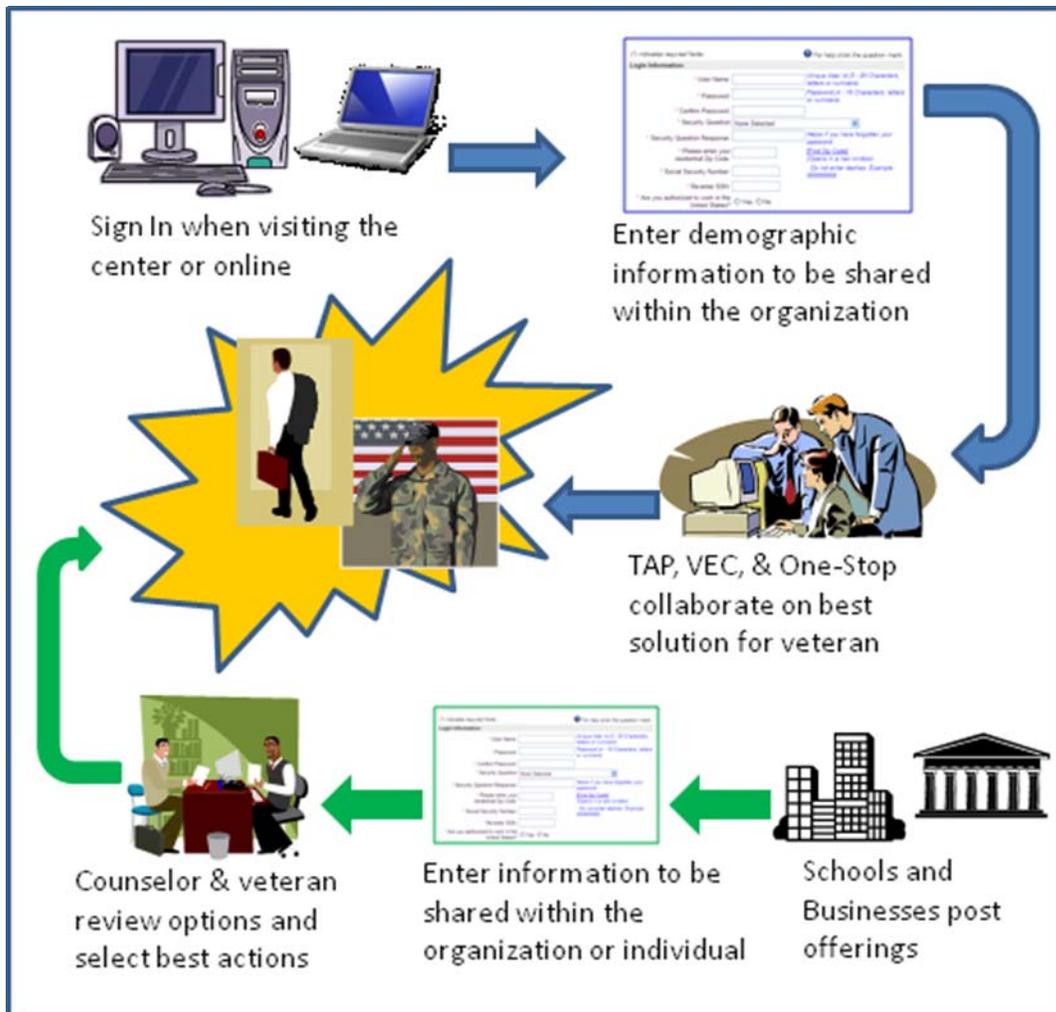
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- > [More Services](#)

VETERAN SERVICES

- > [Hire Vets First](#)
- > [Helmets to Hardhats](#)
- > [Transition Assistance](#)
- > [Troops to Teachers](#)
- > [More Services](#)

employee, regardless of status (civilian, active duty, or veteran), uses the VWC as an initial entry to the system, creating a tracking mechanism for all services. Employers and schools enter their respective information the same way. Staff from all participating organizations have equal and identical access to both the individual client information and to the opportunities available. The staff, from one or more of the inclusive organizations, can then help the prospective employee with the standard services, translating qualifications, determining eligibility for various benefits, and helping with resume building, with tangible goals in mind, based on the employer/educational opportunities.



This consolidation of the use of VWC will produce a single set of performance metrics and statistics to better manage veterans' workforce issues (in addition to the civilian populace). Many of the service statistics, being consolidated, will yield more accurate results for the purpose of future funding, staffing, and marketing:

- Total population served
- Total drawing employment benefits
- Total using veterans benefits
- Number of successful matches
- Number of employers utilizing veterans
- Number of minority or veteran employers
- Types of services used/not used
- Number of returning clients
- Types of services to returning clients

These are only a few of the possible uses – the key is that all the information will be in one accurate database.

By retooling and increasing the function of the VWC website, we realize several important benefits to the government, industry, and most importantly the veteran. The first and most obvious benefit is the elimination of redundant systems and processes, saving both time and funding. Each affected group has a distinct set of benefits as listed below:

BENEFITS OF INCREASED FUNCTIONALITY OF VIRGINIA WORKFORCE CONNECTS		
GOVERNMENT	INDUSTRY AND EDUCATIONAL ENTITIES	VETERAN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save funds by consolidating TAP & VEC/One-Stop (could be used for other improvements) • Eliminate redundant practices & service costs through collaboration • Better statistical reporting resulting in more accurate budgeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single focal point for posting job opportunities • Collaborative education and training programs • Improved statistics for targeting future requirements • Reduce costs by saving time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No “drop out” point during transition • More knowledgeable counselors • Easy access to all available opportunities • One source of answers to many types of questions • Change opportunities and/or benefits without starting over

Since the veteran could just as easily use the tool at the Center or from home, the level of assistance can be entirely up to the veteran.

There will be some challenges associated with this solution:

CHALLENGE:	MITIGATION:	RISK LEVEL:
Establishing a service agreement between federal and state organizations	Conduct a cost benefit analysis, identify responsibilities each government can assume, establish trade-off services, facility costs, equipment, etc.	Moderate
Increasing the functionality of the Virginia Workforce Connection website	Funds saved through consolidation of services can be transferred to pay for improvements. Federal and state governments can pay for portions of improvements most affecting their own organization	Low
Establishing a culture of true collaboration between the state agencies, DoD, and the VA	By collocating the services at every possible location, and by sharing services, employees will, over time, blur the lines of communication naturally and a true collaboration will exist	Low
Mounting an aggressive marketing campaign to get the word out over various mediums, within DoD and the VA	The biggest challenge in marketing is cost. By saving money through consolidation, and through aggressive and innovative resource management, dollars saved could be used within the organization for marketing and other new processes.	Moderate
Branding the new job/workforce service tool so	Through technological adjustments to the tool, and	Low

that it becomes intuitive to the veteran, potential employers, and government agencies	through smart marketing, the new tool can become a “brand name” for vets in Virginia	
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One final benefit can be added to the improvement of the VWC tool not mentioned thus far. The tool can also serve as a central knowledge repository for all information veterans need – news articles, connection to benefits applications, regulations, other federal services, links to service organizations, links to their respective military websites, legislation/legislators, and much more. For an example of a robust site, visit www.military.com.

ATTACHMENT 1: TASKFORCE TEAM MEMBERS (BY TIGER TEAM)

Taskforce Chairman: Mr. Alfredo J. Sample, Sr.

Veterans Workforce Analysis

- Bettye Simmons, BGen USA Ret (Team Lead)
- Dr. LeRoy Gross
- CW5 Eddie Whitt (for MGen Robert Newman)
- Ann Atkins
- VA Representative (Invited but did not participate)

Placement Strategies

- Vince Burgess (Team Lead)
- Senator Wagner
- Laura Loda
- Paul Hinkhouse
- Jim Cocke
- Aida Pacheco

Workforce Requirements

- Malcolm Forbes (Team Lead)
- Dan Corry
- Daniel LeBlanc
- Ed Turner
- Angela Chiang
- Jonathan Ballard

Budget and Legal Strategies

- Delegate Watts (Team Lead)
- William Mann
- Mike Gardner
- Steve Combs

Training, Education, and Retooling Strategies

- Debra Ruh (Team Lead)
- Loretta Chittum
- Peter Blake
- James Rothrock
- Martha Mead

Technology and Access Process

- Doris Thomas (Team Lead)
- Colonel Oliver Norrell (for MGen Stevenson)
- Thomas Stephen
- Preston Wilhelm
- David Simmons

