

**Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs
2012 Annual Report**



31 December 2012

Reference MSAR #s: 5564 and 5667

Executive Summary

In accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) is submitting its annual report. The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) veteran population data projections estimate that there are approximately 459,918 veterans in Maryland, as of 30 September 2012.

The main services MDVA offers to all Maryland veterans are: the availability of claims assistance through the service program; admission to our veteran's home when necessary; burial in one of our five veteran's cemeteries; and a place to honor their service at one of our three memorials.

The challenges facing Maryland Veterans as they return home from their service to our nation remain unchanged from the previous years. Severely wounded personnel, including those suffering Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress (PTS), will be a stress on the VA health and benefits systems for decades to come. This is of even greater concern in Maryland as there are high numbers of National Guard and other reserve component personnel participating in multiple deployments to overseas combat zones. At a time when the US Department of Defense (DOD) and the VA have difficulty providing timely services to many veterans in need, MDVA will continue to provide safety nets, wherever possible, in Maryland to augment and enhance needed support.

MDVA continues to collaborate with individuals, organizations, commissions and other state agencies to develop, promote and support the interests of Maryland's veterans. MDVA works in partnership with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) to support and participate in Maryland's Commitment to Veterans, the behavioral health initiative begun in October, 2008, to provide for the current needs of Maryland's veterans. MDVA works in partnership with the Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) to administer the Military Personnel and Service Disabled Veteran No-Interest Loan Program for certain small business owners. In partnership with the Motor Vehicles Department (MVA) and the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR) MDVA will receive email addresses to expand our outreach efforts to Maryland veterans.

In accordance with Maryland's College Collaboration for Student Veterans, MDVA coordinated with the higher education community to host the 2nd Annual Student Veteran Resource Provider Conference at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County on September 28th, 2012. Representatives from 39 of the state's 46 higher education institutions attended this event. The morning portion consisted of presentations on veterans benefits - specifically, the GI Bill, VA healthcare benefits, and the Veterans Retraining and Assistance Program (VRAP). The afternoon portion consisted of breakout sessions in which the participants learned and shared best practices about the following subjects: veterans employment opportunities, transferring credits from the military to civilian institutions of higher education, and support services on campus for student veterans.

Outreach & Advocacy Program

Outreach & Advocacy's (O&A) mission is to develop innovative ways to seek out and inform Maryland's veterans about benefits, services, and incentives that are available from federal, state and local agencies and solicit feedback from veterans regarding their needs for additional services.

In March 2012, the O&A Program returned to its authorized staffing level of two full-time employees. The Deputy Director position was converted to an Outreach Coordinator position. This individual joined the existing Director.

In 2012, O & A established a model of Veterans and Families Information Days, which are events that build on existing expos, fairs, and venues where Maryland veterans and their families may speak with an MDVA staff member to learn about the benefits and services offered by federal, state, local and non-profit agencies. MDVA provides answers to veterans' questions as well as referral to other state agencies. At many events, an MDVA Service Officer is available to directly assist veterans with filing claims for disability and compensation.

In 2012, we attended fifty-two (52) events and reached approximately 17,852 veterans and their family members using this model. There was no cost to MDVA for participating in these events, and no cost to the veterans and family members to attend. O&A plans to continue to pursue outreach opportunities under this model.

Outreach is also conducted through briefings and staffing of resource tables at the Maryland National Guard and U.S. Reserve Components Yellow Ribbon Reintegration events. These events are attended by service members returning from deployments that include Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation New Dawn, and Guantanamo Bay and their family members. The Yellow Ribbon Program's objectives are to educate every service member regarding the challenges of transitioning from deployment to community and family, how to address these challenges and where to connect to the service providers and resources available from various federal, state, and local agencies and non-profit organizations. The briefings place an emphasis on behavioral and physical health, employment, education, and economic issues. To further support the needs of returning veterans, O & A mailed 4,084 new veteran informational packets to returning Maryland veterans.

In early 2012, MDVA began using Constant Contact to increase the effectiveness of outbound emails and to manage our email list. The email contact list was expanded from 1,500 email addresses to over 7,500 addresses. In December 2012, MDVA received 4,328 additional email addresses from DLLR, which will be added to the existing database in January 2013. MDVA sent over 591,873 individual email messages since the implementation of the new Google email system in July. Twelve percent of these emails provided information regarding employment and training opportunities for Maryland veterans and their dependents. O & A staff responded to approximately 450 email requests during 2012.

O&A is responsible for the publication of an eight page bi-annual newsletter, *The Maryland Veteran*. The distribution of the department newsletter is approximately 45,000. The newsletter is distributed through various means: direct mail to individuals and organizations via regular mail; email

subscription list; Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn followers; distributed at events attended by MDVA staff; and is available for download from our website. It is also made available at local community centers, veteran service organizations, chambers of commerce, senior centers, public libraries, and military bases in Maryland and Washington, D.C. The current print media count is 35,000 MDVA is hoping to decrease the number of print copies while increasing the electronic distribution. Approximately 2,000 electronic copies are currently distributed. The newsletter will continue to be distributed in print to accommodate our senior veterans and those with disabilities. In addition to the newsletter, the comprehensive State Benefits & Information Guide is being updated with a new printing planned for January 2013.

O&A maintains and manages the content on the MDVA website. MDVA's website has had over 5.4 million requests during calendar year 2012 with the State Benefits and Information Guide being the most requested page. The website is changed weekly to reflect current issues of interest to Maryland veterans and to highlight offerings by other state agencies. Our site includes information regarding services available to Maryland's veterans with links to other state agencies, the VA Maryland Health Care System, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Federal and state benefits guides, our newsletters and other documents of interest are posted to the website in an effort to remotely inform as many of Maryland's veterans and their families as possible.

O&A has increased its use of social media. The Facebook page is updated with relevant postings. Because of Facebook's sharing and posting design features, each posting has the potential to reach 417,173 Facebook subscribers, a 50% increase from calendar year 2011. The MDVA Twitter account configuration has also been updated. Using "hootsuite" technology, all social media accounts are updated together and updates may be scheduled in advance. MDVA follows the Twitter accounts of other relevant federal and Maryland state agencies. This allows MDVA to provide our veteran population with updated information from these agencies

Personnel from each MDVA department have supported Outreach & Advocacy's mission by attending speaking engagements and making public appearances at multiple events in the past year. These include; Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day and Veterans Day events; Veteran Service Organization (VSO) conventions; Veterans and Families Information Days; and civic and community events.

Outreach & Advocacy Program 2012 Highlights

- Each MDVA Facebook fan page posting reaches approximately 417,173 Facebook subscribers.
- The email contact list was expanded from 1,500 email address to over 7,500 addresses. MDVA sent over 591,873 individual email messages since the implementation of the new Google email system. O & A staff responded to approximately 450 email requests during 2012.
- The MDVA website received 5,370,299 server requests during 2012.
- O&A staff had 17,852 face-to-face contacts at fifty-two events during the year.

- New veteran informational packets were mailed to 4,084 Maryland veterans.

Service Program

The Service Program provides assistance to the men and women who served in the Armed Forces of America, their dependents and survivors, and the general public, in obtaining benefits from VA, DOD, the State of Maryland and other programs for Veterans and their families. Our staff provides respectful advocacy and representation to the veterans' community, regarding earned entitlement rights to federal, state and local benefits and services for veterans and their families. Our staff provides a detailed one-on-one interview, reviewing military separation discharge documents or DD 214s. We also review previous VA rating decisions on a first come-first serve basis.

We offer the following services:

- Comprehensive benefit counseling
- Claim development, preparation & submission
- Case management
- Initiate appeals when appropriate
- Networking with federal, state and local agencies
- Public speaking and outreach events

Information & referral for the following:

- Crisis Intervention
- Public assistance & homeless services
- Social Security
- And numerous miscellaneous issues

To enhance the service MDVA staff and Service Centers are able to provide, each of the nine remote MDVA service centers obtained direct access into VA claims tracking systems. This access allows each service center to obtain claim statuses and updated information on clients we serve.

During Fiscal Year (FY), 2012 the service program made 104,423 contacts with veterans, dependents and survivors. Our clientele include those veterans who have served in World War II, into their late 80's and 90's with geriatric, Alzheimer's and dementia issues, Korean War veterans into their 80's, Vietnam veterans experiencing the effects of Agent Orange exposure and Post Traumatic Stress (PTS), and clients of recent conflicts experiencing effects of PTS and Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI). The nature of an individual contact varies greatly depending on the needs of the individual veteran, dependent or family member.

An individual contact may include a one-on-one detailed interview, reviewing military separation or discharge documents for the purpose of determining eligibility for VA programs, and claim development, preparation and submission which typically take 45-60 minutes. An individual contact can also include responding to a complex and detailed VA development letter, 15-30 minutes, providing a claim status update 10-15 minutes or a contact may be a request for information for a friend or family member 5-10 minutes.

Service program staff assisted in the submission of 4,154 disability compensation and pension claims for adjudication to VA. These claims generated \$17,372,912 in federal tax exempt monetary benefits paid to veterans in the State of Maryland. Economic studies have indicated these monies turn over between three to seven times in a community. Using the conservative multiplier of three, this equates to a spending impact of at least \$52,118,736 from monetary benefits received by veterans assisted by the MDVA Service Program. It should also be noted there is no direct correlation between claims filed and benefits received in any one particular year. Many of the claims filed this year will not be adjudicated until 2013 or 2014. MDVA currently has in excess of 5,000 claims pending for adjudication with VA.

Additionally, Maryland Veterans also received \$3,775,981 in education benefits, from various VA education programs. Service Program staff accepted representation or Power of Attorney (POA) on 1,806 new veterans during the year.

The Service Program also serves as a repository for DD 214s for Maryland veterans who have been released from active duty since October 15, 1979. The service program received and processed 11,869 DD 214s during FY 2012. In an effort to reach recently discharged veterans, the program utilizes a database to track DD 214s received. Coordinating between the Service Program and O & A the MDVA Secretary uses the addresses in the database to send new veteran packets to honorably discharged veterans.

Service Program 2012 Highlights

- All MDVA Service Centers have obtained remote access into VA claims tracking systems.
- Service Program staff made 104,423 contacts with veterans.
- Service Program staff obtained \$17,372,912 in federal tax exempt monetary benefits for veterans in the State of Maryland.
- Service Program staff processed 11,869 DD 214s.
- Service Program staff accepted representation or POA on 1,806 new veterans.
- Service Program staff submitted 4,154 disability compensation claims for adjudication to VA.
- Maryland Veterans also received \$3,775,981 in education benefits.
- Service Program staff attended over 100 veterans outreach events and provided presentations on veterans benefits.

Charlotte Hall Veterans Home

Located in St. Mary's County, Charlotte Hall Veterans Home (CHVH) is a 456 bed facility which provides assisted-living and skilled nursing care for Maryland Veterans and eligible spouses who are unable to take care of themselves due to age or disability.

The highest census for Charlotte Hall Veterans Home (CHVH), 422 residents, occurred in October 2012. Overall this year the total census numbers were slightly lower. The female population of veterans and spouses, increased this year from a January census of 29 (including 14 spouses) to 40, (including 20 spouses). The female census, overall, increased by 38%.

The first three quarters of 'percent capacity filled' are reported below with the most current available census information included:

March 2012	Total Census – 411 - 90% capacity
May 2012	Total Census – 413 - 91% capacity
September 2012	Total Census – 416 - 92% capacity
December 2012	Total Census – 411 - 90% capacity

The December 2012 Total Census includes: 261 Skilled Nursing - 91% capacity and 150 Assisted Living - 89% capacity.

The total bed capacity was adjusted last year to create a Skilled Nursing Women's Wing on the south corridor of 3A and to create dining space on the resident floors of 1B, 2B and 3B. The new total capacity is 456, of which 288 are Skilled Nursing and 168 are Assisted Living.

CHVH 2012 Highlights

CHVH Commission

During 2012, there were three new Maryland Veterans Home Commissioners. They are: LTC Glenn Parker, USAF (Ret.), Gary Knight, and Dr. Gordon Browning.

Management Changes

There was a key personnel change in Health Management Resources of Maryland, LLC (HMR), the contractor that manages CHVH. Mr. Larry Younger accepted the position of Administrator following the resignation of Mr. Steve Wynn.

Bus Donation

On Sunday, July 22nd, Past Commander Buddy Mastin of the Sons of the American Legion presented a beautiful new 16 passenger transport bus to CHVH. The bus was provided by the The Department of

Maryland - The American Legion, The Sons of The American Legion, and The American Legion Auxiliaries. The American Legion Riders provided a motorcycle escort from the Waldorf post to CHVH where 250 people gathered for the ceremony.

Emergency Generator Grant Funding

On March 5th VA Secretary Shinseki approved the CHVH grant application request for the expansion/replacement of the emergency generators. The grant amount awarded was \$3,765,184, which equals 65% of the total project cost. The project is underway with an anticipated completion date of March 17, 2013.

Electronic Medical Records/CPRS Trainer Position

In order to advance the implementation and use of the an electronic medical records system, CHVH has contracted Ms. Chris Heilmeier, RN, MSN and Captain, USAF 1995 – 1999, to fulfill the duties of trainer. Ms. Heilmeier also supports the state office with input and guidance concerning clinical issues and decisions.

Annual Volunteer Appreciation

The Annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet was held on April 18th. About 120 people attended. Secretary Chow served as Guest Speaker for the event. Individuals and groups were recognized during the program. This year CHVH has been blessed with over 11,500 hours of volunteer services.

USDVA Recognition and MD Office of Health Care Quality Surveys

The following health care quality surveys were conducted at CHVH during 2012:

- USDVA Recognition Survey was conducted July 31 – August 2, 2012
- OHCQ Assisted Living Program Survey was conducted May 9 – 11, 2012
- OHCQ Annual Medicare/Medicaid Skilled Nursing Survey was conducted October 9 – 12, 2012

CHVH Annual Open House

The annual CHVH Open House was held on November 3, 2012. This year's attendance exceeded 110 visitors. Most visitors did request tours and the Admissions department received numerous inquiries.

CHVH Veterans Day Celebrations

This was the third year that CHVH residents participated in the Veterans Day Parade in Leonardtown, MD. Secretary Chow spoke and presented the Governor's Proclamation. In addition, special remembrances and a celebration meal were conducted at the facility.

USDVA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC)

VA is moving forward with plans to construct a new Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) on the CHVH grounds. Deed searches were conducted as there were inconsistencies with ownership of designated location. The new building will be multi- story instead of a single level.

VA Mobile Vet Center

CHVH continues to provide office space for the Prince George's County Vet Center staff to schedule appointments each Thursday and Friday for veterans in the Tri-County area who do not want to travel to Camp Springs. Dr. Fred Lockard, Prince George's County Veterans Center stated appointment days are full.

Cemetery & Memorial Programs

The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs Cemetery Program maintains five (5) State veterans' cemeteries, providing a final resting place for those eligible Maryland veterans and their eligible dependents who desire this benefit. The five State Veterans Cemeteries include Crownsville in Anne Arundel County, Cheltenham in Prince George's County, Eastern Shore in Dorchester County, Garrison Forest in Baltimore County and Rocky Gap in Allegany County. The Cemetery Program also oversees a Civil War Cemetery at Rose Hill Cemetery in Hagerstown.

Since the program's inception in the mid-1970s, more than 83,000 of Maryland's veterans and their dependents have been interred at our five veterans' cemeteries. This requires the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs not only to conduct burial services, but also provide perpetual care on the ever-increasing expansion of grave sites within the system in accordance with National Cemetery Standards (NCA). Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs is a leader among the nation in State veteran's cemeteries with three out of the five cemeteries among the top ten busiest cemeteries in FY-2012 and where the State conducts the highest number of interments throughout the nation.

The facilities provide interment services during the normal business week (Monday through Friday) and are open to the public 365 days a year. The Cemetery Program maintains and operates the cemeteries, sets the eligibility requirements for burial and manages the day-to-day operations and records. There was an average of 3,257 interments annually over the past three years. The annual interment rate represents 29% of Maryland veteran's deaths.

Interment is the most important function carried out in the cemetery where we ensure the honor and dignity of our veterans and their families is performed for every interment. The operations and maintenance (perpetual care) ensure that our State Veterans Cemeteries are maintained as national shrines, dedicated to preserving the history of our nation and state, nurturing patriotism and honoring the service and sacrifice veterans and their families have made.

Cemetery Program 2012 Highlights

- The capital construction grant for Garrison Forest State Veterans Cemetery Administration & Maintenance Complex was approved by the State Cemetery Grants Program for \$4,610,970.00. Construction is about 3/4 complete with the final phase scheduled to be completed by March 2013.
- For FY 2014 two new expansion projects were submitted to the State Capital Improvements Program for Eastern Shore and Rocky Gap Cemeteries totaling more than 4.5 million dollars.
- An Operations & Maintenance Grant at Cheltenham Veterans Cemetery was approved by the State Cemetery Grants Program for \$1,712,444.00. One quarter of the project is complete.

- Crownsville Master Plan and Expansion Phase III. The legislature approved \$700,000 for design funding in FY 2013 for this project. This funding will allow us to move to the PG-1 Ranking on the State Cemetery Grants Priority List for FY 14.
- Conducted Memorial Day and Veterans Day events at all five Maryland State Veterans Cemeteries honoring the service and sacrifices of our State's veterans.
- Conducted Wreaths Across America events at all five Maryland State Veterans Cemeteries, World War II Memorial, Korean War Memorial, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial honoring the service and sacrifices of our State's veterans.

Cheltenham Veterans Cemetery

- Department of General Services (DGS) completed new heating oil tank replacement project at the administration building.

Crownsville Veterans Cemetery

- DGS has completed procurement for the outfall and construction to begin mid-December 2012.
- Began entering all records in to the National Cemetery Administrations Burial Operation Support System for Crownsville and Cheltenham. Data entry was performed by two interns.
- Purchased five new Gators – People Movers.

Eastern Shore Veterans Cemetery

- A Blue Star Mothers of American, Inc. memorial was installed in the Memorial Section.
- Resealed the roadway and hot filled cracks in roadway.

Garrison Forest Veterans Cemetery

- Three new backhoes were purchased.

- A new sound/PA system was purchased for use at all events.
- Purchased a new 20x20 foot canvas tent for use as a temporary Committal shelter.

Rocky Gap Veterans Cemetery

- A new Superintendent was hired.
- Laid sod for over 150 graves in the cemetery
- Constructed and mounted a military ceremonial rifle rack on the inside wall of the Committal Shelter so the Honor Guards would have place for rifles.
- Cleaned and re-painted three footbridges on cemetery grounds.
- Installed shelving units and reorganized storage areas in the committal shelter to enhance storage.

Memorials and Monuments

Currently, Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs Cemetery and Memorial Program has responsibility for the following memorials:

- World War II Memorial in Annapolis
- Korean War Memorial in Baltimore
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Baltimore
- War Memorial Building in Baltimore - Joint responsibility with the City of Baltimore

These facilities are open 365 days a year in recognition of those who served and those who made the ultimate sacrifice to secure our freedom and democracy.

Memorials 2012 Highlights

- Fourteen (14) patriotic events were held at the memorials throughout the year, including Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day and other special commemorations.
- Design completed and procurement of wrought iron fence project at War Memorial Building to be completed January of 2013.

- Design completed, project out for bid for drainage project for slab movement at Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Construction to begin in spring 2013.
- War Memorial Building Elevator – The project is approved by DGS to procure an Architect and Engineer for FY 13.
- Mulch all of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial with 140 cubic yards of black mulch.
- Completed aeration and overseeding of turf at the three Memorials.
- Installed two new MDVA signs at the Korean War Memorial.
- Installed replacement trash can and lid at the World War II memorial and two new lids at the Korean War Memorial.
- Overflow lot at the World War II Memorial was repaired by having the State Highway Administration (SHA) spread and roll asphalt millings in eroded areas.
- DGS contractor finished asphalt paving, fence and seal coat of the driveway at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Commissions and Boards

There are five commissions/boards to advise the Secretary in various areas:

- Maryland Veterans Commission
- Charlotte Hall Veterans Home Commission
- Maryland Military Monuments Commission
- War Memorial Commission
- Commission on the Establishment of a Maryland Women in Military Service Monument

Maryland Veterans Commission

The Maryland Veterans Commission advises the Secretary on all issues relating to veterans, including legislation. Commission meetings are held quarterly. Individuals may be called upon to represent the Department at speaking engagements for commemorative events, present Governor's Proclamations on Veterans Day and Memorial Day ceremonies, and provide recommendations when changes may be requested for the Cemetery & Memorial Programs. The members also review proposed veteran-related legislation and advise the Secretary accordingly.

The Commissioners represent veteran groups and the eight congressional districts in the state. The Commissioners are appointed to five-year terms by the Governor, who also names the Chair. The Maryland Veterans Commissioners represent the following organizations or categories:

- American Ex POWs
- American Veterans AMVETS
- Catholic War Veterans
- Colonial Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Disabled American Veterans
- Fleet Reserve Association
- Jewish War Veterans
- Korean War Veterans Association, Inc.
- Maryland Military Officers Association of America
- Marine Corps League
- Military Order of the Purple Heart
- National Association of Black Veterans
- Pearl Harbor Survivors Association (Honorary nonvoting member)
- Polish Legion of American Veterans
- The American Legion

- The Retired Enlisted Association
- Veteran of the Iraq/Afghanistan Wars
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Vietnam Veterans of America
- Women Veterans
- At Large Member

Maryland Veterans Home Commission

The Maryland Veterans Home Commission advises the Department on issues relating to State veteran homes and interacts with veterans and other organizations to disseminate information concerning Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, in St. Mary's County, the only State veteran home facility in Maryland. The Commission has fourteen members and meets four times per year. Eleven members are named to five-year terms by the Governor with Senate advice and consent. Three members serve ex-officio, representing the Governor, Speaker of the House and President of the Senate.

Maryland Military Monuments Commission

The Governor established the Governor's Commission on Maryland Military Monuments in January, 1989 and it was transferred to the MDVA in October, 2008. The Commission inventories Maryland military monuments. Each monument is identified by name, date of construction, location, and original sponsorship. Current ownership of both the monument and its site is noted with a complete description of the monument, including its construction materials; condition; theme; inscriptions, if any; and who is responsible for maintenance. To restore damaged monuments, the Commission determines the cost and secures funds. The Commission also assigns responsibility for maintenance of each monument and prepares educational and tourism materials for public distribution. Since 1989, the Commission has arranged for the cleaning and restoration of ninety-seven Maryland military memorials. Appointed by the Governor, the Commission consists of up to twenty-one members. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs serves as chair. Meetings of the Commission are held quarterly.

War Memorial Commission

The Commission, which meets four times per year, shares custody and supervision of the War Memorial Building and the War Memorial Plaza with the City of Baltimore. Both were erected in 1927 in Baltimore to honor those Marylanders who died in World War I. The War Memorial Building lies directly across from City Hall, and with the Plaza, was designed by Baltimore architect, Lawrence Hall Fowler. The Building is open and available for meetings of veterans groups, patriotic societies and for civic gatherings. Use by these groups is permitted provided that no collection or donation is taken nor any admission charged. Maintenance costs are shared equally by the State of Maryland and the City of Baltimore. The Commission's ten members serve five-year terms; five are appointed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with the Governor's approval, and five by the Mayor of Baltimore.

Commission on the Establishment of a Maryland Women in Military Service Monument

The Commission on the Establishment of a Maryland Women in Military Service Monument originally was authorized in July 2006, and appointed in July 2007 (Chapters 281 & 282, Acts of 2006). The Commission was to identify and recommend the funding, design, construction, and placement of a monument dedicated to women from Maryland who served in the uniformed forces of the United States. Authorization for the Commission expired September 30, 2007; however, an extension was authorized to March 3, 2008. The Commission submitted its interim report on December 31, 2007, and its final report on March 3, 2008.

In June 2009, the Commission was re-established (Chapters 537 & 538, Acts of 2009). It will coordinate and monitor efforts to erect a monument to Maryland women who have served in the military, and may enter into a memorandum of understanding with the federal government, a unit of State government, county government, or a municipality.

Authorization for the Commission extends through September 30, 2014, or until a monument to honor Maryland women in military service is completed and erected, if that occurs before September 30, 2014.

Maryland Veterans Demographics According to VA Census Data

Maryland Veterans Population.....	459,918
Maryland Veterans Age 65 and Older.....	179,810
Maryland Women Veterans.....	49,961
County with Most Veterans: Prince George's.....	65,565
County with Fewest Veterans: Kent.....	2,089
County with Highest % Veterans: Calvert	11.9%
County with Lowest % Veterans: Montgomery.....	5.1%

Key Performance Measures for Veterans Represented By the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs Fiscal Year 2012

Inputs

Potential number of veterans to be served.....	459,918 (Approx.)
Number of veteran contacts.....	104,423

Outputs

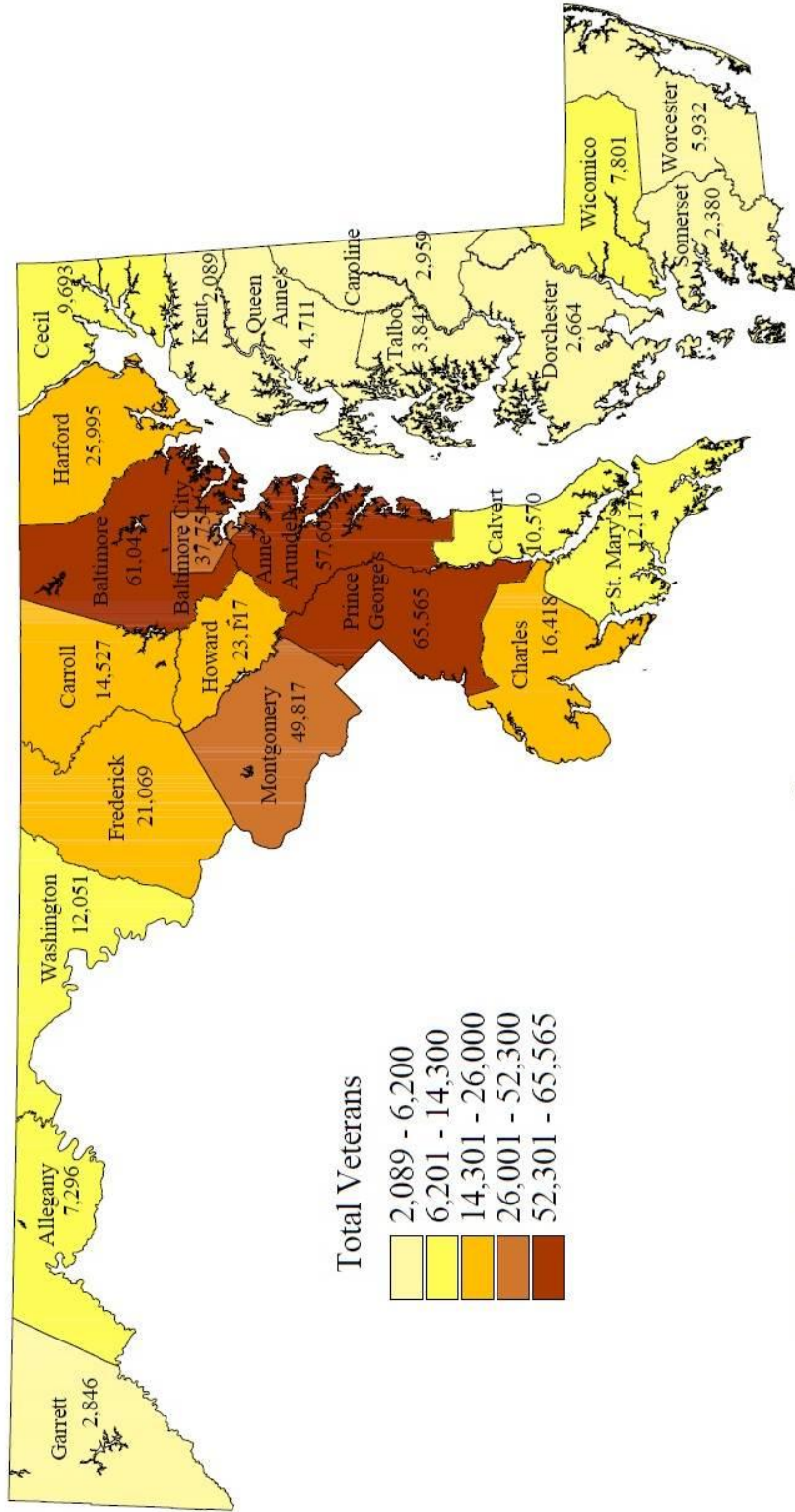
Claims filed and developed on behalf of service-connected disabled veteran.....	4,154
Cases pending adjudication for veterans represented by the MDVA.....	5,543
Appeals of unfavorable VA decisions filed on behalf of veterans.....	325

Outcomes

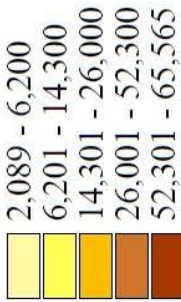
Total of awards to veterans and survivors represented by MDVA.....	\$17,372,916
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Projected Number of Veterans in Maryland - 2012

Projected Veterans in Maryland: 459,918



Total Veterans



Source: United States Department of Veterans Affairs
 Map Prepared for the Maryland Department of Veteran Affairs
 by the Maryland Department of Planning.



MARYLAND VETERAN POPULATION BY COUNTY 2012

	Total Population 2011 projected*	Veteran Population 2012 projected**	% Veteran Population
State of Maryland	5,773,552	459,918	8.8
By County			
Allegany County	75,087	7,296	9.7
Anne Arundel Co.	537,656	57,605	10.7
Baltimore City	620,961	37,754	6.1
Baltimore County	805,029	61,045	7.6
Calvert County	88,737	10,570	11.9
Caroline County	33,066	2,959	8.9
Carroll County	167,134	14,527	8.7
Cecil County	101,108	9,693	9.6
Charles County	146,551	16,418	11.2
Dorchester County	32,618	2,664	8.2
Frederick County	233,385	21,069	9.0
Garrett County	30,097	2,846	9.5
Harford County	244,826	25,995	10.6
Howard County	287,085	23,117	8.0
Kent County	20,197	2,089	10.3
Montgomery County	971,777	49,817	5.1
Prince George's Co.	863,420	65,565	7.6
Queen Anne's Co.	47,798	4,711	9.9
St. Mary's County	105,151	12,171	11.6
Somerset County	26,470	2,380	9.0
Talbot County	37,782	3,843	10.2
Washington County	147,430	12,051	8.2
Wicomico County	98,733	7,801	7.9
Worcester County	51,454	5,932	11.5

*Estimates as of April 5, 2010 from [Maryland State Data Center](#), Dept. of Planning (most recent data available).

**Estimates from U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs VetPop 2007 (most recent data available).

Estimated Impact of Current Military Operations on the Needs of Future Veterans

The estimated impact of current military operations on the future needs of veterans will continue to be seen in the increased requests for claims counseling and assistance. National Guard members and Military Reservists who have been activated for federal service, as well as Maryland veterans who served on active duty in the military, are eligible for state and federal veteran benefits. Recent studies have suggested that returning veterans from the Southwest Asia Theater continue to have a high demand for counseling and assistance. There are outstanding issues regarding Gulf War illnesses, Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Although MDVA had three additional service officer positions approved during the 2008 General Assembly, additional veteran service officer staffing may be required to meet an increased demand for services, as well as additional service office locations based on demographics and census data – a general fund issue.

There are difficulties faced by women veterans. Women veterans make up approximately 10.9% of Maryland's veteran population. This percentage will increase as the number of women serving in the military increases. Women experience difficulties obtaining gender-specific medical care. They are also more often the victims of military sexual trauma (MST). MDVA will continue to work with VA to ensure our women veterans are receiving the care and service they deserve. We are working to develop outreach efforts that target women veterans and help them address these issues.

Current military operations, as with previous military operations, will produce a new generation of veterans with special needs. Today, World War II and Korean War veterans are aging; most are beyond 80 years in age. Many of these veterans have been dependent upon the VA system for more than 60 years as a result of injuries, diseases and disabilities suffered while exposed to battlefield conditions. Changes in the list of presumptive illnesses due to exposure to herbicides (Agent Orange) have resulted in additional benefits for Vietnam War veterans. However, these new claims have resulted in an increased workload for an already overburdened system.

For veterans of Operation Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, and Operation Enduring Freedom, PTS and TBI injuries and other exposures (Gulf War Syndrome) will make access to medical care critical to their recovery. Government agencies at all levels, private and non-profits and the veterans' community should plan and prepare for long term assistance to veterans with medical and special needs.

Projected Conditions Affecting Future Services at MDVA

- Aging and declining veteran population base – World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War veterans and their dependents.
- Influx of younger veterans from ongoing combat operations in Southwest Asia.

- Increase in diagnosed cases of PTS, TBI, and MST
- Largest deployment of Maryland National Guard since World War II.
- The lack of awareness among veterans and their dependents of the services and benefits available to them.
- Limited resources within MDVA to reach and serve the approximately 459,918 Maryland veterans and their families and advise them of and connect them with the benefits and services available to them.