

# Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission

Commission Priorities  
Presented by Ray Wilburn

June 8, 2007

# Top 5 Priorities

Received 5-10 Votes

- 1. Transition
- 2. Claims Processing
- 3. Concurrent Receipt of Retired Pay/Comp
- 4. Concurrent Receipt of SBP/DIC
- 5. Effects of Mental vs. Physical Disability on Lifetime Income/QOL

# Priorities Receiving 2-4 Votes

- 6. Adequacy of Benefits over Lifetime
- 7. Disability Rating Issues
- 8. Presumptions
- 9. Survivors' Benefits
- 10. Treatment Incentives/Disincentives  
Regarding Mental Conditions
- 11. Adequacy of Benefits for Earnings & QOL
- 12. PTSD

# Priorities Receiving One Vote

- 13. Ancillary and Special Benefits
- 14. Extent DoD/VA provide disabled vet 30%+ the Opportunity to Succeed in civilian life & Adequacy of Benefits to replace earnings, rehabilitate, improve QOL
- 15. In Service Treatment for those Wounded or Exposed to Traumatic Events

# Priorities Receiving One Vote (cont)

- 16. Is it a Benefit if the Vet has to pay for it?
- 17. Principles to Clarify Purpose & Objective of Benefits
- 18. Universal Access to Medical Care from all sources
- 19. Voc Rehab

# Transition

- RQ's 26-31
- Preliminary Findings:
  - Transition has been described as needing to be seamless, integrated, and transparent. These concepts are operationally defined in many ways.
- Moving Forward:
  - Commission release paper (June) for concurrent public/technical review and reach tentative decisions on options (July/August)

# Claims Processing

- RQ 6, 8, 11, 13, 15, 18, 19, and 22
- Decision to limit scope to high level comparison of VA, DoD, SSA programs by CNA
- Impact of Transition Recommendations
- Preliminary Findings:
  - Tentative option decisions on line of duty, character of discharge, lump sum, age as a factor, reasonable doubt, time limit for filing an original claim, pending claim ends at death, & duty to assist.

# Claims Processing (cont)

- Moving Forward:
  - IOM and CNA results must be addressed.
  - Integrate the various findings that have been made or will be made
  - Overall recommendations on changes to the claims process.



# Concurrent Receipt of Retired Pay & Comp

- RQ's 21
- Preliminary Findings:
  - Retired Pay and VA Comp different purposes
  - By 2013 all veterans with a disability rating of at least 50% can receive both DoD retirement and VA disability compensation without offset.
  - Arguments for and against full concurrent receipt in issue paper.

# Concurrent Receipt of Retired Pay & Comp (cont)

- Moving Forward :
  - Commission decision on the options.

# Concurrent Receipt of SBP & DIC

- RQ 21
- Preliminary Findings:
  - Those opposed to eliminating both offsets say it would be too costly.
  - Those in favor of concurrent receipt for survivors argue that the programs have distinctly different purposes and should not be offset.
  - To date, no laws passed to eliminate the SBP/DIC offset.

# Concurrent Receipt of SBP & DIC (cont)

- Moving Forward:
  - Commission decision on the options.

# Effects of Mental vs. Physical Disability on Lifetime Income/QOL

- RQ 2, 5a
- Preliminary Findings:
  - CNA continues to brief the Commission regarding the impact of disability on employment, earned income and compensation analysis.
  - CNA continues to brief on the results of the veterans survey on impact of disability on quality of life.

# Effects of Mental vs. Physical Disability on Lifetime Income/QOL

- Moving Forward:
  - CNA draft final report due the end of July; briefing August
  - Commission decision on recommendations August-September.

# Other Topics

- VA/DoD Disability Rating Process
- Support for families of Severely Disabled
- Commencement of Comp Payment
- Ongoing Program Analysis & Evaluation
- Employability (IU)
- IT Interoperability
- COLAs for Comp & Ancillary Benefits