



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Office of the General Counsel  
Washington DC 20420

January 14, 2013

In Reply Refer To: 02REG

Ms. Heather Vitale, Desk Officer  
The Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs  
The Office of Management and Budget  
725 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Ms. Vitale:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) submits the enclosed report on VA's Plan for Periodic Review of Existing Regulations, in response to Executive Order (E.O.) 13563, "Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review," and the reporting requirements in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum, "Implementation of Retrospective Review Plans," dated October 26, 2011. This report also includes VA's response to E.O. 13610, "Identifying and Reducing Regulatory Burdens," dated May 10, 2012, and the reporting requirements in OMB's Memorandum, "Reducing Reporting and Paperwork Burdens," dated June 22, 2012. VA's reports follow OMB's suggested templates.

VA's mission is to administer benefit programs, provide health care, and perform mortuary services for America's Veterans. Consequently, we are focusing on identifying, updating, and simplifying significant rules that are obsolete, outdated, confusing, or that place unnecessary burdens on Veterans or their beneficiaries. We currently have two major rewrite projects pursuing the retrospective review goals of EO 13563--the Compensation and Pension Regulation Rewrite Project and VA's Schedules for Rating Disabilities Project. Neither retrospective review project is expected to result in significant economic savings, but both projects will improve the administration of benefits for veterans. VA's paperwork burden reduction initiatives, however, should result in substantial monetary savings and significant reductions in paperwork burdens.

VA's Office of Regulation Policy and Management in the Office of General Counsel is the point of contact for the retrospective review portion of this report (Janet Coleman, (202) 461-4937). VA's Records Management Service in the Office of Information and Technology provided the paperwork reduction information (Crystal Rennie at (202) 632-7492).

Sincerely,

*Robert C. McFetridge*  
Robert C. McFetridge  
Director,  
Office of Regulation Policy and  
Management

Enclosure

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<b>Agency/ Admin</b>	<b>RIN/OMB Control No.</b>	<b>Title of Initiative/ Rule/ICR</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Actual or Target Completion Date</b>	<b>Anticipated savings in costs and/or information collection burdens, together with any anticipated changes in benefits (please quantify, to the extent feasible, and also specify baseline, time horizon, and affected groups)</b>	<b>Progress updates and anticipated accomplish- ments</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Office of the General Counsel</b>	2900-AO13, proposed rule	VA Compensation and Pension Regulation Rewrite Project	VA has reorganized and rewritten its compensation and pension regulations in a logical, user-friendly format. The intent of the Rewrite Project is to assist veterans, their representatives, and VA staff in locating and understanding these regulations. The new regulations will be placed in 38 CFR, and become effective for claims filed after a	TBD. VA's leadership is considering the best way to integrate the Regulation Rewrite Project with VA's current priority effort to reduce and eliminate the claims backlog. VA already has published 20 proposed rules and received public comments.	None. The new regulations will not alter the benefits VA provides nor alter claims procedures. By reorganizing and redrafting these regulations they will become much easier to find, read, understand, and apply. The new reorganization and redrafting should reduce the amount of time it takes to adjudicate VA	Pending approval, AO13 will be submitted for OMB review. Publication and implementation of the final rule may be delayed in order to integrate the Rewrite Project with VA's Claims Transformation Initiative, which is designed to	

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			certain date, TBD.	Tentatively, VA may publish this consolidated rule in 2013, which will provide the public with an additional opportunity to comment on all of the proposed regulations.	claims and should improve accuracy. The publication of AO13 will enhance public participation by allowing the public to see all of the rewritten provisions at one time, review VA's responses to all previous comments, and provide a final opportunity for any additional comments.	eliminate VA's claims backlog.	
<b>Compensation Service</b>	2900-AO19, proposed rule	Schedule for Rating Disabilities—Hemic and Lymphatic	AO19 (The Hematologic and Lymphatic Systems) proposes to amend the portion of the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities that addresses the hematologic and lymphatic systems. The intended effect of this change is to incorporate medical advances that have occurred since the	Publish the proposed rule NLT Dec 2014.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.	AO19 currently is being coordinated with VA's Office of General Counsel.	A VASRD Status Summit: Public Overview of Proposed Disability Evaluation Criteria for 9 body systems was held in Arlington,

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			last revision of these regulations, update medical terminology, add medical conditions not currently in the Rating Schedule, and refine criteria for further clarity and ease of rater application.				VA, June 4-8 and 11-13, 2012.
<b>Compensation Service</b>	2900-AO44, proposed rule	Schedule for Rating Disabilities—Endocrine	AO44 (The Endocrine System) proposes to revise the portion of the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities that addresses the endocrine system. The intended effect of this change is to update medical terminology, add medical conditions not currently in the Rating Schedule, revise the criteria to reflect medical advances since the last revision of these regulations, and clarify the criteria.	Publish the proposed rule NLT Dec 2014.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.	AO44 currently is being coordinated with VA's Office of General Counsel.	A VASRD Status Summit: Public Overview of Proposed Disability Evaluation Criteria for 9 body systems was held in Arlington, VA, June 4-8 and 11-13, 2012.
<b>Compensation</b>		Schedule for Rating		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. Updated rating schedules will		A VASRD Status

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<b>Service</b>		Disabilities— Mental Disorders			benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		Summit: Public Overview of Proposed Disability Evaluation Criteria for 9 body systems was held in Arlington, VA, June 4-8 and 11-13, 2012.
<b>Compensation Service</b>		Schedule for Rating Disabilities— Musculoskeletal		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		A VASRD Status Summit: Public Overview of Proposed Disability Evaluation Criteria for 9 body systems was held in

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							Arlington, VA, June 4-8 and 11-13, 2012.
<b>Compensation Service</b>		Schedule for Rating Disabilities— Dental and Oral Conditions		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		A VASRD Status Summit: Public Overview of Proposed Disability Evaluation Criteria for 9 body systems was held in Arlington, VA, June 4-8 and 11-13, 2012.
<b>Compensation Service</b>		Schedule for Rating Disabilities— Genitourinary		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		A VASRD Status Summit: Public Overview of Proposed

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							Disability Evaluation Criteria for 9 body systems was held in Arlington, VA, June 4-8 and 11-13, 2012.
<b>Compensation Service</b>		Schedule for Rating Disabilities—Infectious Disease, Immune Disorders, and Nutritional Deficiencies		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		A VASRD Status Summit: Public Overview of Proposed Disability Evaluation Criteria for 9 body systems was held in Arlington, VA, June 4-8 and 11-13, 2012.

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<b>Compensation Service</b>		Schedule for Rating Disabilities—Digestive		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		A VASRD Status Summit: Public Overview of Proposed Disability Evaluation Criteria for 9 body systems was held in Arlington, VA, June 4-8 and 11-13, 2012.
<b>Compensation Service</b>		Schedule for Rating Disabilities—Cardiovascular		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		
<b>Compensation Service</b>		Schedule for Rating Disabilities—Respiratory		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information		



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					for disability adjudications.		
<b>Compensation Service</b>		Schedule for Rating Disabilities— Impairment of Auditory Acuity		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		
<b>Compensation Service</b>		Schedule for Rating Disabilities— Neurological Conditions and Convulsive Disorders		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		
<b>Compensation Service</b>		Schedule for Rating Disabilities— Gynecological Conditions and Disorders of the Breast		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		
<b>Compensation Service</b>		Schedule for Rating Disabilities— Skin		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. Updated rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		
<b>Compen-</b>		Schedule for		Draft a proposed	None. Updated		

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<b>sation Service</b>		Rating Disabilities— Organs of Special Sense (Eye)		rule, TBD.	rating schedules will benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		
<b>Compensation Service</b>		(New) Schedule for Rating Disabilities— Rheumatology		Draft a proposed rule, TBD.	None. A new rating schedule in this area may benefit veterans by applying the latest medical information for disability adjudications.		A VASRD Status Summit: Public Overview of Proposed Disability Evaluation Criteria for 9 body systems was held in Arlington, VA, June 4-8 and 11-13, 2012.

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Burden Reduction Initiatives:

Sub-Agency	Title	Description of the initiative	Hours of paperwork/reporting eliminated	Estimated effective date of the change	Notes
Veterans Benefits Administration	E-Benefits Portal	2900-0737 - eBenefits is a joint VA/DoD web portal that provides resources and self-service capabilities to Veterans, Service members, and their families to research, access and manage their VA and military benefits and personal information. eBenefits uses secure credentials to allow access to personal information and gives users the ability to perform numerous self-service functions. VA is planning to reduce the time per response from 5 minutes to 2 minutes by improving the electronic profile form. The original form has been modified to take less time to complete. Registration information belongs with the Department of Defense and is not collected by eBenefits. Once an authenticated user accesses their personal profile screen, numerous fields are pre-populated, e.g. name, thus the user has less fields to complete.	135,000	11/2012	<i>\$2,025,00 - Cost in savings to the respondents.</i>

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Veterans Health Administration	Application and Renewal for Health Benefits	2900-0091 Collects Veteran information to enroll for health care benefits. It establishes basic eligibility, identifies 3rd party health insurance coverage, identifies prescription copayment, provides for income verification and serves as a mechanism to make changes upon admission or yearly financial updates. VHA plans to consolidate the 10-10EZ and 10-10EZR online applications by electronically presenting questions to Veterans based on responses they provide and data needed by VA to effect a determination for benefits or renewal for VA health care. The reduction in burden hours for each form is estimated to be 5 minutes. VA plans to eliminate the collection of financial information in CY13. Instead VA will leverage IRS/SSA electronic queries to verify income/net worth of Veterans thus relieving this burden. For those required to submit financial information, it is estimated it will save 22.5 minute on the 10-10EZ and 12 minutes for the 10-10EZR.	110,145	5/2013	<i>\$5,871,720 - Cost Savings to the Government.</i>
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<p>Veterans Benefits Administration</p>	<p>Disability Benefits Questionnaires (Groups 1 and 2)</p>	<p>2900-0776 and 2900-0779-DBQs use standardized questions specifically designed to address the questions needed by VA to adjudicate a veteran's disability claim. Additionally, DBQs enable a Veteran to have a treating physician complete the DBQ and, thereby, aid in VA's disability examination process. VA, VA-contracted, and private providers will all use the same identical standardized questionnaire in the future, resulting in consistent products regardless of who completes the form. VA is currently building and will soon field an online, interview-based tool that will allow both VA and private providers to complete and submit DBQs online. This interview-based tool will assist in the completion of a DBQ thereby making it easier and faster to complete. Additionally, the tool will collect data and automatically upload it into VA adjudication system which will create an aggregate timeliness and quality advantage for claims processing and thus help alleviate claims backlog. At this time, there will be no changes to the forms but VA does plan to have future improvements to the content of the forms. The estimated timeframe for implementation of this planned improvement is in late FY2014.</p>	<p>180,750</p>	<p>12/2014</p>	<p><i>\$13,793,648 - Cost Savings to the Government.</i></p>
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