

The Florida Senate
COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA
MILITARY AFFAIRS, SPACE, AND DOMESTIC SECURITY
Senator Altman, Chair
Senator Hill, Vice Chair

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, January 26, 2011

TIME: 10:45 a.m.—12:45 p.m.

PLACE: Mallory Horne Committee Room, 37 Senate Office Building

MEMBERS: Senator Altman, Chair; Senator Hill, Vice Chair; Senators Bennett, Bullard, Jones, Sachs, and Storms

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
1	Presentation from the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs		
2	Presentation from the Florida County Veteran Services Officers Association		
3	Presentation from the National Drug Court Institute		
4	Update from Staff on Incarcerated Veterans Statistics		



Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs

Lieutenant General Bob Milligan
U.S. Marine Corps (Ret)
Interim Executive Director



Veterans' Facts

- **Nation's 3rd largest Veteran population**
 - More than 1.6 million Floridians are Veterans
 - 12 percent of population 18 years & over
- **Florida's Veterans are a major fiscal force**
 - \$12 Billion Federal dollars for Veterans flow annually into Florida's economy
- **Florida's Veterans are a diverse group**
 - Largest population of World War II vets in nation
 - More than 190,000 are Iraq & Afghanistan vets
 - 12 percent of Florida's vets are female



How We Serve

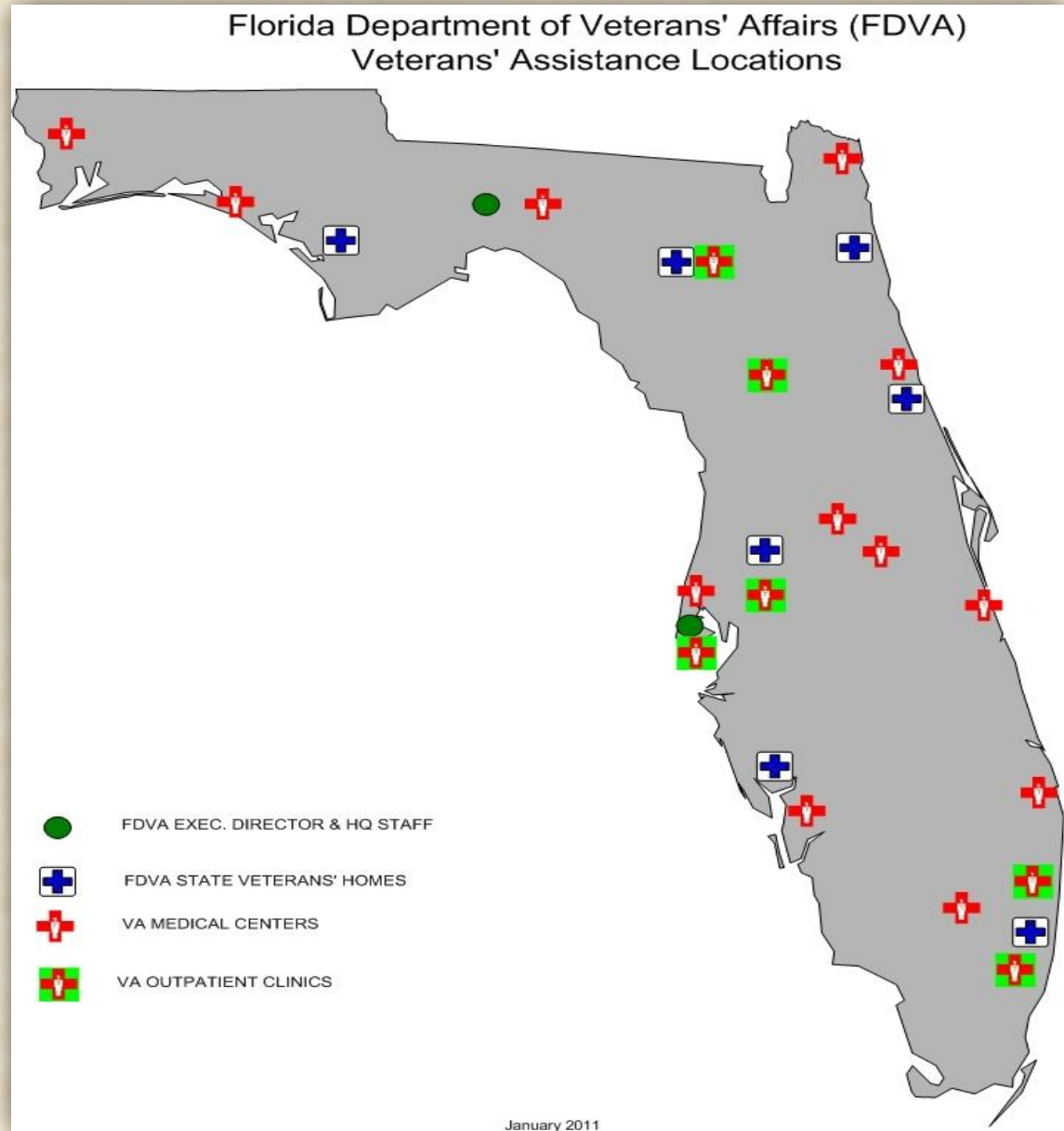
- **Veterans' Benefits & Assistance**
- **Long-Term Health Care Services**
- **Legislative Advocacy**





FDVA Footprint

- 27 locations
- 6 Veterans' Nursing Homes
- 1 Domiciliary (ALF)
- 22 field offices staffed with Claims Examiners
- 3 division headquarters





Benefits & Assistance Division

- **Bureau of Veterans' Claims Services**
 - Assists in preparation, submission & prosecution of claims & appeals for state & federal entitlements
 - Partners with Bay Pines VA Regional Office to expedite veterans' claims & influence positive outcome
- **Bureau of Veterans' Field Services**
 - Provides face-to-face benefits counseling & claims services at locations throughout state
- **Bureau of State Approving for Veterans' Training**
 - 100% Federally funded program reviews, evaluates & approves Veterans' education programs & training



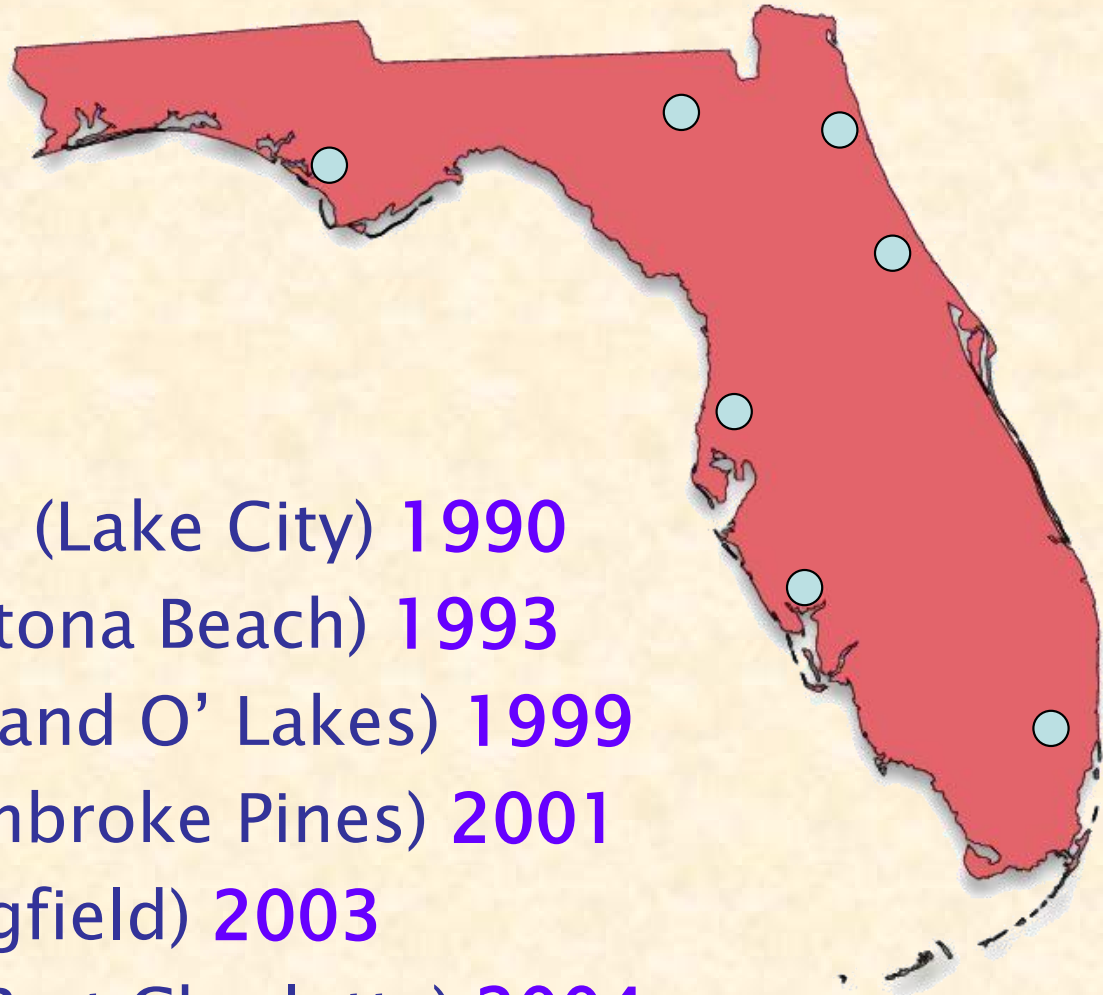
County Veteran Service Offices

- Local assistance available through network of County Veteran Service Offices
- FDVA trains and certifies staff
- Services provided at no cost to veteran





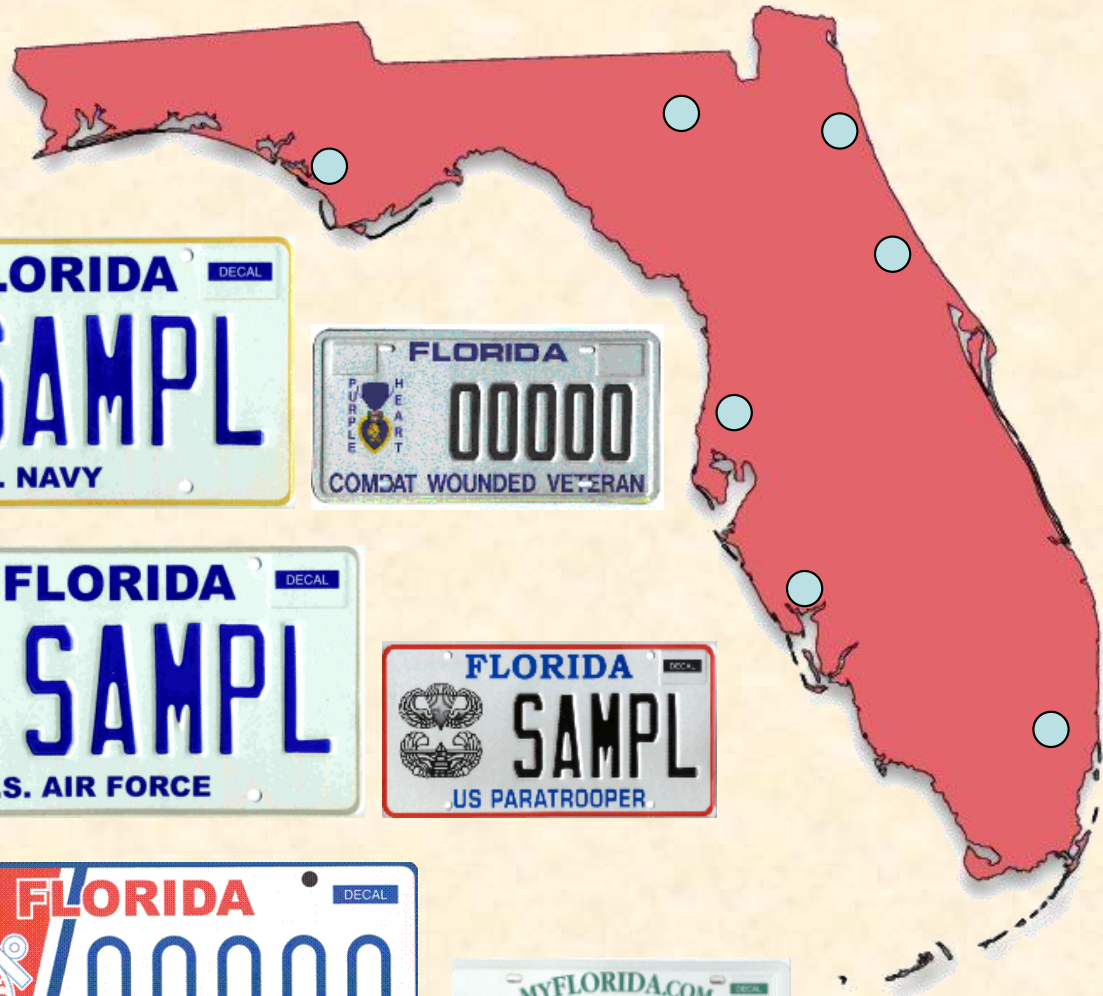
Our Veterans' Homes



- **Robert Jenkins Domiciliary (Lake City) 1990**
- **Emory Bennett SVNH (Daytona Beach) 1993**
- **Baldomero Lopez SVNH (Land O' Lakes) 1999**
- **Sandy Ninger SVNH (Pembroke Pines) 2001**
- **Clifford Sims SVNH (Springfield) 2003**
- **Douglas Jacobson SVNH (Port Charlotte) 2004**
- **Clyde Lassen SVNH (St. Augustine) 2010**



License Plate Sales





Homes' Program Funding

- **Construction & Renovation Reimbursement Sources:**
 - 65% Federal VA funding
 - 35% State of Florida matching funds
- **Resident Care Reimbursement Sources:**
 - Resident care funded by VA if service-connected disability is 70% or greater
 - VA Per Diem
 - Private pay
 - Third-Party Insurance
 - Medicare
 - Medicaid
 - General Revenue



A New Concept for State Veterans' Homes



Public Corporation Concept

- Operation of State Veterans' Homes transferred to Public Corporation
- Public Corporation to be self-funded -- no GR
- Increase Veteran resident quality of care
- Improve flexibility to recruit & retain employees
- Allow homes to compete with industry incentives
- Corporation reports directly to Governor & Cabinet as Board of Trustees
- FDVA & Public Corporation coordinate on Veterans' issues
- Retain Federal VA Per Diem funding
- Sovereign Immunity & risk management continue to apply



Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs

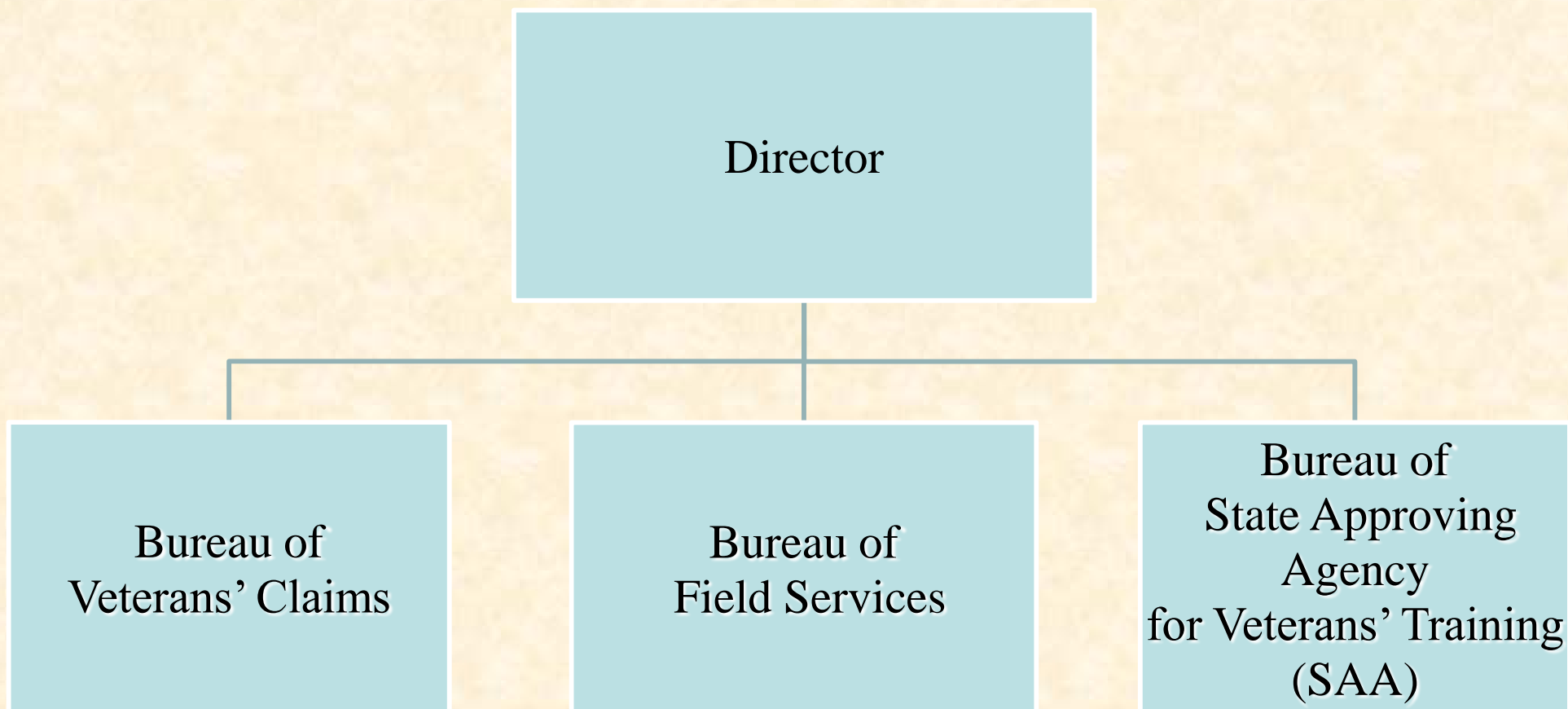
www.FloridaVets.org



Division, Veterans' Benefits and Assistance



Division, Veterans' Benefits and Assistance





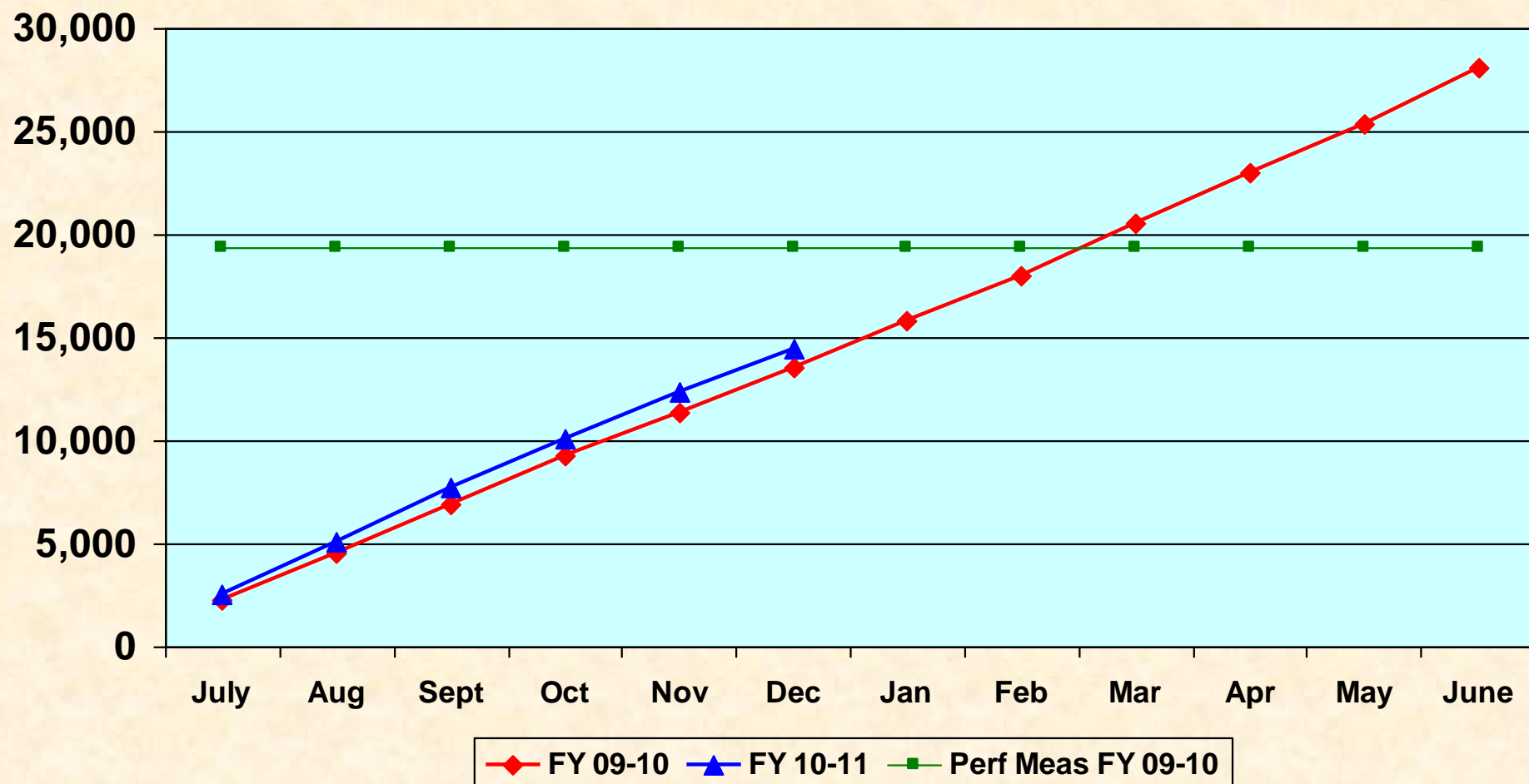
2009 – 2010 B&A Revenue



- Value of Benefits Granted - \$347,711,507
- Value of Retroactive Benefit - \$115,509,750
- Value of Debt Waiver - \$468,866
- Value of Issue Resolutions - \$43,459,699
- Claims Processed - 28,064
- Veterans Served - 97,088
- Services to Veterans - 504,153
- Ratings Reviewed - 38,864
- Federal Dollars Received vs. Expense - 132:1

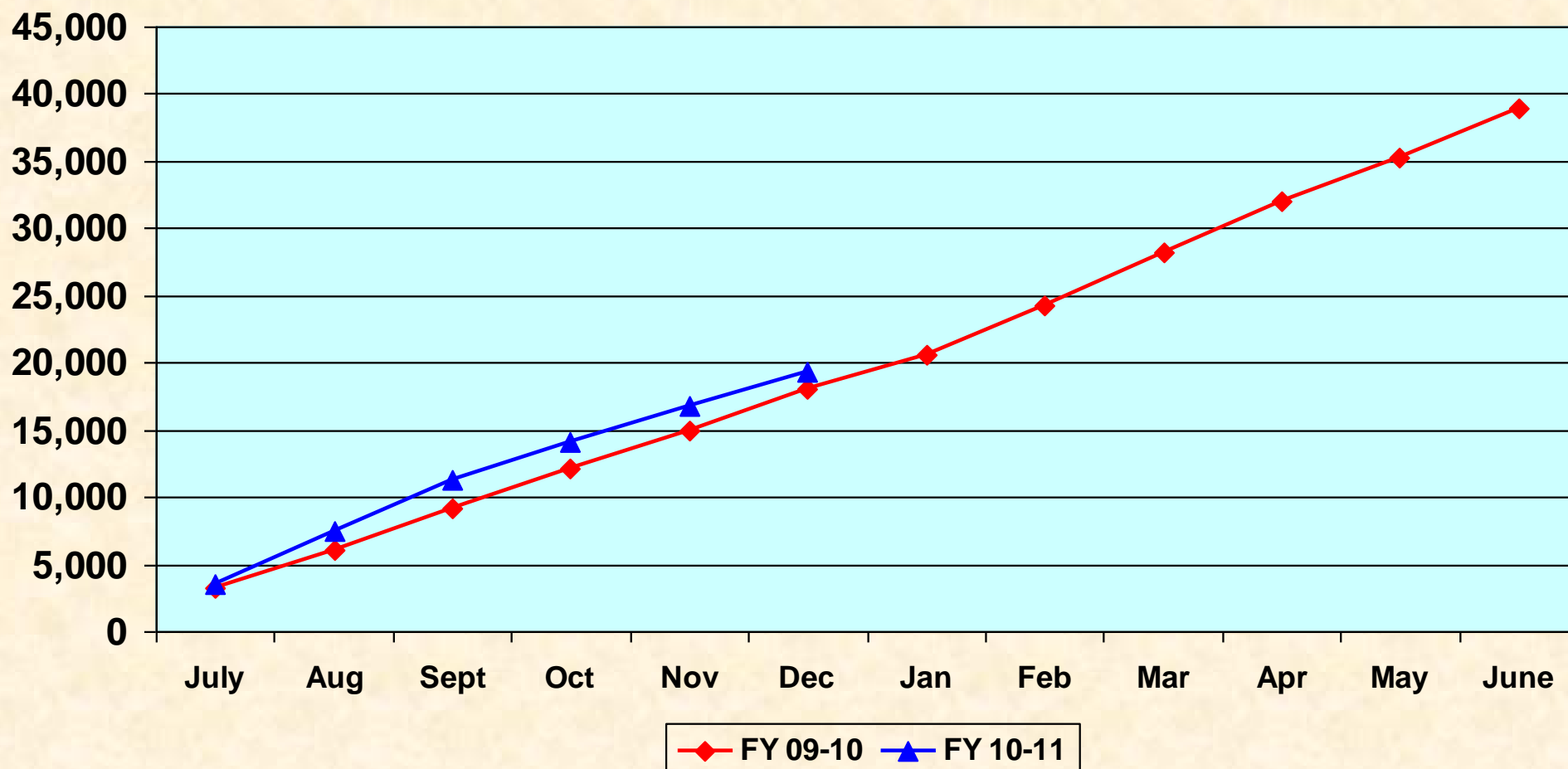


Benefits and Assistance VA Benefits Claims Processed-Cumulative



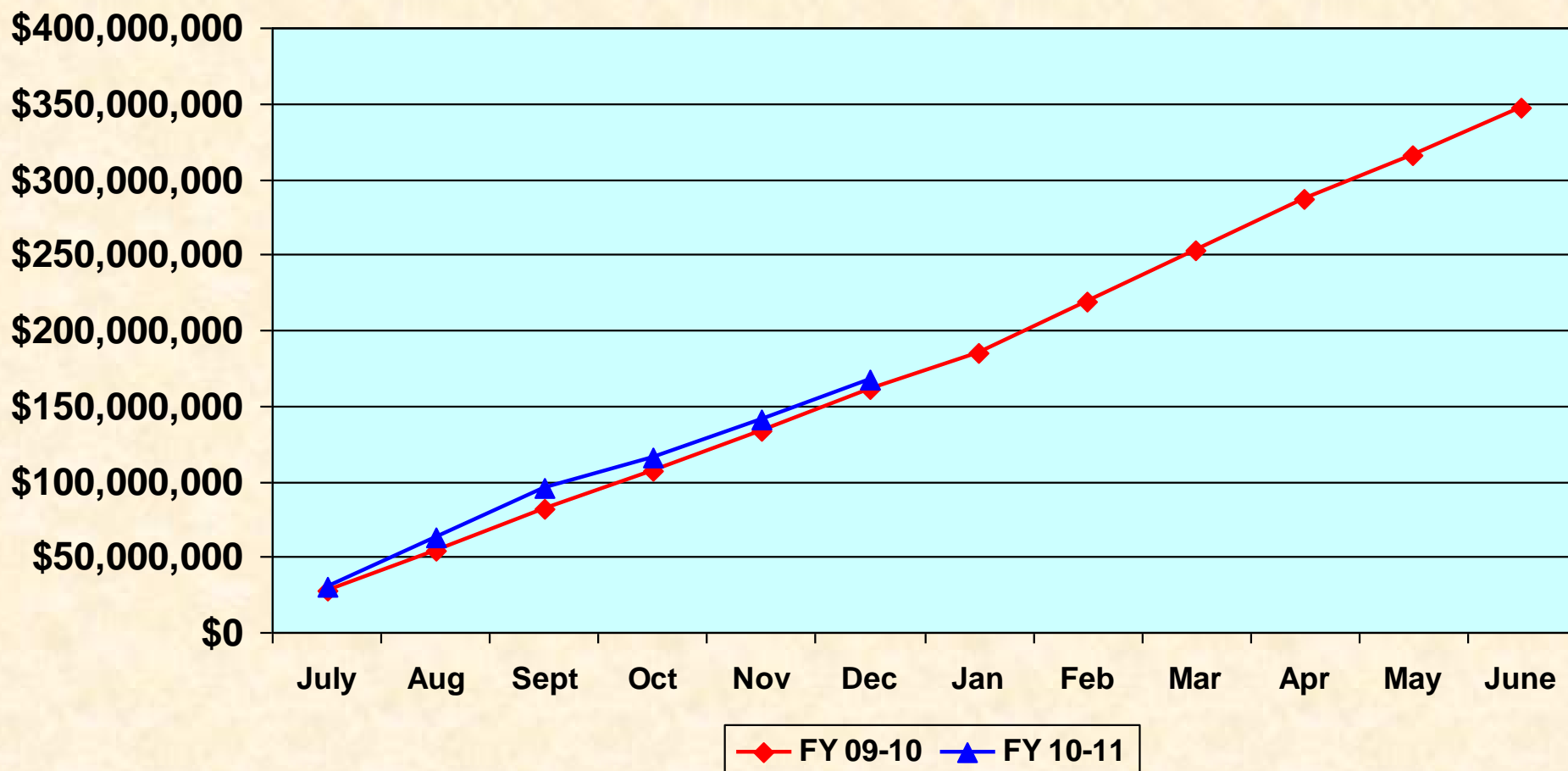


Benefits and Assistance VA Disability Ratings Reviewed-Cumulative



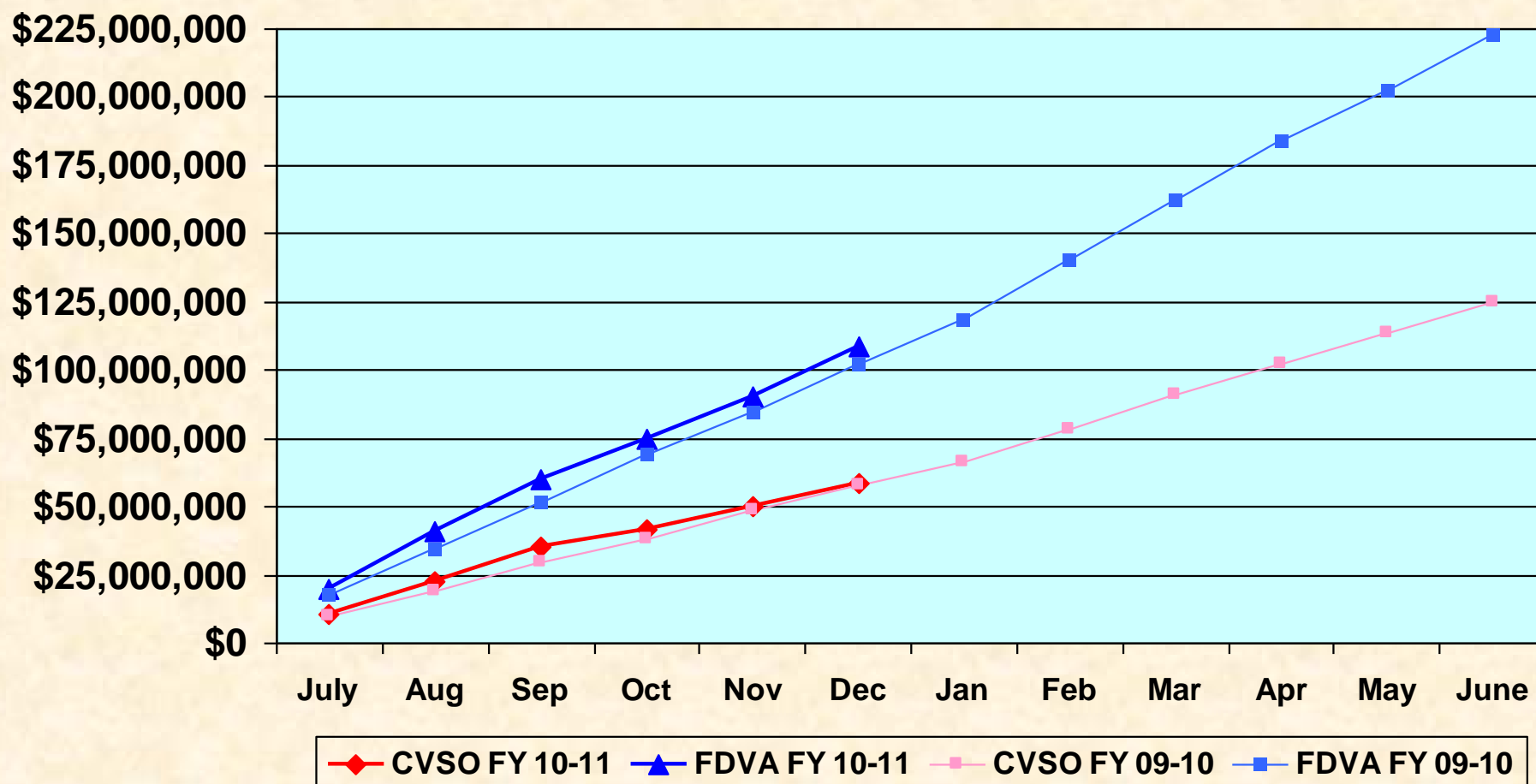


Benefits and Assistance VA Benefits Granted- Cumulative



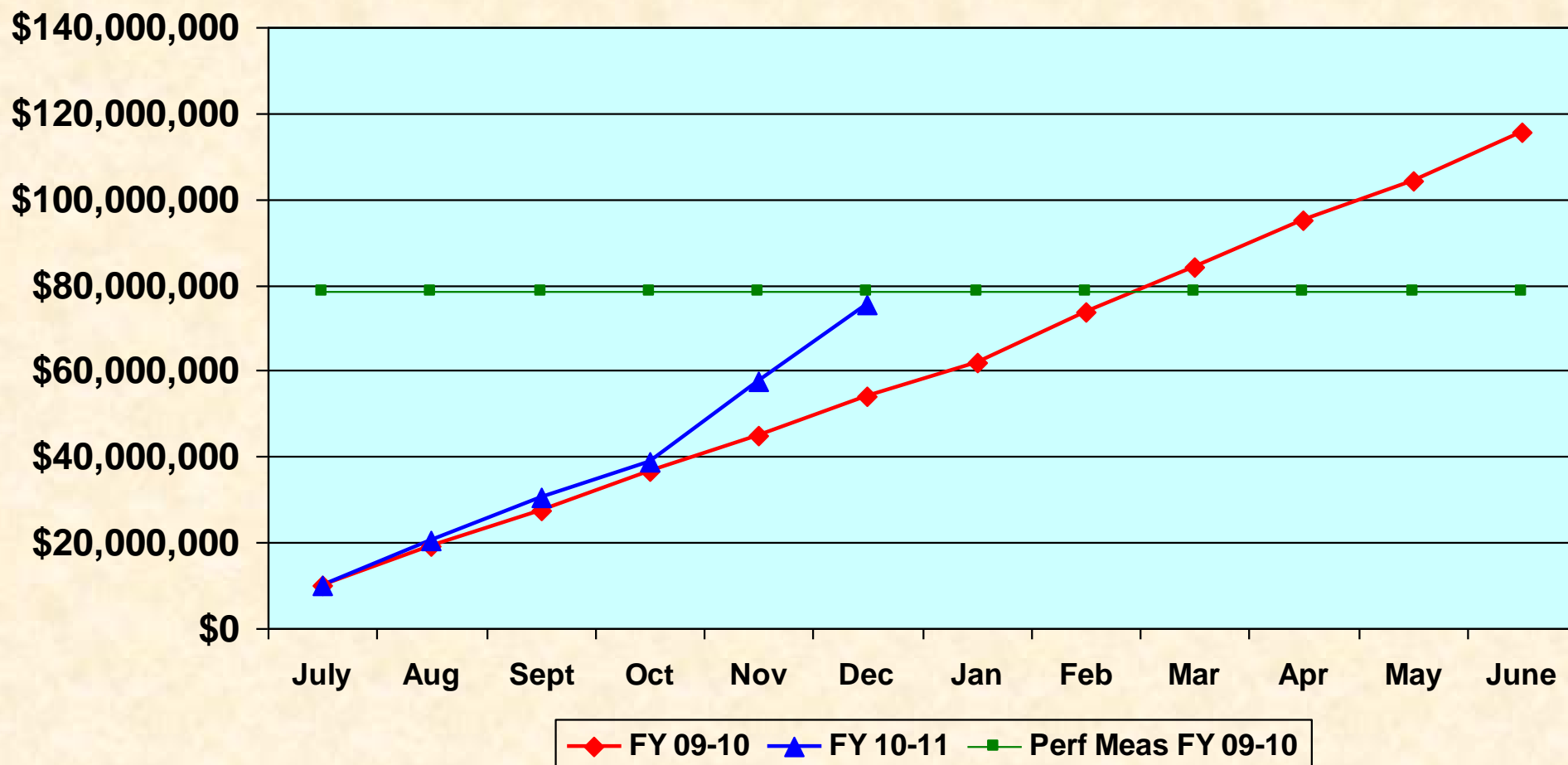


Benefits and Assistance CVSO/FDVA Federal Benefits Granted



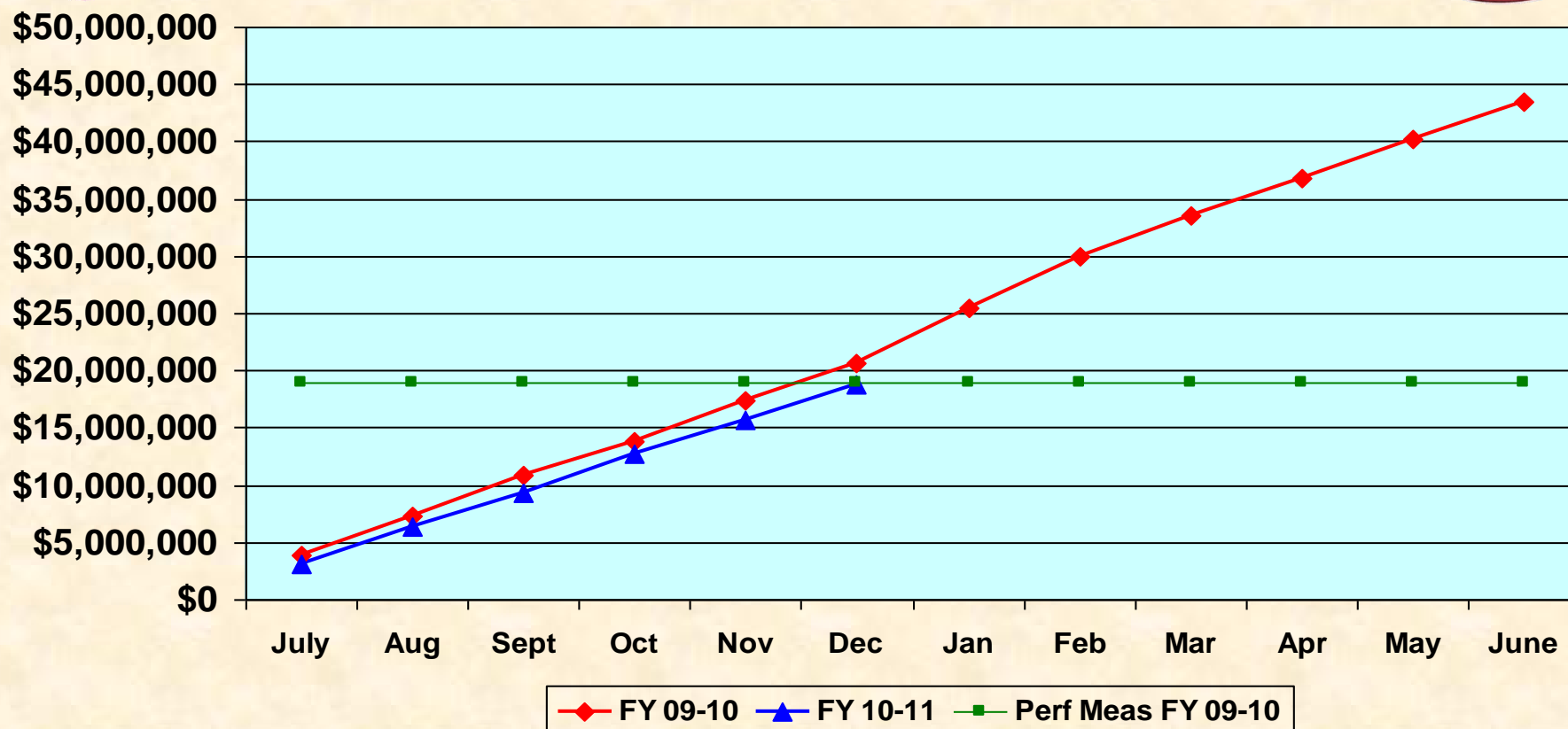


Benefits and Assistance Federal Retroactive Benefits Granted





Benefits and Assistance Issue Resolutions- Cumulative



Issues Resolved:

Wheel Chair
HISA Grants
VA Enrollment

Hearing Billing Errors
Clothing Allowance
Eye Glasses

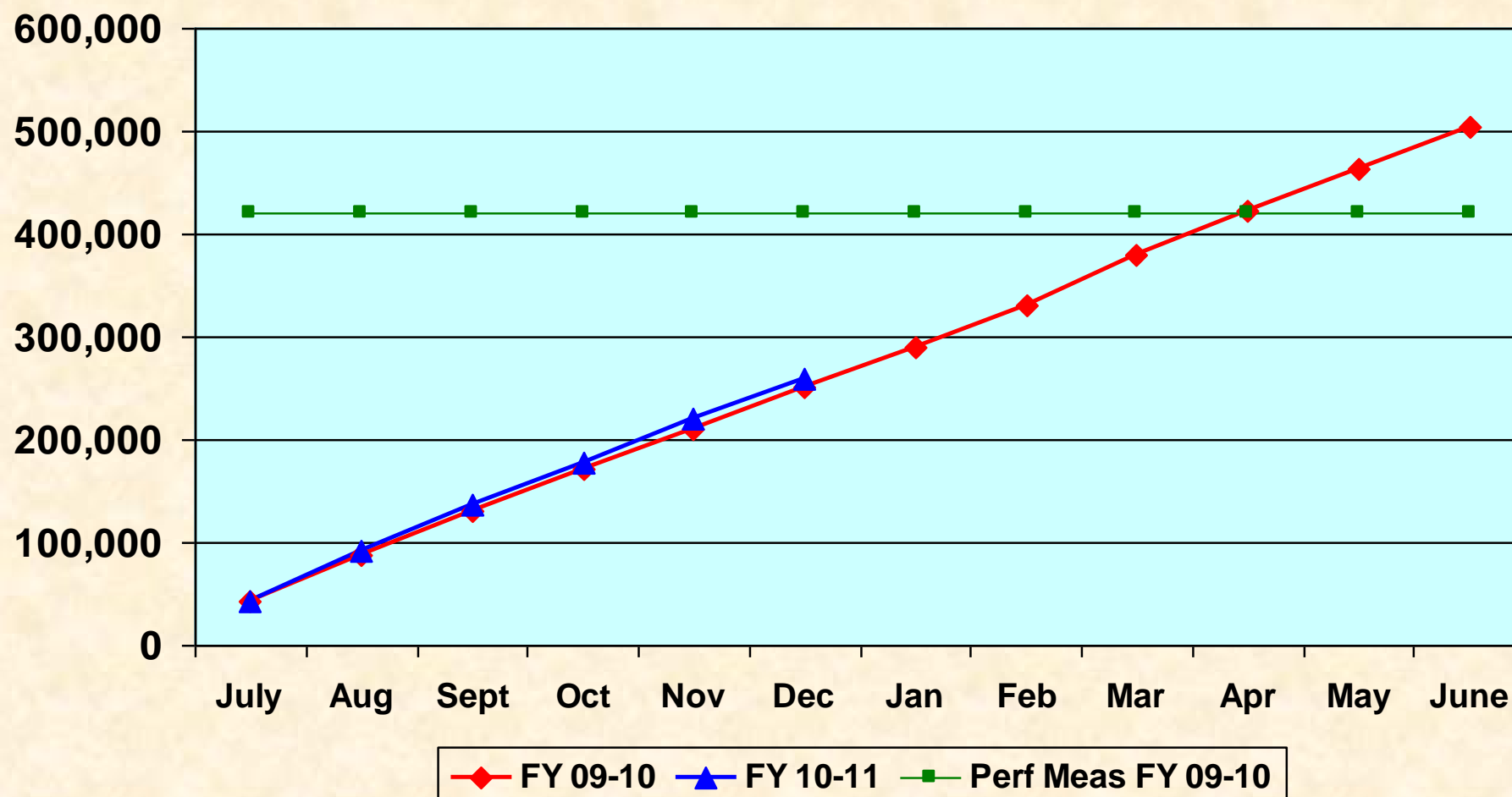
Ambulance Bill
Hearing Aids

Lost Checks
Dental Eligibility

SS Benefits
Parking Placard

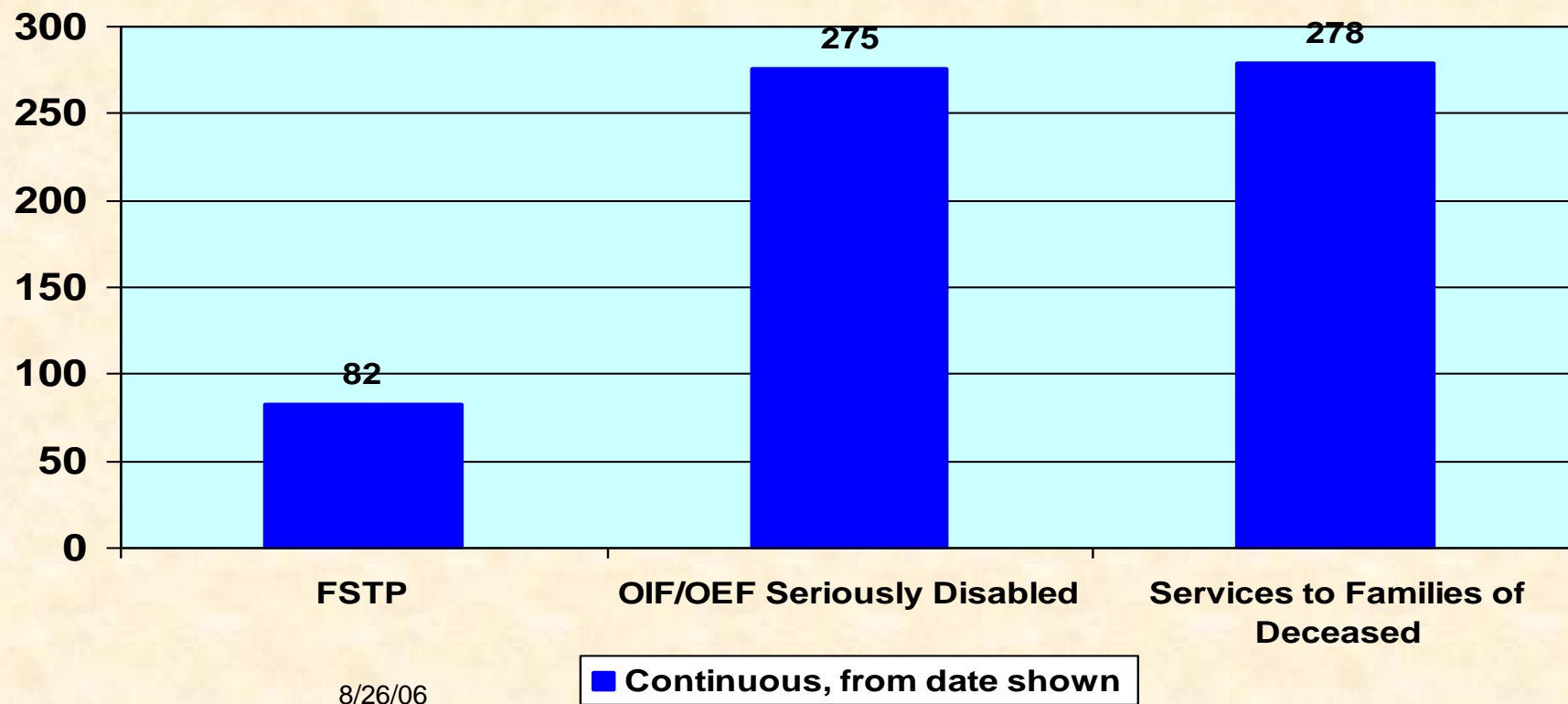


Benefits and Assistance Services to Veterans- Cumulative





Benefits and Assistance OIF/OEF Outreach and Service Delivery Summary



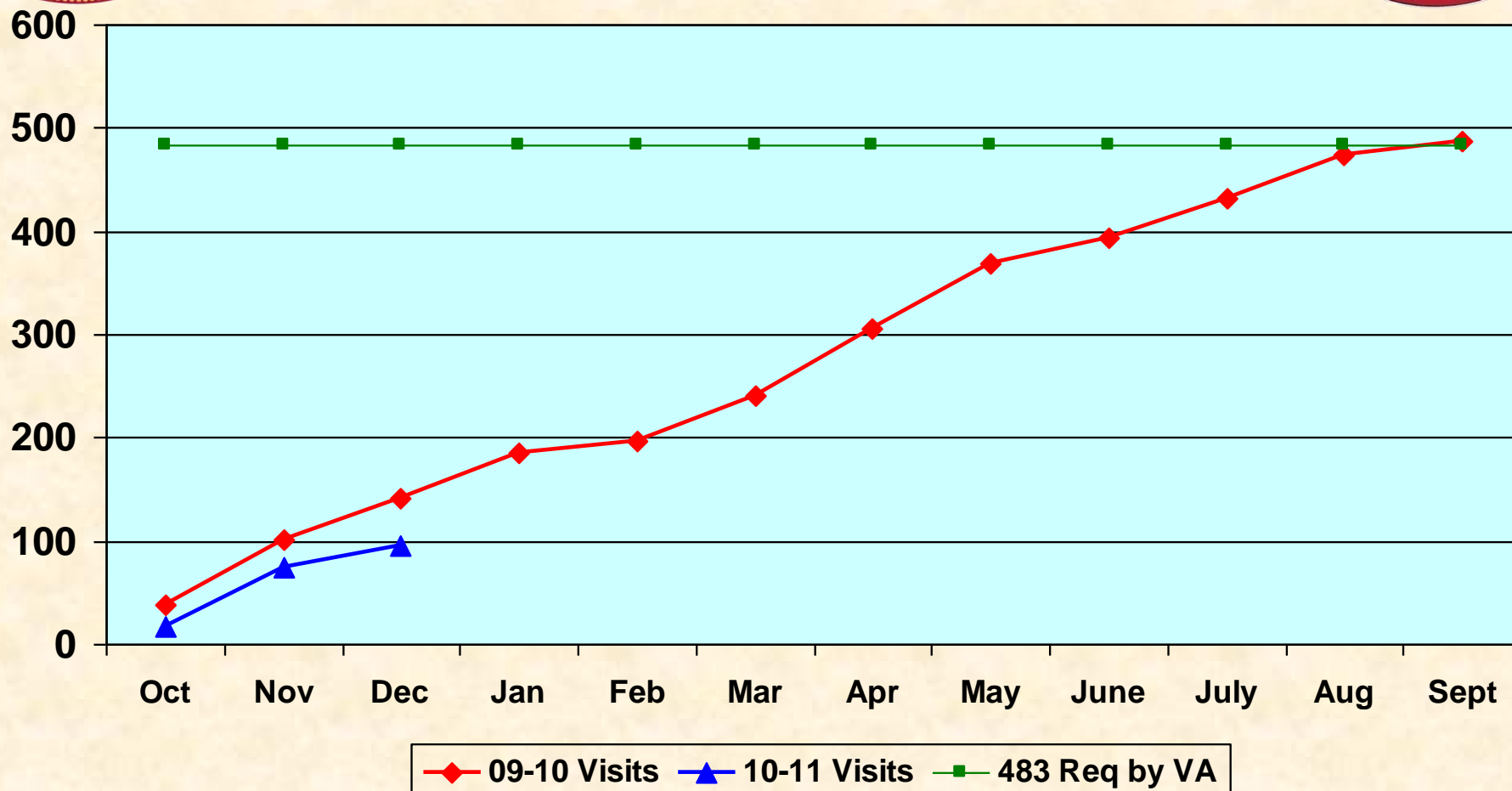
*FSTP: tracks disabled OIF/OEF veterans discharged from facilities outside the state.

**OIF/OEF seriously disabled tracks veterans discharged from Florida VHA facilities or directly from DoD facilities.

RETURNING SOLDIERS BRIEFED in 2010-11: 15,452
HOMELESS VETERAN OUTREACH: 1,858



Benefits and Assistance State Approving Agency School Visits (10/01/09-9/30/10 federal fiscal year)



School Visits

(Compliance with VA Regulations)
Technical Schools and Colleges



Challenges

Continued Effective Outreach

- **New Orlando VAMC**
- **New OPCs & CBOCs requesting service**
- **Selective outreach**
- **Need FTE and \$**

VA Regional Office

- **30% VARO personnel increase-15 FDVA VCEs for 49% claims**
- **New Agent Orange Presumptive Claims/PTSD**
- **Post 9/11 GI Bill veterans' assistance**
- **For continued quality-need FTE and \$**



Benefits and Assistance Issues

- **Recent legislation allows for three new Agent Orange presumptive issues, Ischemic Heart disease, Parkinson's Disease and B Cell Leukemias and relaxed PTSD requirements.**
- **DVA Quick Pay and Fast Track claims with 5-10 day turnaround.**
- **Impact on FDVA VCEs limited review time for disability claims.**
- **Field Service VCEs extensive outreach and out of office.**
- **Issue resolution numbers and claims intake is declining.**
- **B&A has not denied any requests for outreach for retiree functions, returning or deploying military members, Homeless Stand Downs, Congressional Town Hall meetings and Military Appreciation Events, or special functions such as the Coalition to Support America's Heroes.**



Benefits and Assistance Upcoming Events

Jan 21 - Transition Assistance Briefing (TAP), Pensacola

Jan 22 - Marine IRR Muster, Orlando

Jan 25 - American Legion Career Fair, Ft. Lauderdale

Jan 25 - American Legion Career Fair, Ft. Lauderdale

Jan 26 - Transition Assistance Presentation (TAP) , MacDill AFB , Tampa

Jan 27 - Bay Pines Service Officer/Congressional quarterly update, VAMC Bay Pines

Jan 27 - Ft. Myers OPC Service Office/Congressional quarterly update, Ft. Myers

Jan 27 - Outreach Community Resource Health Fair, Boca Raton

Jan 28 - FL Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged business meeting , Pensacola

Jan 29 - Marine IRR muster, Tampa

Jan 29 - Marine IRR muster , Tallahassee

Jan 29 - Marine IRR muster , Naval Air Station Jacksonville

Jan 18 - Orlando Veteran Service Officer/Congressional quarterly update Orlando VA Medical Center

Jan 20 - American Legion Career Fair, Tampa

Feb 12 - Yellow Ribbon event, 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, FL National Guard, Panama City Beach

Feb 15 - Florida Atlantic University Outreach, Health and Wellness Fair, Boca Raton



Benefits and Assistance Upcoming Events (Cont'd)

Feb 19 - Veterans Job Fair, Ft. Myers

Feb 25 - Veterans Connect Fair Glades and Hendry County, Clewiston

Feb 26 - Yellow Ribbon event, 1189 Transportation Brigade , Orlando

Feb 26 - Yellow Ribbon Reintegration event 53rd Inf Florida National Guard, Tampa

Mar 5 - PDHRA, 1218th Transportation, West Palm Beach

Mar 10 - Transition Assistance Presentation , Patrick AFB

Mar 10 - Spruce Creek Monthly veterans meeting, Summerfield

Mar 11/13 - Yellow Ribbon event 81st RSC , Orlando

Mar 12 - PDHRA Florida National Guard, Ocala

Mar 26 - Welcome Home USF Campus, VAMC Tampa

Apr 7 - Transition Assistance Program (TAP), Patrick AFB

Apr 8/10 - Yellow Ribbon 81st RSC, Orlando

Apr 16 - 4th Annual Job Fair and Career Expo, VAMC Orlando

Apr 17 - Pre-deployment briefing for 1-111th Aviation Battalion, Detachment

8/Operational Support Aviation (C-12) and Detachment 1 Company B/ 1204

Aviation Support Battalion, Jacksonville

County Veteran Service Officers Association

Mission:

Provide high quality, professional guidance and assistance to veterans and their dependents in obtaining their rightful entitlements from the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs as well as other federal and state agencies. We serve as advocates for our clients in a wide variety of issues.

Qualifications/Accreditations

- The County Veteran Service Officer (CVSO) is required by Florida Statute to be a wartime veteran. The CVSO is required to initially be certified by the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs and then recertified annually at training conferences.
- Most CVSOs are accredited by at least one national service organization such as American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans etc.
- This accreditation allows access to veterans' records via VA Central Computer System

Locations

Currently the Association has 156 members who provide assistance to their clients in 89 offices throughout 66 of Florida's 67 counties.

Types of Assistance

- County veteran service offices provide a wide variety of assistance including: filing claims for: service connected/non-service connected pension; death compensation/pension; Combat Related Special Compensation; Survivor Benefits etc.

Outreach

- Visit homebound clients' homes, Assisted Living Facilities and Nursing Homes
- Visit local correctional facilities as requested
- Provide veterans benefits briefings to military/veterans and civilian groups

Partnerships

- The Association partners with veterans' organizations such as: American Legion (thru the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs); Veterans of Foreign Wars; Disabled American Veterans etc.
- These organizations, located at the VA Regional Office in St. Petersburg as well as the Mini-Service Centers in Orlando and West Palm Beach VAMC, provide assistance with claims and appeals at the VA Regional Office.

Veterans Treatment Courts (VTCs)





Outline



-
- Veterans in the Criminal Justice System
 - Drug Court – History & Effectiveness
 - Veterans Treatment Court Movement
 - NADCP's initiatives



Justice-involved Veterans



-
- Less likely to be arrested or incarcerated
 - Average 9-10% of criminal justice population
 - Approx 80% discharged Honorable/General
 - 57% of were violent offenders compared to 47% of non-Veterans
 - Reported longer sentences for all crime types
 - Expected increase from Iraq and Afghanistan



Post-9/11 Veterans: Who are they?



- Over 2 million had been deployed to the Global War on Terror (GWOT)
- 810,000 deployed more than once to OEF/OIF
- Unemployment
- Homelessness
- Mental Health & Trauma
- Suicide



VTCs Today



- Jan 08 - First VTC opened in Buffalo, NY
- Jan 11 - 53 VTCs in 22 States
- 10 x growth rate of original Drug Courts





Drug Courts



-
- 1989 – 1st Drug Court formed in Miami, FL
 - 2010 – Over 2,500 Drug Courts nationwide (and over 100 in Florida)
 - Drug Courts Work
 - Reduce crime
 - Lower costs
 - Ensure compliance



Drug Courts Reduce Crime



-
- 75% of clients remain arrest-free at least 2 years after graduation.
 - Reductions in crime last at least 3 years and can endure for over 14 years.
 - Crime reduced as much as 35% more than other sentencing options.



Drug Courts Save Money



-
- \$3.36 in criminal justice costs for every \$1.00 invested.
 - \$12 for every \$1 invested when including other cost offsets such as reduced victimization and healthcare service utilization.
 - Produce total cost savings ranging from \$4,000 to \$12,000 per client.



Drug Courts

Ensure Compliance



- Provide more comprehensive and closer supervision than other community-based supervision programs.
- 6 times more likely to keep offenders in treatment long enough for them to get better.



What is a Treatment Court?



- Intensive treatment and other services combined with accountability
- Judge, Prosecution, Defense, Probation, Treatment Providers, and others work together using a non-adversarial approach
- Frequent court appearances and random drug tests
- System of Incentives and Sanctions
- Voluntary participation



What is a *Veterans Treatment Court?*



- Hybrid Drug and Mental Health Court based on the Drug Court Model
- Allows Veterans to go through the treatment court process with other Veterans
- Utilizes partnerships with federal, state and local agencies, Veterans Service Organizations, etc.
 - U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs
- Mentors/Peer Specialists



VTCs vs. Drug Courts



- Higher alcohol and prescription drug abuse
- Different and significant mental health issues
- Numerous resources available to include volunteers
- More willing to admit those accused of violent offenses to participate
- Significant need for training and technical assistance



NADCP Efforts



- Veterans Treatment Court Planning Initiative (VTCPI)
- Mentor Veterans Treatment Court Network
- “Justice For Vets”
 - The National Clearinghouse for Veterans Treatment Courts (www.JusticeForVets.org)
 - Periodic Situation Reports (SITREPs)
- Technical assistance to jurisdictions and other interested parties



Leave No Veteran Behind



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

COMPARISON OF PRIMARY OFFENSES FOR INCARCERATED VETERANS TO ENTIRE INMATE POPULATION						
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS						
Primary Offense	Claimed Veterans 12/20/2010		Verified Veterans 12/20/2010		All Inmates as of 12/10/2010	
	Inmates	Percent	Inmates	Percent	Inmates	Percent
MURDER/MANSLAUGHTER	1,079	16%	353	28%	13,308	13%
SEXUAL/LEWD BEHAVIOR	1,773	26%	501	39%	11,241	11%
ROBBERY	593	9%	97	8%	13,358	13%
VIOLENT, OTHER	747	11%	84	7%	12,265	12%
BURGLARY	677	10%	98	8%	15,920	16%
PROPERTY THEFT/FRAUD/DAMAGE	579	8%	36	3%	8,194	8%
DRUGS	860	13%	62	5%	19,008	19%
WEAPONS	165	2%	17	1%	3,345	3%
OTHER	391	6%	25	2%	5,491	5%
Total	6,864	100%	1,273	100%	102,130	100%

Notes:

Inmates tagged in the Verified Veterans Group are also in the Claimed Veterans count.

Inmates tagged in the Claimed Veterans group are in the All Inmates as of December 10, 2010 count.