



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
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TO; David J. Rosen
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

FROM: Major General Glenn K. Rieth
The Adjutant General

DATE: 25 April 2008

RE: Answers to Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee follow-up Questions

During the Senate Budget hearing for the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs several Committee members requested additional information. Below you will find the responses to those inquiries:

Senator Buono:

What percentage of your department's personnel positions were unclassified administrative positions prior to the budget reductions and what percentage of your department's personnel positions are unclassified administrative positions now?

Answer:

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs had a total of 263 unclassified employees at the end of 2001. Currently the Department has 228 unclassified employees which is a reduction of 35 employees or 24% reduction. The numbers of director level (M98) positions were reduced by 38% from 16 positions in 2001 to the current count of 10 positions.

Senator Cunningham:

What percentage of returning combat veterans are diagnosed with post traumatic stress syndrome and will you please break that percentage out between active duty reserve and New Jersey National Guard combat veterans?

Answer:

Research indicates that 60% of all men and 50% of all women will experience, in their lifetime, a traumatic event sufficient to trigger PTSD. Approximately 8% of the men and 20% of women who experience such an event will actually develop PTSD. Operation Iraqi Freedom Veterans shows a PTSD rate of 12% to 20%. Operation Enduring Freedom Veterans have shown a rate of 6% to 11%. These statistics reflect individuals actually seeking treatment but many simply do not; largely due to the stigma still associated with mental health issues. However, predicting the incidence rate is not an exact science since it correlates directly to the soldier's experience in the field.

Since the end of 2007, DMAVA has tracked the service affiliation and enlistment status of those utilizing our PTSD Counseling Services. A breakdown by number and percentage follows:

PTSD Counseling Clients by Service Group

Army	568	58.6%
Marines	205	21.1%
Navy	92	9.5 %
Air Force	41	4.2%
Coast Guard	7	1.0%
Army National Guard	40	4.1%
Army Reserve	<u>16</u>	1.5%
	969	

Those seeking counseling services are not solely confined to our newest veterans. A breakdown by service era follows:

PTSD Counseling Clients by Service Era

Vietnam	654	67.0%
OIF/OEF	238	25.9%
World War II	66	7.0%
Gulf War	<u>11</u>	1.0%
	969	

Senator Sweeney:

What is the suicide rate for returning combat veterans?

Currently, there is a lack of statistical information for Veteran Suicides on the national level since no federal agency is actively tracking these statistics. This fact came to light during a CBS News story that aired on November 13, 2007 and a follow-up segment on April 22, 2008.

In order to compile their segment, CBS requested the relevant statistical data from all fifty states for the years 1995 to 2005, and received responses from forty-five. As a result, CBS News compiled the following summary:

National Suicide Rate Results - 2004 **

Overall Rates	Veterans: 17.5 to 21.8 per 100,000 Non-Veterans: 9.4 per 100,000
Male Rates	Veterans: 30.6 to 38.3 per 100,000 Non-Veterans: 18.3 per 100,000
Female Rates	Veterans: 10.0 to 12.5 per 100,000 Non-Veterans: 4.8 per 100,000

National Suicide Rate Results - 2005 **

Overall Rates	Veterans: 18.7 to 20.8 per 100,000 Non-Veterans: 8.9 per 100,000
Male Rates	Veterans: 31.5 to 35.3 per 100,000 Non-Veterans: 17.6 per 100,000
Female Rates	Veterans: 11.1 to 12.3 per 100,000 Non-Veterans: 4.5 per 100,000

**Please note that these rates are for all veterans and do not delineate between service era or if the veteran saw combat or served in peacetime.

The New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans has taken a progressive and proactive stance in dealing with both PTSD and suicide prevention. In concert and under contract with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, the Department maintains a 24 hour Veterans Counseling Hotline (1-866-838-7654), presenting instant access for any veteran in crisis and needing assistance. Over the last year, this service has interceded and dispatched immediate help to two veterans presenting extreme suicidal tendencies and guided six others showing lesser inclinations into counseling. All eight are currently receiving follow up monitoring and treatment.

In addition, suicide prevention training is mandated for all NJ National Guard unit commanders. This coupled with an aggressive post-deployment and reconstitution counseling process, the Department is making every effort to identify those needing help and insuring they receive the necessary assistance.