

# **Department of Veterans Affairs**

## **Gulf War Veterans Information System**

**August 2007**



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## August 2007 GWVIS Report

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# **Section One**

## **GWVIS Report Introduction**

### **Overview**

The Gulf War Veterans Information System (GWVIS) provides the best available current data identifying the 6.5 million Gulf War service member population. The GWVIS reports monitor, in part, the service members' use of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) healthcare and disability benefits.

GWVIS reports are distributed each quarter during the following months: March, June, September, and December.

### **History and Partnership**

In 1997, VA's Office of Policy, Planning, and Preparedness, working with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), and other VA organizational elements, created the GWVIS reports to identify Gulf War service members and monitor, in part, their VBA compensation and pension benefit use.

VBA works to enhance GWVIS reports with several governmental partners, including: Department of Defense's Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) and Deployment Health Support Directorate (DHSD), VHA, VA's Office of Policy, Planning and Preparedness, VA's Office of the General Counsel, VA's Readjustment Counseling Service (RCS), and VBA's Compensation and Pension Service (C&P Service).

GWVIS reports are consistent with the "Veterans Health Care Act of 1992" (Public Law 102-585) in identifying Gulf War service members and reporting on various aspects of their VA healthcare and benefit activity.

### **Preparation**

VBA uses four steps to prepare the quarterly GWVIS reports:

1. Every three months, the DoD sends VBA an updated list identifying all current and prior military service members since the start of the Gulf War on August 2, 1990.
2. VBA compares DoD's updated list of service members with VBA information systems.
3. VBA uses the results from the comparison to prepare reports about Gulf War veterans and their compensation and pension benefit use sorted by specific cohorts based on Gulf War deployment status.

4. VBA provides VHA a copy of the DoD data. VHA prepares the following reports for inclusions in the GWVIS Reports:

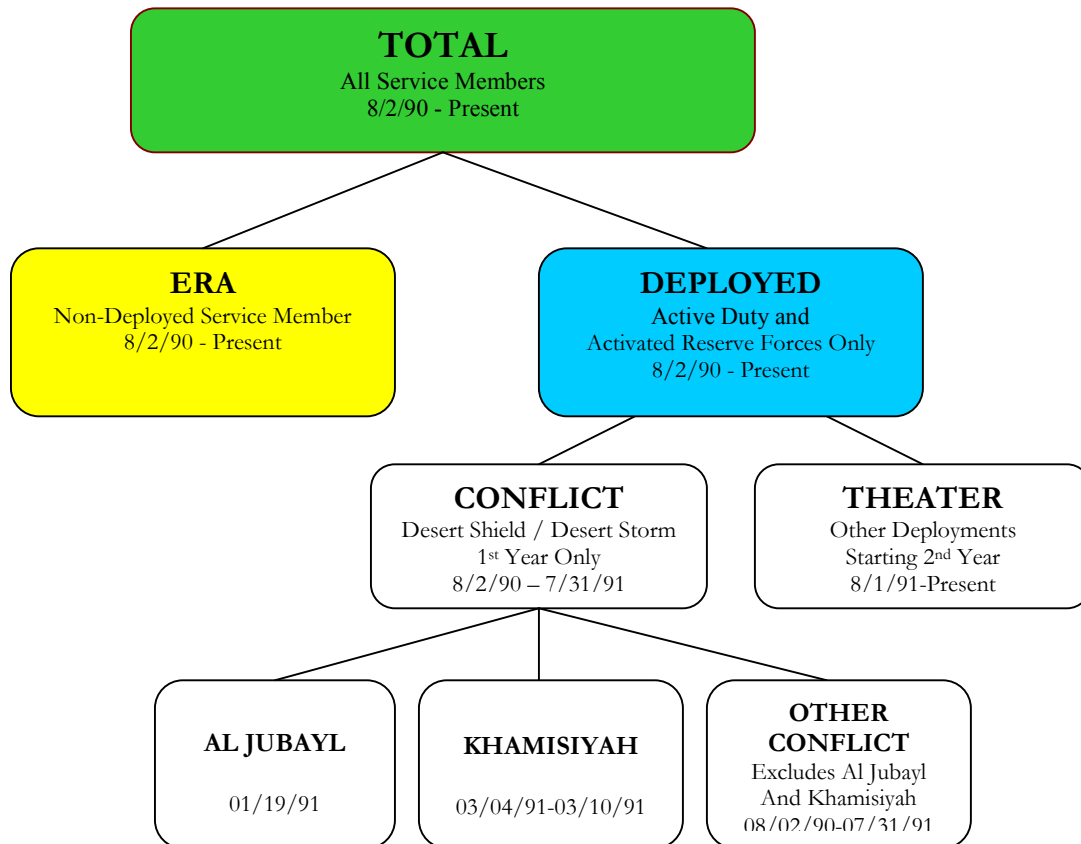
- Gulf War Readjustment Counseling Service – Vet Center Utilization
- Gulf War Service Member VHA Healthcare Enrollment by Priority Group
- Gulf War Mortality Data

**Categories**

GWVIS reports are prepared for all categories shown below. The following describes how some categories are combined to create other categories:

<b>The Count for this category ...</b>	<b>... Is the sum of these categories</b>
Total	Era + Deployed
Deployed	Conflict + Theater
Conflict	Al Jubayl + Khamisiyah + Other Conflict

The following graph illustrates how GWVIS categories are combined in this report:



## **Data Sources**

VBA uses data from the DoD and VA to prepare GWVIS reports. The list below identifies the DoD and VA organizational source, scheduled cycle dates, and specific file names.

### **DoD:**

DMDC extract, dated July 13, 2007:

- Active Duty Master File
- Active Duty Loss File
- Reserve Components Common Personnel Data System
- Operation Desert Shield/Storm Files
- Operation Mission/Contingency Files

DHSD:

- Khamisiyah Master File, dated March 2006
- Al Jubayl Master File, dated August 2005

### **VA:**

VBA:

- Beneficiary Identification and Records Locator Subsystem (BIRLS), dated August 27, 2007
- Compensation and Pension Master Record (CPMR), dated August 27, 2007
- Pending Issue File (PIF), dated August 27, 2007

VHA:

- VHA Gulf War Veteran Mortality Study, one time study prepared in 2001
- VHA Healthcare Enrollment Files, dated April 2006
- Readjustment Counseling Service - Vet Center (RCSVC) Utilization File, dated March 9, 2006.

## **Limitations**

There are eleven limitations to the GWVIS report.

1. GWVIS reports do not contain information about individual veterans.
2. GWVIS reports do not provide information on how claims are adjudicated. Questions raised on this matter should be referred to VBA's C&P Service.
3. GWVIS reports do not cite statutes or regulations for terms and definitions. Questions about compensation and pension terms and definitions should be referred to C&P Service. Questions about any healthcare terms and definitions should be referred to VHA. The terms and definitions used in this document are intended for this report only, and they should not be relied upon for any other purpose, such as the presentation of claims for VA benefits.

4. Unless otherwise noted, this report provides current counts from the data sources listed. This report does not contain cumulative counts of C&P benefit use.
5. GWVIS reports do not distinguish between a veteran and a “civilian veteran.” Some veterans counted in the GWVIS report may currently be on active duty due to re-enlistment to active duty or due to activation from the Reserve Forces to active duty. In contrast, “civilian veterans,” as defined by the Census Bureau and in VA’s official counts, are those no longer on active duty.
6. The GWVIS report differs from existing VBA Reports Control Symbol (RCS) and Computer Output Identification Number (COIN) reports. The GWVIS report identifies all veterans with military service on or after August 2, 1990. In contrast, the COIN and RCS reports sort veterans into only one period of military service, such as Vietnam Era, Peacetime, or Gulf War. COIN and RCS reports contain lower counts of Gulf War veterans because some veterans of the Gulf War period who served prior to August 1990 have multiple periods of military service. These veterans may be counted in the COIN and RCS reports under another period of military service.
7. This report contains “Gulf War Mortality Data.” Please contact VHA’s Office of Public Health and Environmental Hazards for more information regarding Gulf War mortality data. The GWVIS statistical reports, containing death counts, do not constitute a Gulf War veteran mortality study.
8. Some of the veterans identified in this report had prior active military service. Therefore, not all of the claims counted in this report were incurred during the Gulf War period or deployment to Southwest Asia. VBA’s computer systems do not attribute each of a veteran’s disabilities to a specific period of service or deployment.
9. The report, “Gulf War Readjustment Counseling Service - Vet Center Utilization,” contains counts of unique veterans who sought or are using RCSVC services. The counts do not constitute a VA study of war zone veterans.
10. The report, “Gulf War Service Member VHA Healthcare Enrollment by Priority Group,” is limited to counts of Gulf War service members’ VHA healthcare enrollment by priority group. VA services and treatment available to enrolled veterans generally are not based on priority groups.
11. This report gathered information only from the Benefits Delivery Network (BDN). Therefore, a small number (less than 29,000) of new veteran records processed in the VBA corporate environment are excluded from this report. Only VBA-related tables are affected by the data exclusion.

## Section Two

### August 2007 Reports

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### Service Member Statistics August 2007

Category	Conflict	Theater	Deployed	Era	Total
<b>Service Members</b>	696,842	432,511	1,129,353	5,709,188	6,838,541
<b>Service Member Separations</b>	635,046	348,367	983,413	4,978,816	5,962,229
<b>Active Duty Separations</b>	519,460	341,509	860,969	3,154,085	4,015,054
<b>Activated Reserve Forces Separations</b>	115,586	6,858	122,444	333,423	455,867
<b>Non-Activated Reserve Forces Separations</b>	0	0	0	1,491,308	1,491,308
<b>Non-Activated Reserve Forces, Service- Connected<sup>1</sup></b>	0	0	0	129,816	129,816
<b><u>Veteran</u> Deaths<sup>2</sup></b>	13,816	4,445	18,261	56,610	74,871
<b>Estimated Living Veterans</b>	621,230	343,922	965,152	3,560,714	4,525,866

#### Interpreting GWVIS Categories

The Count for this category:	... Is the sum of:	And:
Total	Deployed	Era
Deployed	Conflict	Theater

<sup>1</sup> 1. VBA identified 129,816 Non-Activated Reservists who are service-connected or pensioners as "veterans." VBA identified 7,639 deaths among the 129,816. The 7,639 deaths are included in the count for Deaths reported under "Era." The 122,177 remaining living veterans are included in the count of "Estimated Living Veterans" reported under "Era."

<sup>2</sup> These counts reflect raw data that has not been subjected to any statistical analysis nor has it been adjusted in any way to make it a mortality study. There has been no adjustment to account for age, gender, race, and other items required for a valid mortality study. In addition, the data will not reflect deaths that occurred after July 2007. The use of these data to draw conclusions regarding mortality rates will result in inaccurate conclusions. For analysis of Gulf War veteran mortality, see "Mortality among US Veterans of the Persian Gulf War: 7-Year Follow-up," Han K. Kang and Tim A. Bullman, American Journal of Epidemiology, 2001,154(5): 399-405.

### Compensation and Pension Statistics August 2007

Category	Conflict	Theater	Deployed	Era	Total
<b>Service Members</b>	696,842	432,511	1,129,353	5,709,188	6,838,541
<b>Estimated Living Veterans</b>	621,230	343,922	965,152	3,560,714	4,525,866
<b>Claims Filed</b>	278,149	126,101	404,250	1,199,140	1,603,743
<b>Claims Processed</b>	238,931	108,781	347,712	1,022,368	1,370,080
<b>C&amp;P Benefit Granted</b>	209,697	100, 287	309,984	896,811	1,206,795
<b>Claims Granted Service Connection</b>	208,337	100,011	308,348	892,756	1,201,104
<b>Claims Denied Service Connection</b>	30,594	8,774	39,368	129,612	169,980
<b>Claims Pending</b>	39,218	17,316	56,534	176,772	233,306
<b>Service-Connected Ten Percent (10%) or Greater, Receiving Compensation or Pension.</b>	160,461	79,956	240,417	683,893	924,310
<b>Service-Connected Zero Percent (0%), Receiving Compensation or Pension</b>	3,244	1,609	4853	12,960	17,813
<b>Service-Connected Ten Percent (10%) or Greater, No Compensation or Pension</b>	4,791	1,348	6,139	24,735	30,874
<b>Service-Connected Zero Percent (0%), No Compensation or Pension</b>	39,841	17,098	56,939	171,168	228, 107
<b>Non-Service Connected, Receiving Pension</b>	1,360	276	1,636	4,055	5,691
<b>Non-Service Connected, No Pension</b>	29,234	8,498	37,732	125,557	163,289

#### Interpreting GWVIS Categories

The Count for this category:	... Is the sum of:	And:
Total	Deployed	Era
Deployed	Conflict	Theater

**Undiagnosed Illness (UDX)  
Compensation and Pension Statistics  
August 2007**

Category	Conflict	Theater	Deployed	Era	Total
Service Members	696,842	432,511	1,129,353	5,709,188	6,838,541
Estimated Living Veterans	621,230	343,922	965,152	3,560,714	4,525,866
Undiagnosed Illness (UDX), Claims Processed	12,788	1,839	14,627	Not Applicable	14,627
UDX, Claims Granted Service Connection	3,280	349	3,629	Not Applicable	3,629
UDX, Claims Denied Service Connection	9,508	1,490	10,998	Not Applicable	10,998
UDX, Service-Connected Ten Percent (10%) or Greater, Receiving Compensation or Pension	2,877	296	3,173	Not Applicable	3,173
UDX, Service-Connected Zero Percent (0%), Receiving Compensation or Pension	204	33	237	Not Applicable	237
UDX, Service-Connected Ten Percent (10%) or Greater, No Compensation or Pension	78	8	86	Not Applicable	86
UDX, Service-Connected Zero Percent (0%), No Compensation or Pension	121	12	133	Not Applicable	133
UDX, Nonservice-Connected, Receiving Compensation or Pension	3,900	748	4,648	Not Applicable	4,648
UDX, Nonservice-Connected, No Pension	5481	729	6,210	Not Applicable	6,210

**Interpreting GWVIS Categories**

The Count for this category:	... Is the sum of:	And:
Total	Deployed	Era
Deployed	Conflict	Theater

**Al Jubayl and Khamisiyah  
Compensation and Pension Statistics  
August 2007**

Category	Al Jubayl	Khamisiyah <sup>1</sup>	Other Conflict	Conflict
<b>Service Members</b>	1,334	145,456	550,052	696,842
<b>Estimated Living Veterans</b>	1,204	130,507	489,519	621,230
<b>Veteran Deaths</b>	38	3,248	10,530	13,816
<b>Claims Filed</b>	480	68,675	209,430	278,149
<b>Claims Processed</b>	425	58,612	179,930	238,931
<b>C&amp;P Benefit Granted</b>	344	49,980	158,707	209,697
<b>Claims Granted Service Connection</b>	346	50,329	157,698	208,337
<b>Claims Denied Service Connection</b>	79	8,283	22,232	30,594
<b>Claims Pending</b>	55	10,063	29,100	39,218
<b>Service-Connected Ten Percent (10%) or Greater, Receiving Compensation or Pension.</b>	262	38,470	121,765	160,461
<b>Service-Connected Zero Percent (0%), Receiving Compensation or Pension</b>	6	679	2,559	3,244
<b>Service-Connected Ten Percent (10%) or Greater, No Compensation or Pension</b>	10	1,311	3,470	4,791
<b>Service-Connected Zero Percent (0%), No Compensation or Pension</b>	68	9,869	29,904	39,841
<b>Non-Service Connected, Receiving Pension</b>	2	349	1,009	1,360
<b>Non-Service Connected, No Pension</b>	77	7,934	20,858	28,742

<sup>1</sup> The total number of service members ever identified by DoD with possible low-level chemical warfare agent exposure serving in units in the hazard areas at or near Khamisiyah, Iraq is 145,472 as of June 30, 2006. In this report, VBA displayed compensation and pension statistics on 145,456 service members. VA and DoD have completed their fourth quarter 2006 review of service member records. However, there is a possibility of future changes, if needed, based on further review by DoD.

**Al Jubayl and Khamisiyah  
Undiagnosed Illness (UDX)  
Compensation and Pension Statistics  
August 2007**

Category	Al Jubayl	Khamisiyah <sup>1</sup>	Other Conflict	Conflict
<b>Service Members</b>	1,334	145,456	550,052	696,842
<b>Estimated Living Veterans</b>	1,204	130,507	489,519	621,230
<b>Veteran Deaths</b>	38	3,248	10,530	13,816
<b>Undiagnosed Illness (UDX), Claims Processed</b>	67	4,321	8,400	12,788
<b>UDX, Claims Granted Service Connection</b>	20	1,136	2,124	3,280
<b>UDX, Claims Denied Service Connection</b>	47	3,185	6,276	9,508
<b>UDX, Service-Connected Ten Percent (10%) or Greater, Receiving Compensation or Pension</b>	19	1,003	1,855	2,877
<b>UDX, Service-Connected Zero Percent (0%), Receiving Compensation or Pension</b>	0	58	146	204
<b>UDX, Service-Connected Ten Percent (10%) or Greater, No Compensation or Pension</b>	0	34	44	78
<b>UDX, Service-Connected Zero Percent (0%), No Compensation or Pension</b>	1	41	79	121
<b>UDX, Nonservice-Connected, Receiving Compensation or Pension</b>	12	1,292	2,596	3,900
<b>UDX, Nonservice-Connected, No Pension</b>	35	1,893	3,553	5,481

<sup>1</sup> The total number of service members ever identified by DoD with possible low-level chemical warfare agent exposure serving in units in the hazard areas at or near Khamisiyah, Iraq is 145,472 as of June 30, 2006. In this report, VBA displayed compensation and pension statistics on 145,456 service members. VA and DoD have completed their fourth quarter 2006 review of service member records. However, there is a possibility of future changes, if needed, based on further review by DoD.

### Gulf War Readjustment Counseling Service – Vet Center Benefit Utilization<sup>3</sup>

The tables below provide counts of unique Gulf War veterans using Readjustment Counseling Service – Vet Center (RCSVC) as of March 2006<sup>4</sup>.

Category	Conflict	Theater	Deployed	Era	Total
<b>Service Members</b>	696,842	432,511	1,129,353	5,709,188	6,838,541
<b>Estimated Living Veterans</b>	621,230	343,922	965,152	3,560,714	4,525,866
<b>Count of Unique Veterans Using Vet Centers<sup>5</sup></b>	74,319	28,256	102,575	243,990	346,565

Category	Al Jubayl	Khamisiyah	Other Conflict	Conflict
<b>Service Members</b>	1,334	145,456	550,052	696,842
<b>Estimated Living Veterans</b>	1,204	130,507	486,572	618,283
<b>Count of Unique Veterans Using Vet Centers</b>	137	17,096	57,086	74,319

#### Interpreting GWVIS Categories

The Count for this category:	... Is the sum of:	And:
Total	Deployed	Era
Deployed	Conflict	Theater

<sup>3</sup> The report, “Gulf War Readjustment Counseling Service – Vet Center Benefit Utilization” contains counts of unique veterans who sought or are using RCSVC services. The counts do not constitute a VA study of war zone veterans. For further information about RCSVC, please go to: <http://www.va.gov/rcs/>

<sup>4</sup> The Readjustment Counseling Service, effective with the August 2005 report, used a new data matching methodology, which ensured a more reliable result.

<sup>5</sup> The Readjustment Counseling Service Vet Centers were created through legislation passed by Congress. Vet Centers provide a continuum of care during the post-war adjustment from military to civilian life for veterans (and family members) in or near their local communities. Key access links to community agencies, VA, and professional readjustment counseling, community education, and outreach to special veteran populations are made available to war zone veterans through the Vet Centers.

### Gulf War Service Member VHA Healthcare Enrollment by Priority Group<sup>6</sup>

The tables below show counts of Gulf War service members' VHA healthcare enrollment by priority group, as of April 2006.

Category	Conflict	Theater	Deployed	Era	Total
<b>Gulf War Service Members</b>	696,842	432,511	1,129,353	5,709,188	6,838,541
<b>Estimated Living Veterans</b>	621,230	343,922	965,152	3,430,898	4,396,050
<b>Enrollment Priority Group 1</b>	39,053	15,246	54,299	138,001	192,300
<b>Enrollment Priority Group 2</b>	34,086	16,980	51,066	137,407	188,473
<b>Enrollment Priority Group 3</b>	55,062	26,239	81,301	242,595	323,896
<b>Enrollment Priority Group 4</b>	1,793	439	2,232	6,642	8,874
<b>Enrollment Priority Group 5</b>	45,819	24,318	70,137	262,686	332,823
<b>Enrollment Priority Group 6</b>	24,204	2,860	27,064	53,890	80,954
<b>Enrollment Priority Group 7</b>	1,965	953	2,918	11,402	14,320
<b>Enrollment Priority Group 8</b>	46,026	18,619	64,645	193,678	258,323
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	248,008	105,654	353,662	1,046,301	1,399,963

#### Interpreting GWVIS Categories

The Count for this category:	... Is the sum of:	And:
Total	Deployed	Era
Deployed	Conflict	Theater

<sup>6</sup> For definitions of VA's eight enrollment priority groups, please see the Glossary of Terms, Definitions, and Limitations.

**Gulf War Mortality Data  
1990 - 1997**

This report, supplied by VHA, shows death rates from 1990 to 1997 of US Gulf War veterans deployed to the Gulf War region before March 1, 1991 compared to non-Gulf War veterans over the same period.<sup>1</sup>

**Gulf War Mortality Data**

Gulf War Veterans			Non-Gulf War Veterans		Ratio of Death Rates <sup>3</sup>	Significance of the ratio of death rates <sup>4, 5, 6</sup>
Veteran Gender	Number of Deaths	Death Rate <sup>2</sup>	Number of Deaths	Death Rate <sup>2</sup>		
<b>Male</b>	4,312	11.1	5,542	12.9	0.95	Not significant
<b>Female</b>	194	6.6	376	5.7	1.16	Not significant

<sup>1</sup> This study compared the mortality among the 621,902 Gulf War veterans who served at least one day during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm (those arriving in the Southwest Asia theater of operations after August 2, 1990, but before March 1, 1991) to the mortality among 746,248 non-Gulf War veterans who served during this conflict but were not deployed to this area, and includes Active Duty, and activated Reserve Forces.

The Southwest Asia theater of operations is as defined by DoD’s Defense Manpower Data Center.

Non-Gulf War veterans used for comparison in this study were service members who served during this period but did not deploy to the Southwest Asia theater of operations, and includes Active Duty, and activated Reserve Forces (from “Mortality among US Veterans of the Persian Gulf War: 7-Year Follow-up,” Kang, Han K., and Tim A. Bullman, American Journal of Epidemiology, 2001, 154(5): 399-405).

This study by the Department of Veterans Affairs is still ongoing.

<sup>2</sup> Crude death rate for all causes of death, per 10,000 person years.

<sup>3</sup> Death rate ratio comparing death rate of Gulf War veterans to the death rate of Non-Gulf War veterans, controlling for, race, branch of service, unit component and marital status. A ratio of 1 indicates that the death rates are the same for the two groups.

<sup>4</sup> Determination if the death rate ratio was statistically significantly different from 1. Differences are considered significant when there is 95% confidence that the difference did not occur by chance.

<sup>5</sup> Although this study found no real difference between death rates among Gulf War and Non-Gulf War veterans, it found that death rates for both groups were less than half of that found in their civilian counterparts.

<sup>6</sup> An increased death rate among Gulf War veterans from motor vehicle accidents found in an earlier VA study has disappeared in this seven year follow up study.



## Section Three

### Glossary of Terms, Definitions, and Limitations

This section provides the terms, definitions, and limitations used in the GWVIS report. Questions about terms and definitions should be referred to C&P Service or VHA, as appropriate. The terms and definitions in this document are intended for this report only, and they should not be relied upon for any other purpose, such as the presentation of claims for VA benefits.

#### Activated Reserve Forces Separations

Activated Reserve Forces Separations is a subset of Service Member Separations. Activated Reserve Forces Separations identifies only current and former activated Reserve Forces personnel with a discharge who were called to active duty on or after August 2, 1990, by the Federal Government. All Activated Reserve Forces are counted, regardless of:

- Length of enlistment
- Re-enlistment
- Character of service
- Death

*Limitations:* In some cases, DMDC cannot determine if a service member enlisted directly into active duty or if a service member was activated from the Reserve Forces. In those cases, the service members are counted under Active Duty Separations.

#### Active Duty Separations

Active Duty Separations is a subset of Service Member Separations. Active Duty Separations identifies current and former active duty personnel with a discharge and with service on or after August 2, 1990. All Active Duty Separations are counted, regardless of:

- Length of enlistment
- Re-enlistment
- Character of service
- Death

*Limitations:* In some cases, DMDC cannot determine if a service member enlisted directly into active duty or if a service member was activated from the Reserve Forces. In those cases, the service members are counted under Active Duty Separations.

## **Al Jubayl**

Al Jubayl is a subset of the Conflict category. On or about January 19, 1991, service members serving in and around Al Jubayl, Saudi Arabia reported an incident involving a “loud noise,” “bright flash,” and possible “Iraqi chemical warfare agent attack.” There are 1,334 service members identified by the DoD as having served in and around the port city of Al Jubayl on January 19, 1991. DoD concludes that the chemical attack was “unlikely.” Additional information regarding events at or near Al Jubayl can be viewed at DoD’s web site: <http://www.deploymentlink.osd.mil>

## **Claims Denied Service Connection**

A veteran’s claim is denied when VA determines none of the veteran’s conditions meet eligibility requirements for service connection under VA statutes and regulations. This denial is called “Nonservice-Connected,” or “NSC.” Claims Denied Service Connection is the sum of Nonservice-Connected - No Pension and Nonservice-Connected - Receiving Pension.

*Limitation:* Claims Denied Service Connection includes claims where all the veteran’s conditions were determined to be Nonservice-Connected even if the veteran was granted pension. The total number of Claims Denied Service Connection may decrease as appealed or reopened claims are granted. This is not a cumulative count.

## **Claims Filed**

Claims Filed equals the total of Claims Granted Service Connection, Claims Denied Service Connection, and Claims Pending. This is not a cumulative count.

*Limitations:* Some duplicate counting may exist in the category Claims Filed if a veteran who was previously granted or denied disability benefits subsequently reopens his/her claim. Pending claims may increase or decrease each quarter based on the number of veterans who open new claims or re-open prior claims. This is not a cumulative count.

## **Claims Granted Service Connection**

A veteran’s claim is granted when VA determines at least one of the veteran’s conditions meets eligibility requirements for service connection under VA statutes and regulations. This grant is called “service-connected,” or “SC.” Veterans frequently file a claim for more than one condition. For veterans who filed a claim for more than one condition, this category contains veterans with a full grant of all conditions as well as veterans with a combination of grants and denials. Disabilities are evaluated according to VA regulations, and the extent of the disability is expressed as a percentage from zero percent to 100 percent, in increments of 10 percent. Claims Granted Service Connection includes all service-connected disabilities, from zero percent to 100 percent, regardless of whether the veteran receives monetary compensation.

*Limitations:* Claims Granted Service Connection excludes claims where all the veteran's conditions were determined to be Nonservice-Connected even if the veteran was granted pension. The number of Claims Granted Service Connection includes veterans who have subsequently died. The total number of claims granted remains constant or increases each quarter. However, subcategories of Claims Granted Service Connection may increase or decrease. An increase or decrease may occur when a veteran with a granted claim re-enlists on active duty or is ordered to active duty from the Reserve Forces. Veterans who return to active duty are not permitted to receive both active duty pay and VA payments. This is not a cumulative count.

### **Claims Pending**

Claims Pending identifies where VA is reviewing a veteran's claim for compensation or pension benefits. This includes appealed and reopened claims, diary issues, issues pending authorization, and issues pending acceptance.

*Limitations:* The count of Claims Filed is the sum of Claims Pending and Claims Processed. Therefore, duplicate counting may exist in the category Claims Filed if a veteran who was previously granted or denied disability benefits subsequently reopens their claim. Pending claims may increase or decrease each quarter based on the number of veterans who open new claims or re-open prior claims. This is not a cumulative count.

### **Claims Processed**

Claims Processed equals the total of Claims Granted Service Connection and Claims Denied Service Connection. Claims Processed does not include pending claims. This is not a cumulative count.

### **Conflict**

Conflict is a subset of Deployed. Conflict identifies active duty service members deployed to Southwest Asia during the Gulf War, from August 2, 1990, through July 31, 1991. This includes Active Duty as well as Activated Reserve Forces.

*Limitations:* The initial Gulf War air campaign began on January 17, 1991, and it lasted through February 28, 1991. The Gulf War ground invasion into Iraq and Kuwait began February 24, 1991, and it stopped on February 28, 1991. VA defines the Southwest Asia theater as Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea, and the airspace above these locations.

## **C&P Benefit Granted**

C&P Benefit Granted is a sum of "Claims Granted Service Connection" and "Non-Service connected, Receiving Pension." This is not a cumulative count.

## **Deployed**

Deployed identifies active duty service members who served at least one day in the Southwest Asia theater of operations from August 2, 1990, through the present. VA uses the period from August 2, 1990, to the present to identify service members deployed to the Southwest Asia theater of operations who are potentially eligible for additional VA benefits (such as undiagnosed illness compensation). Deployed includes Activated Reserve Forces. Deployed equals the sum of the Conflict and Theater categories.

*Limitations:* VA defines the Southwest Asia theater as Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea, and the airspace above these locations.

## **Era**

Era identifies service members who did not deploy to the Gulf War. This includes Active Duty, Activated Reserve Forces, and Non-Activated Reserve Forces.

## **Estimated Living Veterans**

Estimated Living Veterans is a subset of the Service Member population. It identifies individuals with active duty service and a discharge on or after August 2, 1990. Estimated Living Veterans includes service members called to active duty from the Reserve Forces. Subtractions are made for deaths.

*Limitations:* Estimated Living Veterans includes living Non-Activated Reserve Forces with a VA service-connected condition or who are in receipt of pension. Subtractions are made for deaths from among those Non-Activated Reserve Forces who had a VA service-connected condition or who were in receipt of pension. This report does not distinguish between a veteran and a "civilian veteran." Some veterans counted in this report may currently be on active duty due to re-enlistment to active duty or due to activation from the Reserve Forces to active duty. In contrast, "civilian veterans" (as defined by the Census Bureau and in VA's official counts) are those no longer on active duty.

VBA continues to work with VA's Office of Policy and Planning to resolve differences in the number of estimated living Gulf War veterans counted in GWVIS and those determined to be Gulf War veterans in VetPop2004, v1.0, which is 4,839,000 as of July 2007. VetPop2004 estimates the number of civilian veterans (veterans not on active duty), while the VBA counts unique social security numbers, and includes both civilian veterans and veterans who are on active duty. Moreover, VetPop2004 includes a combination of reported separations up through September 2003 and projected separations after 2003

whereas VBA includes reported separations up through April 2006. The number of estimated living Gulf War veterans has increased as the number of service members discharged from active duty exceeded the number of Gulf War veterans who died.

**Healthcare Enrollment Priority Group**

The table below describes VA Healthcare Priority Groups 1 through 8.

**Healthcare Enrollment Priority Group**

<b>Priority Group</b>	<b>Description of Priority Group</b>
<b>Priority 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 50% or more disabling, or</li> <li>• Veterans determined by VA to be unemployable due to service-connected conditions</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 2</b>	Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 30% or 40% disabling
<b>Priority 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 10% or 20% disabling</li> <li>• Veterans who are former POWs</li> <li>• Veterans awarded the Purple Heart</li> <li>• Veterans whose discharge was for a disability that began in the line of duty</li> <li>• Veterans who are disabled because of VA treatment or participation in VA vocational rehabilitation program</li> <li>• Veterans whose receipt of disability compensation is suspended because of the receipt of military retired pay</li> <li>• Veterans receiving compensation at the 10 percent rating level based on multiple non-compensable service-connected disabilities that clearly interfere with normal employability</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veterans who are receiving aid and attendance or housebound benefits (on pension) from VA</li> <li>• Veterans who have been determined by VA to be catastrophically disabled</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veterans receiving VA pension benefits</li> <li>• Veterans who are eligible for Medicaid programs</li> <li>• Veterans with income and assets below VA Means Test Thresholds</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veterans with 0% service-connected conditions, but receiving VA compensation</li> <li>• Veterans seeking care only for disorders relating to Ionizing Radiation and Project 112/SHAD</li> <li>• Veterans seeking care for Agent Orange Exposure during service in Vietnam</li> <li>• Veterans seeking care for Gulf War Illness or for conditions related to exposure to Environmental Contaminants during service in the Persian Gulf</li> <li>• Veterans of World War I or the Mexican Border War</li> <li>• Veterans who served in combat in a war after the Gulf War or during a period of hostility after November 11, 1998, for 2 years following discharge or release from the military</li> </ul>

Priority Group	Description of Priority Group
<p><b>Priority 7</b></p>	<p>Veterans who agree to pay specified copayments with income and/or net worth above VA Means Test threshold and income below the Geographic Means Test Threshold</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subpriority a: Noncompensable 0% service-connected veterans who were enrolled in VA Health Care System on a specified date and who have remained enrolled since that date</li> <li>• Subpriority c: Nonservice-connected veterans who were enrolled in the VA Health Care System on a specified date and who have remained enrolled since that date</li> <li>• Subpriority e: Noncompensable 0% service-connected veterans not included in Subpriority a above. <i>VA is not currently using Subpriority e</i></li> <li>• Subpriority g: Nonservice-connected veterans not included in Subpriority c above. <i>VA is not currently using Subpriority g</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority 8</b></p>	<p>Veterans who agree to pay specified copayments with income and/or net worth above VA Means Test Threshold and the Geographic Means Test Threshold</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subpriority a: Noncompensable 0% service-connected veterans enrolled as of January 16, 2003 and who have remained enrolled since that date</li> <li>• Subpriority c: Nonservice-connected veterans enrolled as of January 16, 2003 and who have remained enrolled since that date</li> <li>• Subpriority e: Noncompensable 0% service-connected veterans applying for enrollment after January 16, 2003</li> <li>• Subpriority g: Nonservice-connected veterans applying for enrollment after January 16, 2003</li> </ul>

**Khamisiyah**

Khamisiyah is a subset of the Conflict category. The DoD identified 145,472 service members as having served in units in the hazard areas in and around the Khamisiyah Ammunition Supply Point, Iraq at the time of the demolition of chemical warfare munitions. On March 4, 1991, and on March 10, 1991, the U.S. military destroyed Iraqi “chemical warfare agent rockets,” possibly exposing U.S. service members to low levels of chemical warfare agents. Based on the most recent analysis of the Khamisiyah events, the DoD believes 101,768 service members were possibly exposed to low-level chemical warfare agents. Additional information about the current Khamisiyah analysis can be viewed at DoD’s web site: [http://www.gulflink.osd.mil/khamisiyah\\_iii/](http://www.gulflink.osd.mil/khamisiyah_iii/).

*Limitations:* On December 21, 2004, VA received an updated list of 145,473 service members from DoD who were possibly in the hazard areas according to at least one of DoD’s modeling efforts or DoD’s 50-kilometer radius analysis. This is an increase of 6 service members' records since March 2006 based on new data from DoD. In this GWVIS report, VBA displayed compensation and pension statistics on 145,456 service members. VA and DoD have completed their review of service member records. However, there is a possibility of future changes, if needed, based on review by DoD.

## **Non-Activated Reserve Forces Separations**

Non-Activated Reserve Forces Separations is a subset of Service Member Separations. Non-Activated Reserve Forces Separations identifies individuals with current and former Reserve Forces service and a discharge from Reserve Forces on or after August 2, 1990. Non-Activated Reserve Forces Separations are counted under Estimated Living Veterans only when the individual becomes either service-connected or a pensioner. All Non-Activated Reserve Forces Separations are counted, regardless of:

- Length of enlistment
- Re-enlistment
- Character of service
- Death

*Limitations:* Non-Activated Reserve Forces Separations may include service members who are veterans due to active duty service prior to the start of the Gulf War on August 2, 1990. Due to system limitations, VA cannot determine the status of these service members' active duty service, if any.

## **Non-Activated Reserve Forces, Service-Connected**

This category identifies a subset of Non-Activated Reserve Forces Separations who are service-connected or who are pensioners. This category is included in the count of veterans because they are receiving service-connected or war-time related benefits.

*Limitations:* Non-Activated Reserve Forces Separations may include service members who are veterans due to active duty service prior to the start of the Gulf War on August 2, 1990. Due to system limitations, VA cannot determine the status of these service members' active duty service, if any.

## **Nonservice-Connected, No Pension**

This category identifies the number of veterans who do not qualify for VA compensation or pension. VA determined the veteran did not qualify for compensation because none of the veterans' conditions are related to military service. In addition, VA determined the veteran did not qualify for a pension based on VA's disability and income requirements. This denial is called "nonservice-connected," or "NSC." This is not a cumulative count.

## **Nonservice-Connected, Receiving Pension**

This category identifies the number of veterans where VA determined the veteran's condition(s) were not related to military service. This denial is called "nonservice-connected," or "NSC." However, the veteran qualifies for a pension due to a nonservice-connected disability and income qualifications. This is not a cumulative count.

**Other Conflict**

Other Conflict is a subset of Conflict. Other Conflict identifies active duty service members deployed to Southwest Asia during the Gulf War, from August 2, 1990, through July 31, 1991, not already identified in the categories Al Jubayl and Khamisiyah. This includes Active Duty as well as Activated Reserve Forces.

**Reserve Forces**

This category includes military service members from the following seven Reserve Forces components: Air National Guard, Marine Corps Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Army National Guard, Army Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve.

**Service-Connected Ten Percent (10%) or Greater, No Compensation or Pension**

This category identifies the number of veterans where VA rated at least one service-connected condition at ten percent (10%) or higher. However, the veteran is not in receipt of compensation or pension payments. For example, this category includes service-connected military retiree veterans who are entitled to VA compensation but who elected not to receive it. It also includes veterans with disability severance pay who are on the Temporary Disability Retirement List (TDRL) and the Permanent Disability Retirement List (PDRL). This is not a cumulative count.

**Service-Connected Ten Percent (10%) or Greater, Receiving Compensation or Pension**

This category identifies the number of veterans where VA rated at least one service-connected condition at ten percent (10%) or higher, and the veteran receives compensation or pension payments. This is not a cumulative count.

**Service-Connected Zero (0%) Percent, Receiving Compensation or Pension**

This category identifies the number of veterans where VA rated at least one service-connected condition at zero percent (0%). The veteran qualifies for pension payments based on nonservice-connected disability and income, or the veteran qualifies for compensation based on VA regulations for multiple zero percent service-connected conditions. This is not a cumulative count.

**Service-Connected Zero (0%) Percent, No Compensation or Pension**

This category identifies the number of veterans where VA rated at least one service-connected condition at zero percent (0%). However, the veteran does not qualify for compensation or pension payments. This is not a cumulative count.



## **Service Members**

Service Members identifies individuals with any military service on or after August 2, 1990, the start of the Gulf War. VA identifies Service Members because they may be eligible for VA benefits (education, life insurance, home loan guaranty, and compensation and pension) under certain conditions. This includes:

- Active Duty Services: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard
- Reserve Components: Air National Guard, Marine Corps Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Army National Guard, Army Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve

All Service Members are counted, regardless of:

- Length of enlistment
- Re-enlistment
- Character of service
- Death
- Activated Reserve Forces
- Non-Activated Reserve Forces

*Limitations:* Individuals in the Public Health Service (PHS) or in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) are not identified or counted as Service Members. Details about the benefit use of individuals in PHS and NOAA are not provided in this report.

## **Service Member Separations**

Service Member Separations is a subset of Service Members. Service Member Separations identifies individuals with a discharge from military service on or after August 2, 1990.

Service Member Separations equals the sum of three categories:

- Active Duty Separations
- Activated Reserve Forces Separations
- Non-Activated Reserve Forces Separations

All Service Members Separations are counted, regardless of:

- Length of enlistment
- Re-enlistment
- Character of service
- Death
- Activated Reserve Forces
- Non-Activated Reserve Forces

**Theater**

Theater is a subset of Deployed. Theater identifies active duty service members who deployed to Southwest Asia during the Gulf War from August 1, 1991, until the present. This includes Active Duty as well as Activated Reserve Forces. Service members who served in both the Conflict and the Theater time periods are reported only under Conflict.

*Limitations:* VA defines the Southwest Asia theater as Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea, and the airspace above these locations.

**Total**

Total equals the sum of the categories Deployed and Era.

**Undiagnosed Illness (UDX), Claims Denied Service Connection**

An undiagnosed illness (UDX) claim is denied when VA determines none of the veteran's UDX conditions met eligibility requirements under VA regulations. This denial is called "nonservice-connected," or "NSC."

*Limitations:* There may be overlap between the categories Undiagnosed Claims Denied Service Connection and Claims Granted Service Connection. This happens when a veteran had all UDX conditions denied and a veteran has at least one diagnosed condition granted. The Theater category contains counts of veterans granted and denied UDX claims even though DMDC reports some of the veterans as Era (non deployed). VA is reviewing these veterans' records with DoD to determine the veterans' correct deployment status. This is not a cumulative count.

**Undiagnosed Illness (UDX), Claims Granted Service Connection**

A veteran's undiagnosed illness (UDX) claim is granted when VA determines at least one of the veteran's UDX conditions meets eligibility requirements under VA regulations for service connection. This grant is called "service-connected," or "SC." This category is a subset of Claims Granted Service Connection because the veteran has at least one granted condition. For veterans who filed a claim for more than one UDX condition, this category contains veterans with a full grant of all UDX conditions as well as veterans with a combination of grants and denials for UDX conditions. Disabilities are evaluated according to VA regulations, and the extent of the disability is expressed as a percentage from zero percent to 100 percent, in increments of 10 percent. Undiagnosed (UDX) Claims Granted Service Connection includes all service-connected UDX disabilities, from zero percent to 100 percent, regardless if the veteran receives compensation.

*Limitations:* The Theater category contains counts of veterans granted and denied UDX claims even though DMDC reports some of the veterans as Era (non deployed). VA is reviewing these veterans'

records with DoD to determine the veterans' correct deployment status. This report provides the current count of veterans granted service connection for a UDX condition. This is not a cumulative count. Therefore, the count may increase, decrease, or remain the same. The count may decrease if a service-connected veteran's UDX condition was subsequently diagnosed or resolved.

### **Undiagnosed Illness (UDX), Claims Processed**

Undiagnosed Illness (UDX) Claims Processed equals the total of Undiagnosed Illness (UDX) Claims Granted Service Connection and Undiagnosed Illness (UDX) Claims Denied Service Connection. Undiagnosed Illness (UDX) Claims Processed does not include pending claims. This is not a cumulative count.

### **Undiagnosed Illness (UDX), Nonservice-Connected, No Pension**

This category identifies the number of veterans who do not qualify for VA compensation or pension. VA determined the veteran did not qualify for compensation because none of the veterans' Undiagnosed Illness (UDX) conditions are related to military service. In addition, VA determined the veteran did not qualify for a pension based on VA's disability and income requirements. This denial is called "nonservice-connected," or "NSC." This is not a cumulative count.

### **Undiagnosed Illness (UDX), Nonservice-Connected, Receiving Compensation or Pension**

This category identifies the number of veterans where VA determined the veteran's undiagnosed UDX condition(s) did not meet VA regulations for service connection. This denial is called "nonservice-connected," or "NSC." However, the veteran qualified for a pension due to disability and low income, or the veteran was granted service connection for a diagnosed condition.

*Limitations:* There may be overlap between the category Undiagnosed (UDX) Nonservice-connected Receiving Compensation or Pension and the category Claims Granted Service Connection. This happens when a veteran had all UDX conditions denied and has at least one diagnosed condition granted. This is not a cumulative count.

### **Undiagnosed Illness (UDX), Service-Connected Ten Percent (10%) or Greater, No Compensation or Pension**

This category identifies the number of veterans where VA rated at least one service-connected Undiagnosed Illness condition at ten percent (10%) or higher. However, the veteran is not in receipt of compensation or pension payments. For example, this category includes service-connected military retiree veterans who are entitled to VA compensation but who elected not to receive it. It also includes veterans with disability severance pay who are on the Temporary Disability Retirement List (TDRL) and the Permanent Disability Retirement List (PDRL). This is not a cumulative count.

**Undiagnosed Illness (UDX), Service-Connected Ten Percent (10%) or Greater, Receiving Compensation or Pension**

This category identifies the number of veterans where VA rated at least one service-connected Undiagnosed Illness (UDX) condition at ten percent (10%) or higher, and the veteran receives compensation or pension payments. This is not a cumulative count.

**Undiagnosed Illness (UDX), Service-Connected Zero (0%) Percent, No Compensation or Pension**

This category identifies the number of veterans where VA rated at least one service-connected Undiagnosed Illness (UDX) condition at zero percent (0%). However, the veteran does not qualify for compensation or pension payments. This is not a cumulative count.

**Undiagnosed Illness (UDX), Service-Connected Zero Percent (0%), Receiving Compensation or Pension**

This category identifies the number of veterans where VA rated at least one service-connected condition at zero percent (0%). The veteran qualifies for pension payments based on nonservice-connected disability and income, or the veteran qualifies for compensation based on VA regulations for multiple zero percent service-connected conditions. This is not a cumulative count.

**Unique Count of Veterans Using Vet Centers**

This category counts the number of unique veterans where the Readjustment Counseling Service Vet Center (RCSVC) computer system indicates the veteran sought or is using RCSVC services.

**Veteran Deaths**

Identifies deceased veterans reported only in VBA's Compensation and Pension Master Record (CPMR) and the Beneficiary Identification and Records Locator Subsystem (BIRLS).

*Limitations:* These counts reflect raw data that have not been subjected to any statistical analysis nor adjusted in any way to make it a mortality study. There has been no adjustment to account for age, gender, race, and other items required for a valid mortality study. In addition, the data will not reflect deaths reported after April 2007. The use of these data to draw conclusions regarding mortality rates will result in inaccurate conclusions. For analysis of Gulf War veteran mortality, see "Mortality among US Veterans of the Persian Gulf War: 7-Year Follow-up," Han K. Kang and Tim A. Bullman, American Journal of Epidemiology, 2001, 154(5): 399-405.