

**State of Alaska
FY2004 Governor's Operating Budget**

**Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Veterans' Services
BRU/Component Budget Summary**

BRU/Component: Veterans' Services

(There is only one component in this BRU. To reduce duplicate information, we did not print a separate BRU section.)

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Component Mission

Advocate for veterans' benefits to recognize the sacrifices and achievements of Alaska's veterans and their families.
(Differs from CH 124, SLA 2002, Section 106)

Component Services Provided

This component issues contracts with Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs). The VSOs initiate claims (and appeal claim decisions if necessary) through the Veteran's Administration for benefits due veterans in Alaska. In addition, the service officers maintain information and referral services for the following: how to solve problems arising out of military service; information and advice concerning educational, health, and vocational guidance and placement; upgrade of benefits; benefits counseling; veterans claim preparation and presentation, state benefits application preparation; assistance to homeless veterans, and statewide rural outreach services.

The Department advocates the Alaskan veteran view concerning programs or initiatives of state or federal government.

The FY 2002 contract was awarded to a joint venture consisting of the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans and Veterans of Foreign Wars. The contract provides for salaries and travel cost of VSOs.

Component Goals and Strategies

Advocate for veterans' benefits to recognize the sacrifices and achievements of Alaska's veterans and their families.

Develop solutions that will help meet the long-term care needs of Alaska's veterans, including providing more housing for senior veterans in the Pioneers' & Veterans' Homes.

Provide an interface and advocacy for veterans and veterans' organizations to identify and resolve problems related to veterans' affairs.

Follow-up with Veterans Administration to continue efforts on behalf of veterans to receive just compensation afforded them while in the Pioneers' & Veterans' Home.

Monitor the outreach and assistance services provided by the Veterans Service Organizations.

Expand efforts for veterans in Alaska's rural communities.

Allow use of Army Guard armories statewide as places for veterans to access veterans' program information.

Key Component Issues for FY2003 – 2004

Alaska is the only state without a veterans' home. Last year legislation changed the name of the Alaska Pioneers' Homes to the Alaska Pioneers' and Veterans' Homes in an attempt to provide innovative options to the federal government in funding care for veterans in Alaska. In addition, a study was funded to gather information on the long-term care needs of veterans. Both of these issues will continue to be discussed until solutions can be found to provide the care needed for Alaskan veterans.

Major Component Accomplishments in 2002

- DMVA provided \$560.0 to Veterans Service Officers in Alaska. This money is used to advocate for individual veterans' federal benefits. During this past year, \$27.0 million was obtained for veterans or approximately \$48 in return for every dollar spent on this program.
- Established the Alaska Veterans Advisory Council in statute to insure the continuation of this advisory body.
- Established the Alaska Veterans' Memorial Endowment Fund to provide for the maintenance and construction of memorials and monuments to veterans and the military.
- Helped pass legislation that changed the name of the Alaska Pioneers' Home to the Alaska Pioneers' and Veterans' Home.
- Helped pass legislation that renamed the Knik River Bridge the James Bondsteel Memorial Bridge

Statutory and Regulatory Authority

AS 26 Military Affairs and Veterans
AS 44.35 Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs

Key Performance Measures for FY2004

Measure:

The number of contacts with persons seeking information about veterans' benefits.

Sec 106(b)(1) Ch 124 SLA 2002(HB 515)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

Contacts through phone, office walk-ins, e-mail and outreach briefings.

American Legion: 9,000

VFW: 7,200

DAV: 5,000

State DMVA: 3,500

Benchmark Comparisons:

There is no benchmark for this measure.

Background and Strategies:

The main purpose of this program is to connect Alaskan Veterans with the agencies that can assist them with their benefits.

Measure:

The number of trips to assist rural veterans.

Sec 106(b)(2) Ch 124 SLA 2002(HB 515)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

American Legion: 48 (4 per month)

VFW: 51

DAV: 80 (includes Fairbanks office)

Benchmark Comparisons:

There is no benchmark for this measure.

Background and Strategies:

The contractor is required to provide services statewide. Statistics are provided to DMVA by the contractor on the number of visits to rural areas to assist rural veterans.

Measure:

The change in the number of veterans served each year.

Sec 106(b)(3) Ch 124 SLA 2002(HB 515)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

Collectively there continues to be a significant increase in veterans being served. The largest increase is Southcentral Alaska (primarily the Anchorage bowl @ 43% of the veterans population base). The aging population of veterans also has to be considered.

Benchmark Comparisons:

There is no benchmark for this measure.

Measure:

The change in the estimated monetary value of benefits obtained.

Sec 106(b)(4) Ch 124 SLA 2002(HB 515)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

Although the recovery of veterans' benefits has continually increased over the 17 years of the program's existence, there was a \$2 million downturn in 2002.

Benchmark Comparisons:

There is no benchmark for this measure.

Background and Strategies:

Reporting of this statistic provides important information in determining whether the state is receiving a fair return for the money allocated to this service. Each year the contractor provides information to DMVA on the total amount of benefits provided to Alaska veterans through the Veterans Service Officers (VSOs).

DMVA provided \$560.0 to VSOs in the state. This money is used to advocate for individual veterans' federal benefits. During this past year, \$27.0 million was obtained for veterans, or approximately \$48 in return for every dollar spent on this program.

Measure:

The ratio of cost to estimated value of monetary benefits obtained.

Sec 106(b)(5) Ch 124 SLA 2002(HB 515)

Alaska's Target & Progress:

Collective benefit versus cost:

Service contract: \$560,000

Recovery in benefits: \$27 million

An average benefit obtained is \$48 for each state dollar spent.

Benchmark Comparisons:

There is no benchmark for this measure.

Veterans' Services
Component Financial Summary

All dollars in thousands

	FY2002 Actuals	FY2003 Authorized	FY2004 Governor
Non-Formula Program:			
Component Expenditures:			
71000 Personal Services	81.7	86.0	86.0
72000 Travel	0.0	0.0	0.0
73000 Contractual	542.0	540.0	560.0
74000 Supplies	0.0	0.0	0.0
75000 Equipment	0.0	0.0	0.0
76000 Land/Buildings	0.0	0.0	0.0
77000 Grants, Claims	0.0	26.3	12.5
78000 Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0
Expenditure Totals	623.7	652.3	658.5
Funding Sources:			
1004 General Fund Receipts	623.7	646.0	646.0
1181 Alaska Veterans' Memorial Endowment Fund	0.0	6.3	12.5
Funding Totals	623.7	652.3	658.5

Veterans' Services

Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2004

- A small amount of funding (\$6.2) from the newly created Veterans' Memorial Endowment Fund is being added.

Summary of Component Budget Changes

From FY2003 Authorized to FY2004 Governor

All dollars in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2003 Authorized	646.0	0.0	6.3	652.3
Proposed budget increases:				
-Increase in Veterans Memorial Maintenance Endowment	0.0	0.0	6.2	6.2
FY2004 Governor	646.0	0.0	12.5	658.5

Veterans' Services

Personal Services Information

	Authorized Positions		Personal Services Costs	
	<u>FY2003</u> <u>Authorized</u>	<u>FY2004</u> <u>Governor</u>		
Full-time	1	1	Annual Salaries	66,146
Part-time	0	0	Premium Pay	0
Nonpermanent	0	0	Annual Benefits	20,457
			<i>Less 0.70% Vacancy Factor</i>	(603)
			Lump Sum Premium Pay	0
Totals	1	1	Total Personal Services	86,000

Position Classification Summary

Job Class Title	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Juneau	Others	Total
Spec Asst To The Comm I	1	0	0	0	1
Totals	1	0	0	0	1