Voice of the Veteran Line of Business Tracking Study
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment
Access and Servicing

Fiscal Year 2015 Non-Response Bias Analysis

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION [FY15 REPORT]

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 4
Introduction 6
Methodology 7
2.1 J.D. Power Index Model 7
2.2 Sampling 11
2.3 Data Collection 11
Non-Response Bias Analysis 12
3.1 Survey Yield 20
3.2 Missing Data Patterns and Mechanisms 26
3.3 Margin of Error 27
3.3.1 Sampling Distribution 28
3.3.2 Distribution of Overall Satisfaction Index Scores 29
3.3.3 Analysis for Demographic Differences 30
3.3.4 Data Imputation Analysis for Demographic Differences 35
Findings 38
Conclusion 39
References 40
List of Appendices
Appendix A Missing Data Patterns and Mechanisms 42
Appendix B Item Response Rates 43
Appendix C Study Overview 48
1.1 Study Background 48
1.2 Methodology 48
1.3 Data Cleaning 49
1.4 Order generation and fulfillment process 50
1.5 Reporting 51
Sample Plan Overview 52
2.1 Sample Criteria 52
2.2 Fielding/Sampling Frequency 52
2.3 Data Transfer 53
2.4 Sample Cleaning Rules Glossary 54
2.5 Sample Selection 54
2.6 Data Collection 55
Appendix D Approaches to Effects of Non-Response Bias and Improving Response Rates 56

Approaches to Mitigating the Effect of Non-Response Bias 56
1.1 Approach 1: Strategies to Maximize Response Rates 56
1.2 Approach 2: Correcting Unit Non-response Bias with Sample Weighting and Survey Raking57
Strategies to Improve Response Rate 58
Appendix E Impact of FAR 8.8 59
1.1 Impact 59
Appendix F Survey Questionnaire 60
Appendix G List of Acronyms……..……,……..96

Executive Summary

The Voice of the Veteran (VOV) Line of Business Tracking Satisfaction Research Study was developed to establish continuous satisfaction measurement and incorporate direct Veteran feedback in the decision-making process in order to improve the level of service to Servicemembers, Veterans, and their beneficiaries.

As part of this study, a survey was fielded in Fiscal Year 2015 (FY15) for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Veterans' Benefits Administration (VBA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Access (Access) and VR&E Servicing (Servicing). The survey yielded a response rate of 9.62% (decrease of 2.27% from FY14) for Access and 13.78% (increase of 4.43% from FY14) for Servicing which was lower than the estimated response rate submitted with the information collection request (ICR) as well as lower than the Office of Management and Budget's standard of 80% (at the overall unit response rate).

OMB's "*Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys*," Section 3.2, Guideline 3.2.9, notes that a non-response analysis should be conducted for surveys with an overall unit response rate of less than 80%. Therefore, J.D. Power (JDP) conducted the necessary statistical tests in accordance with OMB's guidelines in order to verify the validity of the Access and Servicing survey results for FY15.

The initial 2015 analyses for these reports were done in consultation with Dr. Don Dillman , a professor at Washington State University. Dr. Dillman is regarded as a key survey method expert on non-response bias research and the report conforms to sound statistical research practices in accordance with OMB standards. The analysis performed also includes an iterative survey raking procedure to derive sample weightings based on a simultaneous balancing analysis of the demographic differences.

After adjusting for demographic differences between survey respondents and non-respondents, the statistical tests performed on the survey responses for the surveys collected, illustrate that no differences were found in the Overall Satisfaction Index score and Advocacy rating (likelihood to inform others about VA benefits).

The sample for the Access population was defined as individuals as Veterans who had an initial meeting with their VR&E counselor and were granted a decision regarding their entitlement within the past 30 days. These veterans include those who applied and showed up for the initial appointment and were either found entitled and pursued the program or found not entitled and did not pursue the program.

The sample for Servicing is defined as Veterans who have entered and been enrolled in one of the five tracks for at least 60 days. These individuals include Veterans who have been rehabilitated; Veterans who have reached maximum rehabilitation gain and could not proceed in the program; and Veterans still pursuing benefits.

The analysis performed was done in consultation with Dr. Don Dillman, professor from Washington State University, who is regarded as a key survey method expert on non-response research. The analysis also includes an iterative survey raking procedure to derive sample weightings based on a simultaneous balancing analysis of the demographic differences.

The Overall Satisfaction Index score and Advocacy rating for Access (600 on a 1,000-point scale and 3.48 on a scale of 1-4 points, respectively) are not impacted in any meaningful way by non-response bias. The Overall Satisfaction Index score and Advocacy rating for Servicing (715 and 3.64, respectively) are not impacted in any meaningful way by non-response bias. This analysis confirms that data collected during Fiscal Year 2015 is valid for use by VBA.

Introduction

In an effort to achieve top level customer service, VBA partnered with J.D. Power to conduct Veteran satisfaction research on its behalf. VBA's Voice of the Veteran (VOV) Satisfaction Initiative was established to continuously measure and improve the level of service to Servicemembers, Veterans, and their beneficiaries.

The intent of this initiative is to:

- Reinstate VBA's customer satisfaction research program in order to incorporate Veteran feedback into the decision-making process
- Identify the critical factors to Veterans' satisfaction with benefits and services provided by VBA
- Provide continuous feedback to validate effectiveness of new initiatives and process changes
- Provide decision-makers and stakeholders with timely and actionable feedback on a continuous basis
- Identify and document best practices, and act as a vehicle to celebrate successful interactions and experiences

VBA's VOV Line of Business Tracking Satisfaction Research Study was developed to continuously field customer satisfaction survey instruments to provide Veteran and beneficiary feedback on the following VBA lines of business and benefit programs: Compensation, Pension, Education, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, and Loan Guaranty (including Specially Adapted Housing). In support of this effort, in FY15, JDP fielded a survey instrument regarding the Access and Servicing processes on behalf of the VR&E program. The purpose of the Access and Servicing process surveys was to identify the factors critical to Veteran satisfaction with enrollment and receipt of benefits issued by VBA and to improve the level of services provided.

The survey instruments for the Servicing and the Access processes were developed in collaboration with VA's VR&E Division and in accordance with OMB's guidelines concerning statistical collection procedures and methods. After the initial survey instrument was designed, cognitive labs using the "think aloud" method were conducted to evaluate user experiences when filling out the survey. Prior to the FY15 fielding of the Servicing and Access process survey, a benchmark (pilot) study was conducted from October 2012 through January 2013 to further assess the effectiveness of the methodology and conformance to OMB's standards. The survey was fielded in 2014 as well and the 2015 fielding will be the third iteration of the survey fielding.

Methodology

2.1 J.D. Power Index Model

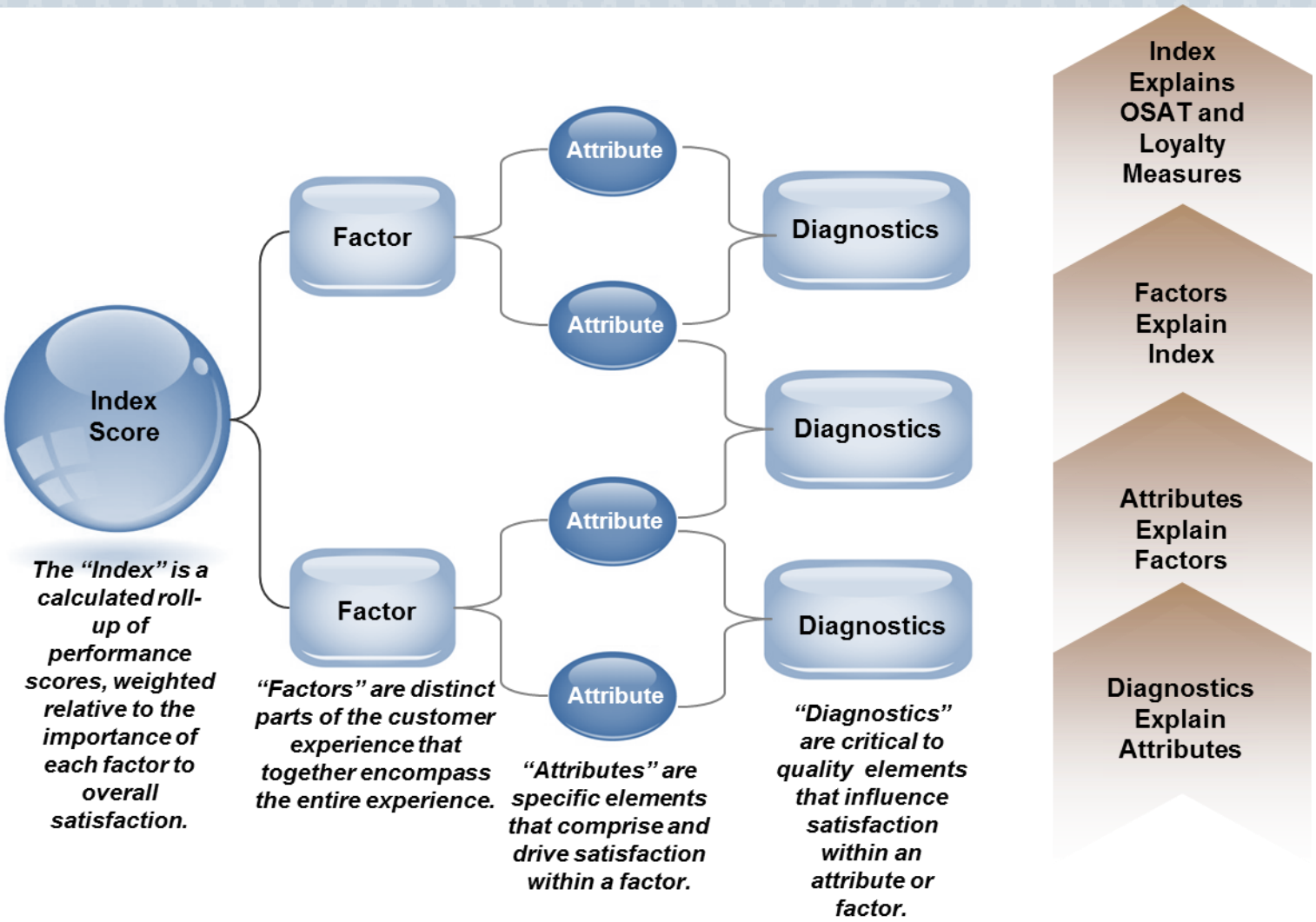
J.D. Power defines customer satisfaction as a measure of how well product or service experiences fit the expectations of customers. All JDP index models assume a two-tiered regression model involving factors and attributes. Each customer experience is influenced by several factors (i.e., first tier), which, in turn, are influenced by several attributes or drivers (i.e., second tier). A diagram of the index model follows on the subsequent page.

In order to begin the index model calculation, each set of attributes within a factor are used to predict the Overall Satisfaction Index score (sub-OSAT) for that factor. An importance weight is assigned to each attribute, where the weight of "importance" of each attribute is defined as the ability of that attribute to predict Overall Satisfaction. A multiple regression model is used to estimate the attribute weights. This model produces the "bottom" level weights and is computed for each factor separately. The bottom level weights are rescaled so that they add up to 1 point within each subcategory. As a result, the percentage of total explained variation in the sub-OSAT that is due to a particular attribute constitutes that attribute's importance weight within its respective factor.

Following the calculation of attribute (i.e., bottom level) weights, the factor (i.e., top level) weights are calculated. Factor scores are calculated by taking the sum of the product of the attribute rating scores and the attribute importance weights. This model produces the top-level weights, which are rescaled so that they add up to 1 point. Thus, the percentage of the total explained variation in the Overall Satisfaction Index score that is due to a particular sub-OSAT constitutes that factor's importance weight.

After all factor scores are computed, they are weighted so that some contribute more to Overall Satisfaction than others, based on the index importance weights. The index score is subsequently calculated by taking the sum of the product of all of the factor scores and the factor importance weights. Finally, both the index and factor scores are multiplied by 100 so that the range of each is 100 (if all attributes were rated 1) to 1,000 (if all attributes were rated 10).

By applying the importance weights derived from the two-tiered modeling approach, JDP creates a weighted index score that ranges from a low of 100 to a high of 1,000. This index approach has the benefit of being highly reliable and valid and provides increased ability to discriminate the performance levels of companies and organizations.



VR&E Access and Servicing Process Index Weights

In working with VR&E's subject matter experts and leadership, the design of its survey encompasses the factors and attributes as outlined in the following tables. The factors (Benefit Information, Contact with VA, Benefit Application, and Benefit Entitlement) and attributes (Ease of Accessing Information, Availability of Information, etc.) represent Access and Servicing Index Models in FY15. The corresponding weights for each factor and attribute are the weights based on the above index model calculation. The weights are derived from the relative importance of each factor or attribute to the respondents.

Table 2.0. Access: Index Model Weights

Access Index Model Weights	
	Effective Weight
Benefit Information	15.15%
Contact with VA	7.71%
VR&E Benefit Application Process	18.04%
VR&E Intake Counselor	20.56%
Benefit Entitlement	38.54%

Table 2.1. Access: Weights by Attribute

Access Weights by Attribute	
	Effective Weight
Benefit Information	
Ease of accessing information	2.98%
Availability of information	1.79%
Clarity of information	2.65%
Usefulness of information	3.49%
Frequency of information	4.24%
VR&E Benefit Application Process	
Ease of completing the application	4.31%
Timeliness of eligibility notification	6.64%
Flexibility of application methods	7.09%
VR&E Intake Counselor	
Promptness of scheduling appointments	4.13%
Courtesy of the app. counselor	4.73%
Knowledge of the app. counselor	2.88%
Counselor's concern for your needs	4.04%
Timeliness of completing your initial evaluation	4.78%
Benefit Entitlement	
Effectiveness of benefit/service	16.88%
Timeliness of receiving benefits/services	21.66%
Contact with VA	7.71%

Table 2.2. Servicing: Index Model Weights

Servicing Index Model Weights	
	Effective Weight
Benefit Information	17.84%
Contact with VA	7.53%
VR&E Service Counselors	26.51%
Benefit Entitlement	48.12%

Table 2.3. Servicing: Weights by Attribute

Servicing Weights by Attribute	
	Effective Weight
Benefit Information	
Ease of accessing information	3.84%
Availability of information	1.60%
Clarity of information	2.85%
Usefulness of information	4.46%
Frequency of information	5.10%
VR&E Service Counselors	
Promptness of scheduling appointments	6.27%
Courtesy of the counselor	5.29%
Knowledge of the counselor	5.15%
Counselor's concern for your needs	4.10%
Timeliness of completing your initial evaluation	5.70%
Benefit Entitlement	
Effectiveness of benefit/service	22.25%
Timeliness of receiving benefits/services	25.87%
Contact with VA	7.53%

2.2 Sampling

The Servicing survey was fielded to Veterans who had an initial meeting with their VR&E counselor and were granted a decision regarding their entitlement within the past 30 days. These individuals include those who applied and showed up for the initial appointment and were either found entitled and pursued the program or found not entitled and did not pursue the program. The Access survey was fielded to Veterans who had entered and been enrolled in one of the five tracks for at least 60 days. These individuals include Veterans who have been rehabilitated; Veterans who have reached maximum rehabilitation gain and could not proceed in the program; and Veterans still pursuing benefits.

J.D. Power mailed approximately 60,000 surveys for Servicing and 14,000 for Access to Veterans across the nation in FY15. The target number of completed surveys for Servicing was 18,000 and 4,200 for Access. The actual number of completed surveys received for Access was 1,106, and for Servicing it was 8,643.

The samples used in this study, which were provided by VR&E, were random samples from the available Veterans. See Appendix D, Sample Plan Overview for further detail on sampling.

Survey Instrument	Methodology	Fielding Frequency	Total Mailouts in FY15
Access	Mail and Online	Annually	14,000
Servicing	Mail Only	Monthly	60,000

2.3 Data Collection

During the survey fielding period, self-administered online survey returns and self-administered paper surveys were collected. While verbatim responses are recorded by a live survey processor, responses from paper surveys are scanned through automated imaging software. Survey returns undergo quality assurance to validate the accuracy of responses captured.

Respondents from the Access study had the option of completing the survey on paper or online and received two separate mailings:

- 1st Mailing: Postcard introducing the study to the respondent, which included an online survey link and a unique access code login for the online survey
- 2nd Mailing: Survey Package, which included a cover letter, with the online survey link and login, a paper survey, and a business reply envelope

Respondents from the Servicing study completed the survey on paper and received two separate mailings:

- 1st Mailing: Survey Package, which included a cover letter introducing the study to the respondent, a paper survey, and a business reply envelope
- 2nd Mailing: Survey Package, which included a cover letter, a paper survey, and a business reply envelope

Each time the surveys were deployed, the postcards and survey packages were subject to a proof approval process that utilized three levels of approvals by J.D. Power, Benefits Assistance Service (BAS), and VA Publications Services Division (VAPSD). After the print vendor mailed the postcards and survey packages, mail receipts were sent to VBA.

During the survey fielding period, JDP provided a toll-free survey hotline and dedicated e-mail address to answer survey-related inquiries and to provide assistance to respondents for completing the surveys. The telephone and e-mail helpdesk was staffed with three JDP employees who answered inquiries during regular business hours (8:00am-5:00pm PST, Monday thru Friday). A voice message system was available to receive phone messages so after-hours calls could be responded to the following business day. An automatically generated e-mail response was sent to all e-mail inquiries informing respondents that their e-mail was received and they would receive a response within 24 hours. JDP helpdesk representatives logged each survey-related inquiry in a password protected spreadsheet documenting the reason for the inquiry, the resolution provided, and the contact information of each caller. At the end of each month, a log containing all inquiries was provided to the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) for review. If non-survey related high-severity benefit inquiries were received, J.D. Power contacted the COR immediately with the respondent's contact information.
Throughout the course of the program, weekly status meetings were held between JDP and BAS to discuss survey administration. Biweekly status meetings were held between the Government Printing Office print vendor, JDP, BAS, and VAPSD to discuss the printing and mailing of the survey materials.

Non-Response Bias Analysis

The purpose of the non-response bias analysis is to ascertain the possible causes of variance in response rates among different respondent demographics and/or determine if any bias has been introduced with a low response rate. Given that the Voice of the Veteran VR&E Access Process Study had an overall unit response rate of 9.62% and the Voice of the Veteran VR&E Servicing Process Study had an overall unit response rate of 13.78% in Fiscal Year 2015, the following section examines whether a low response rate or other factors may have caused respondent bias to occur.

The Office of Management and Budget's Questions and Answers, "*When Designing Surveys for Information Collections,"* dated January 2006, and *"Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys,"* dated September 2006 (see References) provide guidelines on acceptable survey design and response rates. OMB guidelines recommend a non-response bias evaluation for surveys with an overall unit response rate of less than 80%.

In addition to the above referenced documents prepared by OMB, J.D. Power assessed other source documents that were written and published by the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology: "*Statistical Policy Working Paper 17, Survey Coverage*" (1990) and "*Statistical Policy Working Paper 31, Measuring and Reporting Sources of Error in Surveys*" (2001).

While high response rates are always desirable in surveys, JDP finds an 80% response rate is not achievable for most voluntary, satisfaction-based, survey research studies (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). In particular, survey research studies that do not provide an incentive are subject to not achieving an 80% response rate. To better illustrate this point, the Dillman Method for survey fielding was discussed in Dillman, D. A. (2014, pp. 22), detailing the efforts to attain an 80% response rate.

A survey instrument was fielded to 600 students at the University of Washington, the same institution that sponsored the study. After five attempts to solicit a response in a closed university setting, as well as offering a monetary incentive to complete the study, the 80% response rate was not achieved and instead garnered only a 77% response rate. The JDP team met with the VA Contracting officer Representative to discuss current trends and realistic response rates. As noted JDP does not believe that an 80% response rate is achievable and this concern was shared with the Benefits Assistance Service team.

JDP conducted the following non-response bias analysis to determine if the respondents (i.e., those who completed the survey) were different in a meaningful way from the non-respondents (i.e., those who were sent a survey, but did not complete it). Chi-squared analyses consist of comparisons between respondents and non-respondents on available demographic variables, such as gender, age, race, geographical region, war participation (service era), and military service branch. The U.S. states were converted to standard U.S. census regions (Midwest, Northeast, South, and West) in order to aggregate the data and enhance regional comparisons.

J.D. Power research indicates that there is an absence of systematic statistical differences of respondents' overall satisfaction on the mail and online survey results. Research does suggest differences can occur between mixed mode survey methodologies (mail, online, and phone), but these are primarily related to (a) social desirability and interviewer bias associated with phone surveys (see Baum, Chandonnet, Fentress, and Rasinowich, 2012, p. 2, for a review), and (b) that older respondents tend to respond by mail more often than online.

The non-response bias analysis was conducted across both mail and online survey collection modes. However, as a verification check, JDP examined potential differences in mail vs. online survey responses by utilizing a t-test analysis on the OSAT Index and Advocacy rating, which serve as measures of Veterans' overall satisfaction and benefits advocacy. The Overall Satisfaction Index is defined in the Methodology section of this report. The Advocacy rating is defined as Veterans' likelihood to inform others about VA benefits.

Throughout this report, we are conducting statistical analyses to compare survey respondents and non-respondents. Frequently used statistical tests can include the T-Test, Chi-Square, or Analyses of Variance (ANOVA). These tests generate relevant t-statistics, Chi-Squares, or F statistics that are reported. The magnitude of the statistic's value (either positive or negative) measures the size of the difference relative to the variation in the data. If the statistic is not large enough to generate a probability (p-value) less than .05, then it falls below the accepted standard probability cut-off level that indicates whether a statistical difference is significant. If a difference is not significant, statisticians regard these results as part of the normal sample variation that occurs within the same population. Throughout this report, the probability p-value standard of "must be less than .05 to be significant" is used for all statistics reported.

Table 3a.e. shows there were statistical differences found for VR&E Access between the mail and online methodologies on Overall Satisfaction but not for Advocacy. Since surveys for VR&E Servicing were all done by mail, this test was not relevant for Servicing.

Table 3a.e. Access: T-Test Analysis of Mail vs. Online Survey Results

Rating Measure	Mail	Online	t-statistic	p-value
Overall Satisfaction Index (100 - 1000 range)	620	567	3.55	<.0001
Likelihood to inform others about VA benefits (rating 1 - 4)	3.46	3.51	-0.97	.334

For the Access sample, we found significant differences with the population based on gender where the Access sample had a higher percentage of females compared to the population:

Table 3b.e. Access: Comparing Gender for Respondents and Non-Respondents

Gender by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
Female	21	18	18
Male	79	82	82

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	1	4.01	<.05

For the Access sample, the results show significant differences with the population based on age generation such that a larger number of older Veterans and a fewer number of Generation Y/Z Veterans completed the survey:

Table 3c.e. Access: Comparing Age Generation for Respondents and Non-Respondents

Age Generation by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	**Non-Respondents**	**Total**
Baby-Boomer (ages 50-68)	40	23	25
Generation X (ages 37-49)	34	30	30
Generation YZ (ages 18-36)	26	47	45

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	3	215	<.0001

For the Access sample, significant differences were found with the population based on race. The differences indicate that the survey respondents were more likely to fall into the Other category as compared to Asian, Black, and White:

Table 3d.e. Access: Comparing Race for Respondents and Non-Respondents

Race by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	**Non-Respondents**	**Total**
Asian	4	6	6
Black	27	29	29
White	49	53	52
Other	19	13	14

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	3	30	<.0001

For the Access survey, *no* significant differences were found with the population based on geographical region:

Table 3e.e. Access: Comparing Census Region for Respondents and Non-Respondents

U.S. Census Region by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	**Non-Respondents**	**Total**
Midwest	13	13	13
Northeast	7	7	7
South	56	55	55
West	24	24	24

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	3	.67	.881

For the Access sample, significant differences were found with the population based on branch of service. The data results show that the survey respondents were more likely to be in the Navy and less likely to be in the Army or Marines:

Table 3f.e. Access: Comparing Military Service Branch for Respondents and Non-Respondents

Military Service Branch by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
Air Force	14	13	14
Army	50	53	53
Marines	10	12	12
Navy	17	15	15
Other	9	6	6

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	4	25	<.0001

For the Access survey, significant differences were found in war service era, with fewer surveys returned by OEF/OIF veterans than by other war Veterans:

Table 3g.e. Access: Comparing War Participation in OIF and OEF for Respondents and Non-Respondents

OIF and OEF War Service by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
All others	57	51	51
OEF/OIF	43	49	49

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	1	14	<.0002

Note: OIF is Operation Iraqi Freedom and OEF is Operation Enduring Freedom.

For the Access sample, significant differences were found with the population based on days of active service the data indicates that survey respondents were more likely to have either served 1,000 days or less and 4,001 days or more, but not between 1,001 and 4,000 days:

Table 3h.e. Access: Comparing Days of Active Service for Respondents and Non-Respondents

Days of Active Service by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
1000 days or less	22	19	20
1001-2000 days	25	32	31
2001-4000 days	21	23	22
4001 days or more	33	26	27

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	3	37	<.0001

For the Access sample, significant differences were found with the population based on case status. We found that more surveys were completed by Veterans in employment rehab status and fewer were completed by those in discontinued status:

Table 3i.e. Access: Comparing Case Status for Respondents and Non-Respondents

Case Status by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
Discontinued	59	72	71
Employ Rehab	36	24	26
Other	5	3	3

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	2	84	<.0001

For VR&E Servicing, surveys were all conducted by mail (no online methods used).

For the Servicing sample, significant differences were found with gender where the data reflects that the Servicing sample had a higher percentage of females than males:

Table 3b.s. Servicing: Comparing Gender for Respondents and Non-Respondents

Gender by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
Female	22	20	20
Male	78	80	80

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	1	7.46	<.007

For the Servicing sample, significant differences were found with the population based on age generation where the results show that a larger number of older Veterans and a fewer number of Generations X and Y/Z Veterans had completed the survey.

Table 3c.s. Servicing: Comparing Age Generation for Respondents and Non-Respondents

Age Generation by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
Baby-Boomer (ages 50-68)	45	27	30
Generation X (ages 37-49)	31	33	33
Generation YZ (ages 18-36)	24	40	38

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	3	1154	<.0001

For the Servicing sample, significant differences were found with the population based on race. The differences indicate that survey respondents were less likely to be White or Black, and more likely to fall into the Other category:

Table 3d.s. Servicing: Comparing Race for Respondents and Non-Respondents

Race by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
Asian	5	5	5
Black	25	27	27
White	53	54	54
Other	17	14	14

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	3	79	<.0001

For the Servicing survey, significant differences were found with the population based on geographical region and the information reflects that survey respondents were less often from the South and more often from the West:

Table 3e.s. Servicing: Comparing Census Region for Respondents and Non-Respondents

U.S. Census Region by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
Midwest	20	20	20
Northeast	14	14	14
South	39	41	40
West	27	26	26

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	3	11.72	<.009

For the Servicing sample, significant differences were found with the population based on branch of service. The results indicate that the survey respondents were more likely to be in the Air Force, Navy, and Other services, and were less likely to be in the Army or Marines:

Table 3f.s. Servicing: Comparing Military Service Branch for Respondents and Non-Respondents

Military Service Branch by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
Air Force	14	13	13
Army	49	52	52
Marines	11	13	13
Navy	18	17	17
Other	8	5	6

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	4	147	<.0001

For the Servicing survey, we found significant differences in war service era with fewer surveys returned by OEF/OIF veterans than were returned by other war Veterans:

Table 3g.s. Servicing: Comparing War Participation in OIF and OEF for Respondents and Non-Respondents

OIF and OEF War Service by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
All others	69	64	65
OEF/OIF	31	36	35

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	1	59	<.0001

Note: OIF is Operation Iraqi Freedom and OEF is Operation Enduring Freedom.

For the Servicing sample, significant differences were found with the population based on days of active service. Thesurvey respondents were more likely to have served 4,001 or more days and less likely to have served 1,001 to 4,000 days compared to the population:

Table 3h.s. Servicing: Comparing Days of Active Service for Respondents and Non-Respondents

Days of Active Service by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
1000 days or less	25	25	25
1001-2000 days	26	32	32
2001-4000 days	19	22	21
4001 days or more	31	21	22

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	3	386	<.0001

For the Servicing sample, significant differences were found with the population based on case status. Fewer surveys were completed by Employ Rehab Veterans and more by Other Veterans:

Table 3i.e. Servicing: Comparing Case Status for Respondents and Non-Respondents

Case Status by Respondent Type (%)			
	Survey Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
Discontinued	2	3	3
Employ Rehab	71	74	74
Other	26	23	24

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	2	39	<.0001

3.1 Survey Yield

In accordance with OMB "*Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys*," an agency must appropriately measure, adjust for, report, and analyze unit and item non-response when the intended response for a targeted population is not met.[1] In assessing VR&E's data in accordance with Section 3.2, and Guidelines 3.2.1-3.2.3, the unweighted unit response rate was calculated as the ratio of the number of completed cases to the number of in-scope sample cases (Ellis, 2000; AAPOR, 2000).

Table 3.1a.e below shows the sample distribution and response rate for the VR&E Access target population.

Table 3.1a.e. Sample Distribution and Response Rates for VR&E Access Population

Total Access Population FY2015	
Total records received	**19,484**
Duplicate records in sample file	0
Duplicate record history	6,013
Invalid address	551
Invalid values	27
Blanks	0
Do not contact	24
Total records available after cleaning[2]	**12,869**
Total records selected	**11,118**
Undeliverable addresses	441
Total mailed (excludes undeliverable)	**10,677**
Total completed mail surveys	**703**
Total completed online surveys	**403**
Total completed surveys	**1,106**
Total completed surveys with Overall Index Score[3]	**1,069**
Total Sample Response Rate[4]	**9.62%**
Eligible Sample Response Rate[5]	**10.36%**

[1] As defined by OMB and FCSM, unit non-response occurs when a respondent fails to respond to all required response items (i.e., fails to fill out or return a data collection instrument); item non-response occurs when a respondent fails to respond to one or more relevant item(s) on a survey

[2] Glossary of sample cleaning rules included in Appendix E.

[3] Findings in the report are based on the "Total completed surveys with Overall Index Score" (N=1,069).

[4] Response rate calculation per OMB Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys, section 3.2, guideline 3.2.9 (includes undeliverables as number of noncontacted sample units known to be eligible).

[5] Response rate calculation per Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO) (includes number of completed interviews with reporting units/number of eligible reporting units in sample). The American Association for Public Opinion Research (APPOR) also uses this method for calculation and cites CASRO (APPOR Standard Definitions, 2008, pp. 34).

Table 3.1a.s. below shows the sample distribution and response rate for VR&E Servicing target population.

Table 3.1a.s. Sample Distribution and Response Rates for VR&E Servicing Population

Total Servicing Population FY2015	
Total records received	**1,305,948**
Duplicate records in sample file	29,926
Duplicate record history	594,438
Invalid address	218,885
Invalid values	719
Blanks	0
Do not contact	39,902
Total records available after cleaning[6]	**426,078**
Total records selected	**60,000**
Undeliverable addresses	4,785
Total mailed (excludes undeliverable)	**55,215**
Total completed mail surveys	**8,643**
Total completed online surveys	**N/A**
Total completed surveys	**8,643**
Total completed surveys with Overall Index Score[7]	**8,270**
Total Sample Response Rate[8]	**13.78%**
Eligible Sample Response Rate[9]	**15.65%**

Of the 19,484 total records received from Access, 6,615 records were purged from the sample due to cleaning rules, such as duplicate records, invalid addresses and values, blanks, and do not contact opt outs. From the 6,615 records purged, 6,013 records were cleaned out due to duplicate records across VBA's other business line surveys (i.e., duplicate record history). Of the 1,305,948 total records received from Servicing, 879,870 records were purged from the sample due to cleaning rules, such as duplicate records, invalid addresses and values, blanks, and do not contact opt outs. Also, from the 879,870 records that were purged, there were 594,438 records that were cleaned due to duplicate records across other business lines.

[6] Glossary of sample cleaning rules included in Appendix E.
[7] Findings in the report are based on the "Total completed surveys with Overall Index Score" (N=8,270).
[8] Response rate calculation per OMB Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys, section 3.2, guideline 3.2.9 (includes undeliverables as number of noncontacted sample units known to be eligible).
[9] Response rate calculation per Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO) (includes number of completed interviews with reporting units/number of eligible reporting units in sample). The American Association for Public Opinion Research (APPOR) also uses this method for calculation and cites CASRO (APPOR Standard Definitions, 2008, pp. 34).

The purpose of this cleaning rule is to prevent respondents from being re-contacted if they were previously selected to participate in any of VBA's business line surveys in the past 12 months. The cleaning rule is a JDP and survey research best practice and is intended to promote proper conduct in market research. From the total records provided, about 67% were removed from Servicing and about 34% were removed from Access due to this cleaning rule. It is unlikely that the cleaning rules impacted the unit non-response since JDP was able to secure the designated number of records for both Servicing and Access.

Table 3.1b.e. Access: Weight/Person for Completed Surveys per Population

Completed Surveys	Access 2015 Population	Weight/Person
1,106	19,484	18

In Table 3.1b.e the 18 in the Weight/Person column means that every survey completed and returned represents the views of 18 Veterans using VR&E Access benefits.

Table 3.1b.s. Servicing: Weight/Person for Completed Surveys per Population

Completed Surveys	Servicing 2015 Population	Weight/Person
8,643	1,305,948	151

In Table 3.1b.s the 151 in the Weight/Person column means that every survey completed and returned represents the views of 151 Veterans using VR&E Servicing benefits.

To confirm the sample's representativeness for both Access and Servicing, a comparison was conducted among the total records provided and the records available after cleaning. The intent of this analysis was to determine whether the cleaning rules caused the remaining sample to vary in a meaningful way from the original sampling frame.

To confirm the sample's representativeness, a comparison was conducted among the total records provided and the records available after cleaning. The intent of this analysis was to determine whether the cleaning rules caused the remaining sample to vary in a meaningful way from the original sampling frame.

Table 3.1c.e. (Access) and Table 3.1c.s. (Servicing) indicate that characteristics such as gender, age, and geographical region are similar among the total records provided and the records available after cleaning. Regional U.S. state comparisons yield differences that are mostly less than 1 percentage points, with a few exceptions in generation and region where differences were wider (e.g., for states of FL and TX). Overall, these comparisons suggest the cleaning rules did not significantly alter the proportion of respondent characteristics provided in the original sampling frame.

Table 3.1c.e Comparing Gender, Generation, and U.S. States to Total Population

	Total Population (%)	Records Available (%)	% Point Difference
Gender			
Female	18.84	18.42	-0.42
Male	81.16	81.58	0.42
Generation			
Boomer	22.13	24.97	2.84
Generation X	29.69	30.38	0.69
Generation Y/Z	48.18	44.64	-3.53
U.S. State			
AK	0.62	0.57	-0.05
AL	1.88	1.86	-0.02
AR	1.12	0.96	-0.15
AZ	2.36	2.6	0.24
CA	9.23	9.59	0.36
CO	2.92	2.77	-0.15
CT	1.08	0.69	-0.39
DC	0.21	0.17	-0.03
DE	0.14	0.14	0
FL	7.68	9.66	1.98
GA	5.43	6.37	0.95
HI	1	0.77	-0.23
IA	0.73	0.54	-0.19
ID	0.62	0.58	-0.04
IL	1.2	1.02	-0.18
IN	1.67	1.55	-0.13
KS	0.85	0.66	-0.19
KY	1.72	1.21	-0.51
LA	1.1	0.93	-0.17
MA	0.61	0.45	-0.16
MD	2.59	1.86	-0.73
ME	0.69	0.55	-0.15
MI	2.18	2.13	-0.05
MN	0.93	1	0.07
MO	1.66	1.43	-0.23
MS	0.67	0.44	-0.23
MT	0.39	0.33	-0.05
NC	4.36	4.64	0.28
ND	0.16	0.13	-0.03
NE	0.41	0.31	-0.1
NH	0.33	0.24	-0.09
NJ	1.1	0.93	-0.17
NM	0.89	0.75	-0.13

Table 3.1c.e Comparing Gender, Generation, and U.S. States to Total Population (Continued)

	Total Population (%)	Records Available (%)	% Point Difference
NV	1.3	1.2	-0.1
NY	2.28	1.74	-0.53
OH	2.44	2.73	0.29
OK	1.69	1.47	-0.21
OR	1.09	0.96	-0.13
PA	1.81	1.57	-0.23
RI	0.43	0.28	-0.15
SC	3.13	2.84	-0.29
SD	0.52	0.36	-0.17
TN	2.58	2.36	-0.22
TX	13.08	15.61	2.53
UT	0.9	0.75	-0.15
VA	4.35	4.45	0.1
VT	0.23	0.14	-0.09
WA	3.18	3.45	0.27
WI	1.35	1.34	-0.01
WV	0.38	0.31	-0.07
WY	0.05	0.05	0

Table 3.1c.s. Servicing: Comparing Gender, Generation, and U.S. States to Total Population

	Total Population (%)	Records Available (%)	% Point Difference
Gender			
Female	20.77	20.98	0.21
Male	79.23	79.02	-0.21
Generation			
Baby-Boomer	30.77	31.31	0.53
Gen X	33.15	33.51	0.36
Gen Y	36.08	35.19	-0.89
U.S. State			
AK	0.64	0.43	-0.22
AL	2.09	2.10	0.02
AR	1.34	0.92	-0.42
AZ	1.66	1.17	-0.49
CA	8.93	9.88	0.94

Table 3.1c.s.Servicing: Comparing Gender, Generation, and U.S. States to Total Population (Continued)

CO	3.01	3.23	0.22
CT	1.24	0.84	-0.40
DC	0.23	0.18	-0.05
DE	0.21	0.09	-0.13
FL	8.49	13.85	5.36
GA	4.02	5.21	1.20
HI	0.75	0.49	-0.25
IA	1.01	0.64	-0.38
ID	0.50	0.28	-0.21
IL	1.61	1.04	-0.57
IN	2.43	2.26	-0.18
KS	0.73	0.44	-0.29
KY	2.22	1.79	-0.44
LA	0.99	0.61	-0.38
MA	1.25	0.85	-0.40
MD	2.85	2.07	-0.78
ME	0.58	0.32	-0.26
MI	3.09	3.46	0.36
MN	1.10	0.72	-0.39
MO	1.70	1.14	-0.57
MS	1.01	0.69	-0.32
MT	0.50	0.29	-0.21
NC	3.31	3.60	0.29
ND	0.22	0.10	-0.11
NE	0.56	0.34	-0.22
NH	0.44	0.22	-0.23
NJ	1.49	0.92	-0.57
NM	0.94	0.66	-0.28
NV	0.82	0.46	-0.36
NY	2.77	1.70	-1.07
OH	3.09	3.51	0.42
OK	1.84	1.34	-0.50
OR	1.54	1.09	-0.44
PA	2.09	1.35	-0.74
RI	0.26	0.14	-0.13
SC	2.48	2.06	-0.42
SD	0.51	0.27	-0.24
TN	2.11	1.67	-0.45
TX	11.65	18.02	6.36
UT	0.89	0.56	-0.33
VA	3.13	2.56	-0.57

VT	0.25	0.10	-0.16
WA	2.82	2.81	-0.01
WI	1.08	0.71	-0.37
WV	0.57	0.36	-0.20
WY	0.10	0.09	-0.01

3.2 Missing Data Patterns and Mechanisms

In accordance with the OMB "*Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys,*" Guidelines 3.2.9 and 3.2.11, an investigation of missing data patterns was performed on the 1,677 total surveys received for Access and the 5,898 total surveys received for Servicing. In order to assess the distribution of missing data, a procedure was performed to process missing values involving iterative multiple imputation chains using expectation–maximization (MCMC) algorithms and divide these into distribution interval groupings (Pierchala, Carl E. (2001)). This was done on the key measures of the Overall Satisfaction Index score (see Appendix A for calculation) and Advocacy ratings related to Veterans' likelihood to recommend VA benefits.

As shown in Tables 3.2.e. and 3.2.s. for Access and Servicing, respectively, there were no indications of unusual patterns for missing data. For more discussion of missing data mechanisms (MCAR, MAR, and MNAR), please see Appendix A.

Table 3.2.e. Access: Missing Data Patterns in Satisfaction and Advocacy (0 = missing, 1 = data)

					Group Means		
Group	**Overall Satisfaction**	**Likelihood to inform others**	**Freq**	**Percent**	**OSAT Index**	**Age**	**% Male**
1	0	0	45	4%	655	50	76%
2	0	1	16	1%	591	49	75%
3	1	0	8	1%	535	51	88%
4	1	1	1000	94%	598	46	80%

Table 3.2.s. Servicing: Missing Data Patterns in Satisfaction and Advocacy (0 = missing, 1 = data)

					Group Means		
Group	**Overall Satisfaction**	**Likelihood to inform others**	**Freq**	**Percent**	**OSAT Index**	**Age**	**% Male**
1	0	0	151	2%	725	48	79%
2	0	1	72	.9%	686	47	68%
3	1	0	384	5%	716	51	85%
4	1	1	7254	92%	717	47	78%

3.3 Margin of Error

The margin of error expresses the maximum expected difference between the true population parameter and a sample estimate of that parameter. It is often used to indicate the accuracy of survey results. The larger the margin of error around an estimated value, the less accurate the estimated value will be. Larger samples are more likely to yield results close to the true population quantity and thus have smaller margins of error than smaller samples.

Based on a sample of 1,106 Veterans, the Overall Satisfaction Index score in the Access study is 600 with a margin of error of 14 index points at the 95% confidence level. This indicates that if the survey were repeated many times with different samples, the true mean Overall Satisfaction Index score would fall within 14 index points 95% of the time.

Table 3.3.e. below demonstrates relative decreases in margin of error as the study sample size increases. A 20% response rate (2,135 completes) would be associated with a margin of error of 10 index points, similar to the margin of error for a 30% response rate (3,203 completes). Results from this analysis indicate the Overall Satisfaction Index (OSAT) score calculated from the Access study is an accurate measurement of the true population mean.

Table 3.3.e. Access: Margin of Error for Larger Sample Sizes

Sample	Response Rate	Completes (N)	OSAT (mean)	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Margin of error (95% confidence interval)
10,677	**10.36%**	**1,106**	**600**	**233**	**7.0**	**14**
10,677	20%	2,135	600	233	5.0	10
10,677	30%	3,203	600	233	4.1	8
10,677	40%	4,271	600	233	3.6	7
10,677	50%	5,339	600	233	3.2	6
10,677	60%	6,406	600	233	2.9	6
10,677	80%	8,542	600	233	2.5	5

Based on a sample of 8,643 Veterans, the Overall Satisfaction Index score in the Servicing study is 715 with a margin of error of 5 index points at the 95% confidence level. This indicates that if the survey were repeated many times with different samples, the true mean Overall Satisfaction Index score would fall within 6 index points 95% of the time.

Table 3.3.s. below demonstrates relative decreases in margin of error as the study sample size increases. A 20% response rate (11,043 completes) would be associated with a margin of error of 4 index points, similar to the margin of error for a 30% response rate (16,565 completes). Results from this analysis indicate the Overall Satisfaction Index (OSAT) score calculated from the Servicing study is an accurate measurement of the true population mean.

Table 3.3.s. Servicing: Margin of Error for Larger Sample Sizes

Sample	Response Rate	Completes (N)	OSAT (mean)	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Margin of error (95% confidence interval)
55,215	**15.65%**	**8,643**	**715**	**229**	**2.5**	**5**
55,215	20%	11,043	715	229	2.2	4
55,215	30%	16,565	715	229	1.8	3
55,215	40%	22,086	715	229	1.5	3
55,215	50%	27,608	715	229	1.4	3
55,215	60%	33,129	715	229	1.3	2
55,215	80%	44,172	715	229	1.1	2

In the margin of error analysis noted on the previous page and in subsequent analyses included in this report, the Overall Satisfaction Index score is the main dependent variable and is the basis for the analysis. The Overall Satisfaction Index score is the survey metric that VBA utilizes to measure customer satisfaction and benchmark performance against other industries. It is the primary measurement in all reports. The Overall Satisfaction Index model encompasses all aspects of the customer experience,[10] and can therefore be used as a reliable indicator for the presence or absence of respondent bias in the survey results as a whole. For these reasons, the Overall Satisfaction Index score is used as the main dependent variable in the margin of error analysis and subsequent t-test analyses included in this report.

3.3.1 Sampling Distribution

Respondent characteristics such as gender and age were compared to that of the total sample to determine whether respondents and non-respondents differed on key variables of interest.

Compared to the population of all eligible respondents (Access 11,118), survey respondents demonstrate the same gender characteristics. For Access, Table 3.3.1.e. below illustrates that 20% of survey respondents were female and 80% were male, similar to the total sample population. The distribution of age shows that survey respondents tend to be older.

[10] *Explanation of J.D. Power Index Model Calculation included in Methodology.*

Table 3.3.1.e. Access: Comparing Gender and Age of Survey Respondents to Total Sample

	Respondents (%)	Sample Size (N)	Total Sample (%)	Sample Size (N)	% Point Difference
Gender					
Female	20	226	18	2046	-2
Male	80	880	82	9072	2
Age Generation					
Baby Boomer	41	457	25	2770	-16
Generation X	33	365	30	3380	-3
Generation Y/Z	26	284	45	4968	19

Compared to the population of all eligible respondents (Servicing 60,000), survey respondents demonstrate the same gender characteristics. For Servicing, Table 3.3.1.s. below illustrates that 21% of survey respondents were female and 79% were male, similar to the total sample population. The distribution of age shows that survey respondents tend to be older.

Table 3.3.1.s. Servicing: Comparing Gender and Age of Survey Respondents to the Total Sample

	Respondents (%)	Sample Size (N)	Total Sample (%)	Sample Size (N)	% Point Difference
Gender					
Female	21	1,763	20	12,251	-1
Male	79	6,455	80	47,749	1
Age Generation					
Baby Boomer	46	3766	30	17,907	-16
Generation X	30	2505	33	19,645	2
Generation Y/Z	24	1947	37	22,448	14

3.3.2 Distribution of Overall Satisfaction Index Scores

Following the comparison of sampling distributions, a comparison of Overall Satisfaction scores was conducted to determine whether differences in age and gender among respondents correlate with differences in the Overall Satisfaction Index.

For Access, Table 3.3.2.e. below indicates differences in Overall Satisfaction scores are notable between gender groups. On average, females tend to rate their experience higher than males (607 vs. 598, respectively). Comparing age groups shows that Generation Y/Z had much higher satisfaction than Generation X and Boomers.

Table 3.3.2.e. Access: Overall Satisfaction Scores for Gender and Age Groups

Characteristics	OSAT (mean)	Standard Deviation	Sample Size (N)
Gender			
Female	607	227	221
Male	598	234	848
Age Generation			
Baby Boomer	569	234	432
Generation X	610	226	360
Generation Y/Z	636	234	277

For Servicing, Table 3.3.2.s. below indicates differences in Overall Satisfaction scores are notable between gender groups. On average, females tend to rate their experience higher than males (724 vs. 715, respectively). Comparing age groups shows that Generation X had much higher satisfaction than Generation Y/Z.

Table 3.3.2.s. Servicing: Overall Satisfaction Scores for Gender and Age Groups

Characteristics	OSAT (mean)	Standard Deviation	Sample Size (N)
Gender			
Female	724	223	1,697
Male	715	230	6,164
Age Generation			
Baby Boomer	713	228	3,528
Generation X	728	225	2,435
Generation Y/Z	709	235	1,898

3.3.3 Analysis for Demographic Differences

T-test analyses were conducted to determine whether differences in demographic groups produced statistical differences in Overall Satisfaction (OSAT) scores. T-tests are typically used to determine whether or not the difference between two groups' averages most likely reflect a meaningful difference in the population from which the groups were sampled.

For Access, gender differences were *not* statistically significantly different, whereas war participation was statistically significant where we found that OEF/OIF respondents had lower overall satisfaction:

Table 3.3.3a.e. Access: T-Test Analysis for Pairs of Characteristics in Veterans' Satisfaction

Characteristics	T-Test Statistic	Statistical Difference (95% confidence level)
Gender		
Female vs. Male	.50	No
War Participation		
OEF/OIF vs. All Others	-2.26	Yes

For Servicing, the differences for gender were *not* significant, but war participation was statistically significant and the data indicates that OEF/OIF respondents had lower overall satisfaction:

Table 3.3.3a.s. Servicing: T-Test Analysis for Pairs of Characteristics in Veterans' Satisfaction

Characteristics	T-Test Statistic	Statistical Difference (95% confidence level)
Gender		
Female vs. Male	1.46	No
War Participation		
OEF/OIF vs. All Others	-2.19	Yes

Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) were conducted to determine whether differences in demographic groups produced statistical differences in Overall Satisfaction scores. ANOVAs are typically used to determine whether or not the difference between three or more groups' averages most likely reflect a meaningful difference in the population from which the groups were sampled.

For Access, differences in Overall Satisfaction by age generation were significant ($F = 7.68$, p-value $< .0005$) and the data reflects that Generation Y/Z had the highest satisfaction:

Table 3.3.3b.e. Access: Overall Satisfaction for Age Generation

Generation	OSAT (mean)	Sample Size (N)
Baby Boomer	569	432
Generation X	610	360
Generation Y/Z	636	277

For Access, differences in Overall Satisfaction by region were *not* significant (F = .98, p-value .399):

Table 3.3.3c.e. Access: Overall Satisfaction by Region

Regions	OSAT (mean)	Sample Size (N)
Midwest	606	134
Northeast	558	80
South	601	598
West	608	257

For Access, racial differences in Overall Satisfaction were *not* significant (F = 1.71, p-value = .16):

Table 3.3.3d.e. Access: Overall Satisfaction for Race

Race	OSAT (mean)	Sample Size (N)
Asian	612	46
Black	600	294
Other	568	201
White	611	528

For Access, differences in Overall Satisfaction by branch of service were *not* significant (F = 1.87, p-value = . 11):

Table 3.3.3e.e. Access: Overall Satisfaction for Military Service Branch

Military Service Branches	OSAT (mean)	Sample Size (N)
Air Force	627	149
Army	605	539
Marines	591	104
Navy	598	178
Other	547	99

For Access, differences in Overall Satisfaction by days of active service were significant (F = 2.69, p-value < .05). The data indicates that the respondents with active service of 1001-2000 days or more than 4001 days had higher satisfaction levels:

Table 3.3.3f.e. Access: Overall Satisfaction for Days of Active Service

Days of Active Service	OSAT (mean)	Sample Size (N)
1000 days or less	562	231
1001-2000 days	613	265
2001-4000 days	605	221
4001 days or more	612	352

For Access, differences in Overall Satisfaction by case status were significant (F = 146, p-value < .0001) such that respondents with Employ Rehab status had the highest satisfaction:

Table 3.3.3g.e. Access: Overall Satisfaction for Case Status

Case Status	OSAT (mean)	Sample Size (N)
Discontinued	511	629
Employ Rehab	736	388
Other	671	52

For Servicing, age generation differences in Overall Satisfaction were significant (F = 4.26, p-value < .02) such that Generation X respondents had the highest satisfaction:

Table 3.3.3b.s. Servicing: Overall Satisfaction for Generation

Generation	OSAT (mean)	Sample Size (N)
Baby Boomer	713	3,528
Generation X	728	2,435
Generation Y/Z	709	1,898

For Servicing, region differences in Overall Satisfaction were significant (F = 15.41, p-value < .0001) such that respondents from the Midwest and Northeast had the highest satisfaction:

Table 3.3.3c.s. Servicing: Overall Satisfaction by Region

Regions	OSAT (mean)	Sample Size (N)
Midwest	740	1,599
Northeast	741	1,133
South	701	3,032
West	708	2,097

For Servicing, racial differences in Overall Satisfaction were significant (F = 3.65, p-value < .02) such that White respondents had the highest satisfaction:

Table 3.3.3d.s. Servicing: Overall Satisfaction for Race

Race	OSAT (mean)	Sample Size (N)
Asian	716	366
Black	710	1,940
Other	703	1,357
White	724	4,198

For Servicing, differences in Overall Satisfaction by branch of service were significant (F = 3.08, p-value < .0002) such that Air Force respondents had the highest satisfaction:

Table 3.3.3e.s. Servicing: Overall Satisfaction for Military Service Branch

Military Service	OSAT (mean)	Sample Size (N)
Air Force	729	1,099
Army	719	3,877
Marines	713	855
Navy	714	1,377
Other	691	653

For Servicing, differences in Overall Satisfaction by days of active service were significant (F = 24.49, p-value <.0001) such that respondents with 4,001 days or more of active service had the highest satisfaction:

Table 3.3.3h.s. Servicing: Overall Satisfaction for Days of Active Service

Days of Active Service	OSAT (mean)	Sample Size (N)
1,000 days or less	699	1,932
1,001-2,000 days	698	2,039
2,001-4,000 days	713	1,487
4,001 days or more	749	2,403

For Servicing, differences in Overall Satisfaction by case status were significant (F = 23.39, p-value < .0001) such that respondents with Employ Rehab status had the highest satisfaction:

Table 3.3.3g.e. Access: Overall Satisfaction for Case Status

Case Status	OSAT (mean)	Sample Size (N)
Discontinued	633	182
Employ Rehab	726	5,600
Other	699	2,079

3.3.4 Data Imputation Analysis for Demographic Differences

A pairwise comparison t-test analysis was done to evaluate whether data imputation for missing values across significant demographic differences shown in section 3.3.3 would impact Overall Satisfaction Index scores. This analysis included survey raking across demographic differences as one level of comparison.

These results (Tables 3.3.4a.e. and 3.3.4a.s.) show that there were no significant differences between the non-imputed mean and the imputed mean of the satisfaction index across demographics, sample sizes, or survey raked values. We want to highlight that after statistical adjustment for the differences found between respondents and non-respondents reported earlier, there were no differences in overall satisfaction levels. These results support the conclusion that the survey's findings for Veterans' Overall Satisfaction scores are accurate.

Table 3.3.4a.e. Access: Comparison of Imputed vs. Non-Imputed on Veterans' Satisfaction

T-Tests on Imputed vs. Non-Imputed raked for Demographic Differences				
Overall Satisfaction Index *(100 - 1000 range)*	**mean *(imputed)***	**mean *(non-imputed)***	**t-statistic**	**p-value**
Imputed demographics (1,069 final sample size)	587.70	600.17	1.22	0.22
Imputed survey-raked demographics (1,069 final sample size)	599.84	609.33	0.93	0.35
Imputed survey-raked demographics (1,106 *total respondents*)	599.61	610.64	1.09	0.27

Note: *Non-imputed is based on the 1,069 final cleaned sample size used in this report.*

Table 3.3.4a.s. Servicing: Comparison of Imputed vs. Non-Imputed on Veterans' Satisfaction

T-Tests on Imputed vs. Non-Imputed raked for Demographic Differences				
Overall Satisfaction Index *(100 - 1000 range)*	**mean *(imputed)***	**mean *(non-imputed)***	**t-statistic**	**p-value**
Imputed demographics *(7,861 final sample size)*	716.56	716.62	0.02	0.99
Imputed survey-raked demographics *(7,861 final sample size)*	715.61	715.53	-0.02	0.98
Imputed survey-raked demographics *(8,218 total respondents)*	715.46	715.63	0.05	0.96

Note: *Non-imputed is based on the 7,861 final cleaned sample size used in this report.*

Survey Raking for Sample Weights to Adjust for Differences and Compare Overall Satisfaction and Advocacy Ratings

The procedure known as raking adjusts a set of data so that its marginal totals match specified control totals on a specified set of variables. The term "raking" suggests an analogy with the process of smoothing the soil in a garden plot by alternately working it back and forth with a rake in two perpendicular directions (Izrael and Battaglia (2004)).

Survey raking is an iterative sample-balancing algorithm-based technique that provides sample weighting convergence across multiple variables and multiple categories (see Battaglia, Izrael, Hoaglin, and Frankel (2009)).

In keeping with OMB "*Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys,*" Guidelines 3.2.12 and 3.2.13, J.D. Power selected the best statistical method to simultaneously adjust for multiple differences between groups by applying a survey raking procedure (see Anderson, L., and R.D. Fricker, Jr. (2015)).

The JDP raking procedure is a proprietary improved version based on the excellent methods initially developed by Izrael and Battaglia (2000, 2004) and Battaglia, Izrael, Hoaglin, and Frankel (2004). JDP raking improvements are primarily related to better handling of low cell values during iterative convergence processing. For this analysis, 50 iterations were set (although less were needed) to converge on the best sample weights (.2 estimation margin) to simultaneously adjust for non-response bias in age, race, region, and war (service era) demographic categories. For additional background about survey raking methodologies, see Wallace and Rust (1996).

The estimated population distributions are used as convergence targets. In this case, the data set of all eligible respondents for Access (14,000) and Servicing (60,000) were used as the estimated population to derive sample weightings for the Access survey respondents (1,069) and the Servicing survey respondents (7,861).

In accordance with OMB "*Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys,*" Guideline 3.2.13, a series of t-tests were conducted to determine whether non-response bias in demographic areas produced statistical differences in Overall Satisfaction scores and Advocacy ratings. Typically, t-tests are used to determine whether differences between two groups' averages and variances reflect a meaningful difference in the population. The sample weightings derived from the survey raking procedure were included in the t-tests to equalize the survey respondent differences with non-respondents.

For Access, there were no significant differences in Overall Satisfaction or Advocacy levels when the data was adjusted for demographic differences between survey respondents and non-respondents. These results support the conclusion that the survey's findings for Veterans' Overall Satisfaction scores are accurate.

Table 3.3.4b.e. Access: Overall Satisfaction and Advocacy for Survey Respondents Unweighted and Weighted

Analysis of Survey Respondent Scores with Weighted Adjustment for Non-Response Bias						
Rating Measure	**Mean *(Unweighted)***	**Mean *(Weighted)***	**Standard Deviation *(Unweighted)***	**Standard Deviation *(Weighted)***	**t-statistic**	**p-value**
Overall Satisfaction Index (100 - 1000 range)	600	609	233	233	-0.91	0.36
Likelihood to inform others about VA benefits (rating 1 - 4)	3.48	3.51	0.77	0.76	-0.71	0.48

For Servicing, there were no significant differences in Overall Satisfaction or Advocacy levels when the data was adjusted for demographic differences between survey respondents and non-respondents. These results support the conclusion that the survey's findings for Veterans' Overall Satisfaction scores are accurate.

Table 3.3.4b.s. Servicing: Overall Satisfaction and Advocacy for Survey Respondents Unweighted and Weighted

Analysis of Survey Respondent Scores with Weighted Adjustment for Non-Response Bias						
Rating Measure	**Mean *(Unweighted)***	**Mean *(Weighted)***	**Standard Deviation *(Unweighted)***	**Standard Deviation *(Weighted)***	**t-statistic**	**p-value**
Overall Satisfaction Index (100 - 1000 range)	717	716	229	230	0.30	0.77
Likelihood to inform others about VA benefits (rating 1 - 4)	3.64	3.64	0.63	0.62	-0.83	0.41

Findings

Results from the non-response bias analysis indicate that the Overall Satisfaction Index score and the Advocacy rating from the VR&E Access and Servicing studies reflect the experience of all Veterans who applied, were found entitled and pursued the program or found not entitled and did not pursue the program, have been rehabilitated, reached maximum rehabilitation gain, and Veterans still pursuing benefits.

Sample Cleaning: Initial comparisons on age, gender, and geographical characteristics between the total records provided and the records available after cleaning (see Survey Yield, Section 3.1) suggest the sample utilized in the study exhibits similar characteristics as the total sample. Additional comparisons (see Margin of Error and Sampling Distribution, Section 3.3,) suggest the sample cleaning rules did not impact the sample's representativeness and, thus, the results are conclusive.

Non-Response Bias Analysis: Results from the non-response bias analysis did show group differences for age, gender, region, race, military branch, days of service, and war participation between survey respondents and non-respondents. After correcting for these differences using a recommended sample-balancing survey raking method to derive sample weights (see Margin of Error, Section 3.3.4 Data Imputation Analysis for Demographic Variables), there were no differences found in Veterans' Overall Satisfaction and Advocacy (likelihood to inform others about VA benefits) between weighted and unweighted survey respondents.

Item Response Rate Calculations: Results from the survey item response rate calculations show high item response rates, with none falling below OMB guidelines (see Appendix B for Item Response Rates). According to OMB Guideline 3.2.10, given that neither study had a response rate lower than 70%, a non-response bias analysis was not necessary at the item level.

The research and approach taken by J.D. Power are in accordance with sound market research and current best practices from the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) regarding response rate recommendations: "Results that show the least bias have turned out, in some cases, to come from surveys with less than optimal response rates. Experimental comparisons have also revealed few significant differences between estimates from surveys with low response rates and short field periods and surveys with high response rates and long field periods." See AAPOR "*Response Rates – An Overview*" (2015) and Special Issue of Public Opinion Quarterly "*Nonresponse Bias in Household Surveys*" (Singer, 2006).

Conclusion

The Overall Satisfaction Index score and Advocacy rating (likelihood to inform others about VA benefits) are not impacted in any meaningful way by non-response bias. This analysis confirms that the data collected during Fiscal Year 2015 is valid.

The FY15 Voice of the Veteran Line of Business Tracking Satisfaction Study data for the VR&E Access and Servicing surveys can be used to infer reliable Overall Satisfaction scores and Advocacy ratings. The Overall Satisfaction Index score reflects the experience of all Veterans who applied, were found entitled and pursued the program or found not entitled and did not pursue the program, have been rehabilitated; reached maximum rehabilitation gain, and Veterans still pursuing benefits.

The sample utilized in the study exhibits similar characteristics for age, gender, and geography as the total sample provided. This indicates the sample cleaning rules did not impact the sample's representativeness.

While the results from the non-response bias analysis did show group differences on demographic characteristics between survey respondents and non-respondents, there were no differences found in Veterans' Overall Satisfaction scores and Advocacy ratings between weighted and unweighted survey respondents. This was evaluated after correcting for these differences using a recommended sample-balancing survey raking method to derive sample weights. JDP conducted all necessary statistical tests in accordance with OMB standards.

J.D. Power certifies the results contained within this report.

References

Anderson, L., and R.D. Fricker, Jr. (2015). "*Raking: An Important and Often Overlooked Survey Analysis Tool.*" Phalanxhttp://faculty.nps.edu/rdfricke/docs/Analysis%20process_v4.pdf

American Association for Public Opinion Research (2008). Standard Definitions: Final Disposition of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys. Ann Arbor, Michigan: AAPOR. (http://www.aapor.org/AAPORKentico/AAPOR_Main/media/MainSiteFiles/Standard_Definitions_07_08_Final.pdf).

American Association for Public Opinion Research (2015). "*Response Rates – An Overview*." http://www.aapor.org/AAPORKentico/Education-Resources/For-Researchers/Poll-Survey-FAQ/Response-Rates-An-Overview.aspx

Battaglia, Michael P., Izrael, David, Hoaglin, David C., and Frankel, Martin R. (2004). "*To Rake or Not To Rake Is Not the Question Anymore with the Enhanced Raking Macro*." Proceedings of the 29th Annual SAS Users Group International Conference, Paper 207.

Battaglia, Michael P., Izrael, David, Hoaglin, David C., and Frankel, Martin R. (2009). *"Practical Considerations in Raking Survey Data."* Survey Practice, Vol 2, No. 5.

Baum, Herbert M., Ph.D.; Chandonnet, Anna M.A.; Fentress, Jack M.S., M.B.A.; and Rasinowich, Colleen, B.A. (2012). "*Mixed-Mode Methods for Conducting Survey Research*." Data Recognition Corporation. http://www.datarecognitioncorp.com/survey-services/Documents/Mixed-Mode-Methods-for-Conducting-Survey-Research.pdf

Dillman, D. A. and JDP (2015). "*Conference call discussion on non-response bias, avoidance methods, and post-hoc sample weighting*." Conference call between Dr. Dillman and JDP (Greg Truex, Jay Meyers, Ph.D., Lee Quintanar, Ph.D.), May 20, 2015 (2 p.m. PDT).

Dillman, D. A. (2014). Internet, Phone, Mail and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method. Fourth Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc: New York.

Ellis, J. M. (2000). "*Estimating the Number of Eligible Respondents for a Telephone Survey of Low-Incidence Households*." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Association for Public Opinion Research, Portland, OR, May 21.

Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology's "*Statistical Policy Working Paper 31, Measuring and Reporting Sources of Error in Surveys."* (2001). Washington, D.C.

Izrael, David, Hoaglin, David C., and Battaglia, Michael P. (2000). "*A SAS Macro for Balancing a Weighted Sample.*" Proceedings of the Twenty-Fifth Annual SAS Users Group International Conference, Paper 275.

Izrael, David, Hoaglin, David C., and Battaglia, Michael P. (2004). "*Tips and Tricks for Raking Survey Data (a.k.a. Sample Balancing).*" Proceedings of the 2004 American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) Conference.

Malhotra, N.K, and Birks, D.F. (2007). Marketing Research: An Applied Approach. Third edition. Prentice Hall/Financial Times: England.

Pierchala, Carl E. (2001). "*PROC MI® as the Basis for a Macro for the Study of Patterns of Missing Data.*" Northeast SAS Users Group. http://www.lexjansen.com/nesug/nesug03/st/st009.pdf

Singer, E. (2006). Special Issue: Nonresponse Bias in Household Surveys. Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol 70, Issue 5.

U.S. Office of Management and Budget. (1990). "*Survey Coverage.*" Statistical Policy Working Paper 17. Washington, D.C.

U.S. Office of Management and Budget Publication. (January 2006). "*When Designing Surveys for Information Collections.*" The Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW. Washington, D.C. 20503 USA

U.S. Office of Management and Budget Publication. (September 2006). "*Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys.*" The Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW. Washington, D.C. 20503 USA

U.S. Office of Management and Budget Publication. (2008). VBA VR&E OMB - Part B Supporting statement for "*Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods.*" Washington, D.C.

Vogt, W. Paul, Vogt, Elaine R., Gardner, Dianne C., and Haeffele, Lynne M. (2014). Selecting the Right Analyses for Your Data - Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Method. Guilford Press. New York, NY.

Wallace, Leslie and Rust, Keith (1996). A Comparison of Raking and Poststratification Using 1994 NAEP Data. Leslie Wallace, West Inc. 584-589.

Appendix A

Missing Data Patterns and Mechanisms

An excellent discussion of missing data patterns, mechanisms, and research analysis methods is provided in Vogt, W. Paul, Vogt, Elaine R., Gardner, Dianne C., and Haeffele, Lynne M. (2014). An overview of the missing data types and issues is described below.

Understanding the reasons data is missing can help when analyzing the remaining data. If values are missing at random, the data sample may still be representative of the population; however, if the values are missing systematically, analysis may be harder.

- **Missing completely at random.** Values in a data set are missing completely at random (MCAR) if the events that lead to any particular data item being missing are independent both of observable variables and of unobservable parameters of interest, and occur entirely at random. When data are MCAR, the analyses performed on the data are unbiased; however, data are rarely MCAR.
- **Missing at random.** Missing at random (MAR) is an alternative and occurs when the missingness is related to a particular variable, but is not related to the value of the variable that has missing data. An example of this is accidentally omitting an answer on a questionnaire.
- **Missing not at random.** Missing not at random (MNAR) is data that is missing for a specific reason (i.e., the value of the variable that is missing is related to the reason it is missing). An example of this is if a certain question on a questionnaire tends to be skipped deliberately by participants with certain characteristics. Graphical models can be used to describe the missing data mechanism in detail.

While it is clear that MNAR can introduce statistical bias, there is no definitive test (see Vogt et al. (2014)). It is also clear that MCAR is rarely evident in research data and most tests of it will fail. However, MAR is fully acceptable for valid statistical analyses (Vogt et al., 2014). MAR is essentially “missing partially at random,” whereby the intra-group missingness remains random despite some differences between group tendencies. Graphical data representations are the typical tool used in assessment as described above and in Pierchala, Carl E. (2001).

See Section 3.2 Missing Data Patterns and Mechanisms for findings specific to VR&E’s data.

Appendix B

Item Response Rates

In accordance with OMB "*Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys,*" Section 3.2, Guidelines 3.2.6-3.2.7, the item response rate was calculated as the ratio of the number of respondents for whom an in-scope response was obtained to the number of respondents who were asked to answer that item. The number asked to answer an item is the number of unit-level respondents minus the number of respondents with a valid skip pattern. In addition to item response rate, total item response rate was calculated as the product of the overall unit response rate and the item response rate for each item. The purpose of these calculations is to assess the item non-response, which occurs when one or more survey items are left blank in an otherwise completed questionnaire. Tables B1.e. and B1.s. display the item and total item response rates for these surveys.

The OMB "*Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys,*" Guideline 3.2.10 states that an item non-response analysis should be conducted for items with an item response rate of less than 70%. Since none of the survey item response rates fall below 70%, for Access or Servicing, an item-level analysis of non-response bias was not necessary. The Access item response rates range from 84% to 100% with a 96% average, while Servicing response rates range from 82% to 100% with a 97% average.

Table B1.e. Access: Item and Total Item Response Rate[11]

Question Number	Item Response Rate	Unit Response Rate
1	95%	9%
2	99%	9%
3	99%	9%
4	94%	9%
5	95%	9%
6	97%	9%
7a	99%	10%
7b	99%	9%
7c	99%	9%
7d	98%	9%
7e	96%	9%
7f	98%	9%
8	99%	10%

[11] *Open capture question for additional comments about your experience and email opt in questions display "N/A" and were not included in item and total item response rate calculations*

Table B1.e. Access: Item and Total Item Response Rate

9	96%	9%
10	98%	9%
11	95%	9%
12	99%	9%
13	99%	10%
14	97%	9%
15	94%	9%
16	97%	9%
17	96%	9%
18	98%	9%
19	94%	9%
20	91%	9%
21	84%	8%
22	91%	9%
23	94%	9%
24	99%	9%
25	96%	9%
26	94%	9%
27	92%	9%
28	91%	9%
29	88%	8%
30	99%	10%
31	N/A	N/A
32	N/A	N/A
33	N/A	N/A
34a	90%	9%
34b	90%	9%
34c	90%	9%
34d	89%	9%
35a	97%	9%
35b	97%	9%
35c	97%	9%
35d	98%	9%
35e	97%	9%
35f	98%	9%
36	N/A	N/A
37	87%	8%
38a	94%	9%
38b	93%	9%
38c	92%	9%
38d	86%	8%
39	99%	9%
40	94%	9%
41	95%	9%

Table B1.e. Access: Item and Total Item Response Rate

42	N/A	N/A
43	N/A	N/A
44	96%	9%
45	98%	9%
46	97%	9%
47	96%	9%
48	98%	9%
49a.	100%	10%
49b.	100%	10%
49c.	100%	10%
49d.	100%	10%
49e.	100%	10%
49f.	100%	10%
49g.	100%	10%
49h.	96%	9%
49i.	N/A	N/A
49j.	100%	10%
49k.	100%	10%
49l.	100%	10%
49m.	100%	10%
49n.	100%	10%
49o.	100%	10%
49p.	100%	10%
49q.	100%	10%
49r.	100%	10%
49s.	100%	10%
50	100%	10%
50a.	100%	10%
50b.	100%	10%
50c.	100%	10%
50d.	100%	10%
51	N/A	N/A

Table B1.s. Servicing: Item and Total Item Response Rate[12]

Question Number	Item Response Rate	Unit Response Rate
1	92%	13%
2	99%	14%
3	98%	14%
4	98%	13%
5a	98%	13%
5b	98%	14%
5c	98%	13%
5d	97%	13%
5e	97%	13%
5f	97%	13%
6	100%	14%
7	94%	13%
8	98%	13%
9	90%	12%
10	99%	14%
11	95%	13%
12	96%	13%
13	100%	14%
14	100%	14%
15	100%	14%
16	98%	14%
17	100%	14%
18	98%	14%
19a	98%	14%
19b	97%	13%
19c	97%	13%
19d	97%	13%
19e	95%	13%
19f	97%	13%
20	N/A	N/A
21	99%	14%
22	95%	13%
23	97%	13%
24	96%	13%
25	96%	13%
26a	95%	13%

[12] *Open capture questions for additional comments about your experience and items unclear in letter and e-mail opt in questions display "N/A" and were not included in item and total item response rate calculations*

Table B1.s. Servicing: Item and Total Item Response Rate

26b	82%	11%
26c	92%	13%
26d	93%	13%
27	97%	13%
28	97%	13%
29	93%	13%
30	96%	13%
31	99%	14%
32	98%	14%
33	99%	14%
34	96%	13%
35	100%	14%
36	97%	13%
37	99%	14%
38	97%	13%
39	98%	14%
40	99%	14%
41	99%	14%
42	94%	13%
43	N/A	N/A
44	N/A	N/A
45	N/A	N/A

In the item response rate calculations above, J.D. Power considered blanks as non-response for mail returns and “don’t know” selections in addition to blanks as non-response for online returns. “Don’t know” selections are included as non-response for online returns since respondents are forced to select a response in the online survey.

Similarly, “N/A” responses were also included as non-response for rating questions in online returns. For respondents taking the survey online, the respondent must answer each question before proceeding to the next question in the survey, “Not Applicable” or “N/A” could either mean that the respondent was answering “N/A” to the question or did not wish to answer it. Therefore, this response option was included as non-response.

Appendix C

Study Overview

1.1 Study Background

The Voice of the Veteran Satisfaction Initiative tracks Veteran satisfaction with the benefits and services received from VBA. The VOV Tracking Satisfaction Research Study is ongoing survey research tracking Veteran satisfaction with VBA's lines of business: Compensation, Pension, Education, Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E), and Loan Guaranty (LGY).

As part of Executive Order 13571 Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service, agencies that provide significant services directly to the public to identify and survey customers, establish service standards and track performance against those standards, and benchmark customer service against the best in businessThis This program enables VBA to understand what is important to Veterans relative to benefits received and services provided. This program provides timely and actionable Veteran feedback on how well VBA is providing services. Insights from this program identify opportunities for improvement and measure the impact of improvement initiatives as well as continuously measure performance outcomes.

The VR&E survey instrument is regarding Veteran satisfaction with enrollment and receipt of benefits issued by VBA. In FY15, fielding occurred continuously on a monthly basis for Access and annually for Servicing. Surveys remained open in field until the end of each quarter. The returns from surveys received after fielding closed at the end of a quarter were counted in the next quarter's number of returns.

Survey	Methodology	Fielding Frequency	Total Mailouts Per Year	Target Number of Completes
Access	Mail and Online	Annually	14,000	4,200
Servicing	Mail Only	Monthly	60,000	18,000

1.2 Methodology

Respondents from the Access study had the option of completing the survey on paper or online, and received two separate mailings. In the first mailing, a postcard was sent introducing the study, which included an online survey link and a unique access code login for the online survey. In the second mailing, the respondent was sent a Survey Package, which included a cover letter with the online survey link and login, a paper survey, and a business reply envelope. The second survey was cleaned to exclude anyone who completed the survey at least one week prior to the mailing.

Respondents from the Servicing study only had the option to complete the survey on paper, and received two separate mailings. The first Survey Package mailed included a cover letter introducing the study, a paper survey, and a business reply envelope. The second Survey Package mailed included a cover letter, a paper survey, and a business reply envelope. The second survey was cleaned to exclude anyone who completed the survey at least one week prior to the mailing.

Sample Population Definition

The targeted populations were identified by VR&E. For Servicing, the target population is defined as Veterans who have entered and been enrolled in one of the five tracks for at least 60 days. These individuals include Veterans who have been rehabilitated; Veterans who have reached maximum rehabilitation gain and could not proceed in the program; and Veterans still pursuing benefits.

For Access, the target population is defined as Veterans who had an initial meeting with their VR&E counselor and were granted a decision regarding their entitlement within the past 30 days. These individuals include those who applied and showed up for the initial appointment and were either found entitled and pursued the program or found not entitled and did not pursue the program.

Sample File Generation

- VR&E generates the sample files based upon the sampling definitions and submits sample files directly to BAS.
- BAS receives the sample files and sends to VADIR for processing.
- VADIR processes sample files (to remove SSN and append demographics/EDIPI) and returns them to BAS.
- BAS transfers sample files (via EDX platform) to JDP and notifies JDP via email that sample files are ready for deployment.
- JDP cleans the sample file and selects the sample.
- Sample is transferred to Government Printing Office (GPO) print vendor (via EDX platform) for printing and mailing of the postcards and survey packages.
- Sample is transferred in accordance with the following schedule: VOV_LOB Tracking_Production S

1.3 Data Cleaning

JDP processed the sample according to the following cleaning rules:

1. De-duplicate records within each business line and across surveys based on the unique identifier (EDI_PI or VA_ID) for each record. *Note: EDIPI is Electronic Data Interchange Personal Identifier.*

a) *Exception*: For Pension Access (v1) and Pension Servicing (v8), de-duplicate records based on EDI_PI *and* Claim Number.
b) When each new sample file is received, JDP cleans it against all sample selected from every sample batch that has been delivered 12 months prior to ensure a respondent does not receive a VA line of business survey more than once in a 12 month-period. In the case of duplicates occurring within the same sample month, priority is assigned to business lines with the lowest number of sample records.

2. Clean out records present on the JDP Do Not Contact list and clean against the National Change of Address (NCOA) list.
3. Clean out any respondents who do not have any EDI_PI or VA_ID included in their sample record.
   a) *Exception*: For Pension Access (v1) and Pension Servicing (v8), clean out records with blank EDI_PI *and* Claim Number.
4. Clean out any respondents not specified as a dependent/spouse who have a date of death (DOD) in their sample record.
5. Clean out any respondents who do not have any address included in their sample record.
6. Assign and maintain unique sampling identifiers to each sample record in order to track history of sampling. Exclude records that have been sampled in the past 12 months to ensure no respondent is mailed surveys more than once in a 12-month time frame. This rule may not apply to those who completed a survey.

1.4 Order Generation and Fulfillment Process

Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR 8.8) mandate government agencies to solicit all printing requirements through the Government Printing Office. GPO utilizes print vendors to fulfill orders. A Data Transfer Agreement (DTA) must be in place with the print vendor and contractor before BAS can obligate funds or transfer sample files to the print vendor and contractor.

Prior to mailing the postcards and mail surveys, print orders must be generated for each survey. The entire process can take 2-4 weeks from inception of the print order to the mailing of the Survey Package or postcard. Below are the steps involved in order generation and order fulfillment.

Order generation

- After sample is received by JDP, the sample files are cleaned and selected. Then Letter Work Orders (LWOs) are created to provide the print vendor with the necessary information to match the sample files to the correct survey instrument. (1 day)
- JDP creates the print order and sends over to BAS Contractor Officer's Representative (COR). (Same day as above step)
- The COR reviews, authorizes, and submits the print order. (1 day)
- The BAS Publication Officer and/or COR submits the orders to the VA Publications Services Division (VAPSD). (Same day as above step)
- The order is issued a control number by a VBA Management Analyst, Publications. (Variable timing)

- Once the control number is assigned, the order goes to the VA Publication Services Division liaison to forward to GPO Contracting Officer. (Variable timing) *Note: the amount of time an order is with VAPSD varies from 3 days to 20 days.*
- The GPO Contracting Officer sends the printing and mailing order to the print vendor.

Order fulfillment

- Once the order is placed, the GPO print vendor is allotted 9 business days to fulfill the order (2 days to generate proofs, 2 days for proof review/correction, and 5 days to print and mail).
- Upon receipt of the proofs from print vendor, JDP reviews and approves; then BAS reviews and approves; then VAPSD reviews and approves.
- After the orders have been mailed, the print vendor provides the mail receipts to contractor, BAS, and VAPSD.
- Upon order completion, VAPSD provides actual costs to BAS.

1.5 Reporting

Reporting occurs four times yearly for the Servicing Process survey.

On a quarterly basis, the following deliverables are provided:

- Scorecard
- Data matrices
- Data is loaded to the VOV reporting site
- Open-ended comments (verbatims)

On a semiannual (twice yearly) basis, the following deliverable is provided:

- Data and Analysis Presentation

Reporting occurs once annually for the Access Process survey.

On an annual basis, the following deliverables are provided:

- Scorecard
- Data matrices
- Data is loaded to the VOV reporting site
- Open-ended comments (verbatims)
- Data and analysis presentation

Sample Plan Overview

2.1 Sample Criteria

VBA was responsible for providing sample to JDP that met the following sampling criteria:

Sample Population	Inclusion Criteria	Frequency of Data Request
Access Survey	For Access, the target population is defined as Veterans who had an initial meeting with their VR&E counselor and were granted a decision regarding their entitlement within the past 30 days. These individuals include those who applied and showed up for the initial appointment and were either found entitled and pursued the program or found not entitled and did not pursue the program.	Annually
Servicing Survey	For Servicing, the target population is defined as Veterans who have entered and been enrolled in one of the five tracks for at least 60 days. These individuals include Veterans who have been rehabilitated; Veterans who have reached maximum rehabilitation gain and could not proceed in the program; and Veterans still pursuing benefits.	Monthly

2.2 Fielding/Sampling Frequency

Survey Instrument	Methodology	Total Survey Instruments	Targeted Number of Completes	Number of Postcards (eSurvey)	Number of Mail Packages	Fielding Frequency
Access Survey	Mail and Online	14,000	4,200	14,000	14,000	Annually
Servicing Survey	Mail Only	60,000	18,000	N/A	60,000	Monthly

2.3 Data Transfer

The sample was posted by BAS once a month within the sampling folder on the VOV EDX site. Sample should be provided in a file layout consistent with the file layout provided for the study as outlined below.

VR&E File Layout
ADDRESS_1
ADDRESS_2
ADDRESS_LINE_1
ADDRESS_LINE_2
AGE
BAH Rate
BRANCH_1
BRANCH2
BRANCH3
CASE_STATUS_CODE
CITY
Claim_Number
Date_of_Birth
DIAG_CODE
ELGBTY_TRMNTN_DT
Email_Address
EOD_1
EOD_2
EOD_3
First_Name
FIRST_NOTICE_OF_DEATH
GENDER
Last_Name
MILITARY_RANK
PHONE_NUMBER
PHONE_NUMBER_2
POSTAL_CODE
PRCNT_NBR
RAD_1
RAD_2
RAD_3
SEH_STATUS
SERVICE_ERA_1
SERVICE_ERA_2
SERVICE_ERA_3

VR&E File Layout (Continued.)

SERVICE_PERIOD_MONTH
SSN_NBR
STATE
STN_NBR
VETERAN_DOB
Zip
Zip_Code

2.4 Sample Cleaning Rules Glossary

Duplicate records in sample file – The record is cleaned out if there is more than one record within the same sample file for the same respondent

Duplicate record history – The record is cleaned out if the record has been selected within the past 12 months for any of VBA's business line surveys (i.e., Compensation, Pension, Education, Home Loan Guaranty, and Vocational Rehabilitation), regardless of whether the respondent completed the survey

Invalid address – The record is cleaned out if JDP's address verification software indicates an invalid address code

Invalid values – The record is cleaned out if the "VA_ID" field is blank

Blanks – The record is cleaned out if the "Name" field corresponding to the record is blank

Do not contact – The record is cleaned out if the individual is listed on JDP's Do Not Contact list

2.5 Sample Selection

JDP selected sample records following the completion of the sample cleaning process. The following guidelines are referenced when selecting sample:

1. Total Sampling Targets: The table below summarizes the total sampling target per an RO per a fielding period. The "Sampling Target per RO" column indicates the minimum number of sample records that should be selected per an RO for each survey. If this minimum target number cannot be reached for a particular RO, sample from a different RO will be selected to make up the difference.

	Frequency	Total Sampling Target	Sampling Target Per Time Period	Sampling Target Per RO	Number of ROs
Access Survey	Annually	14,000	4,200	241	58
Servicing Survey	Monthly	60,000	18,000	86	58

2. The same record cannot be selected for multiple surveys during the same wave. Respondents who have completed a survey within the past 12 months cannot be selected. Survey priority is based on the number of records in each sample file. The survey with the smallest number of records is given first priority.
3. Following sample selection, the JDP project teams receives an automated report confirming the number of records selected for each survey version. The JDP project team verifies that the sample selection quantities reflect the sample targets and approves the sample file for fielding.

2.6 Data Collection

During the survey fielding period, both online survey returns and paper surveys are collected as they are received and posted on a secure EDX site. Responses from paper surveys are scanned through automated imaging software while verbatim responses are recorded by a live survey processor. Survey returns must have all pages intact in order to be processed and counted as a return. Surveys with missing pages are counted as unusable. Returns are also considered unusable if there is an indication that the individual completing the survey is not the individual selected from the sample file (i.e., the respondent name and/or address on the survey is replaced with a different name and/or address). During each day of fielding, a subset of survey returns undergoes quality assurance to validate the accuracy of responses captured. If duplicate surveys are returned (as identified by the unique sampling identifier assigned to each sample record), the original survey return is processed while the duplicate survey is removed. In the case of duplicate survey returns from mixed methodology surveys, the date the survey was received is used to identify the original return while the subsequent return is removed post-fielding.

Appendix D

Approaches to Mitigating the Effect of Non-Response Bias and Strategies to Improve the Response Rate

The following section outlines two approaches used in FY15 to mitigate the potential of non-response bias. As mentioned earlier in the report, J.D. Power affirms that while high response rates are always desirable in surveys, an 80% response rate is typically not achievable for a voluntary, customer satisfaction survey instrument (Malhotra & Birks, 2007), particularly those that do not provide an incentive (not recommended for this program). To illustrate this point, the Dillman Method for survey fielding (Dillman, D. A. (2014)) discusses a survey instrument that was fielded to 600 students at the University of Washington. After five attempts to solicit a response, as well as offering a monetary incentive to complete the survey, only a 77% response rate was generated.

The first approach to minimize non-response occurs *before and during* data collection and involves introducing measures to maximize survey response rates. The second approach is to make statistical adjustments *after* the data is collected.

1.1 Approach 1: Strategies to Maximize Response Rates

Prior to and during fielding the VR&E survey, JDP implemented the following measures to reduce the chances of non-response:

- Respondents were provided with the promise of confidentiality on the survey cover letter and postcard and assured that their survey responses would not impact their current or future eligibility for benefits.
- Following the first mailing, non-respondents were sent an additional survey mailing.
- Respondents were provided with a toll-free telephone number and dedicated email address to contact JDP about survey-related inquiries (e.g., how to interpret questions and response items, the purpose of the survey, how to get another copy of the survey if their copy has been lost/damaged, etc.). Telephone calls and emails are responded to within 24 hours and answered during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. PT).
- JDP ensured the Web-based surveys were accessible to people with disabilities by maintaining 508 compliant standards. These standards include:
  - Keyboard navigation rather than mouse or other pointing devices
  - Customization options for color, size, and style of text displayed
  - Compatibility with screen-readers to translate items displayed on the survey in audible output and/or Braille displays
  - Customer support and technical support through JDP Help Desk toll-free phone number and email address
  - Exclusion of non-text elements, image maps, animation, flashing or blinking text.

- The survey fielding period was extended to offer opportunities to respond for subgroups having a propensity to respond late (e.g., males, young, full-time employed).
- The survey was developed and reviewed in order to enhance respondent understanding of the survey materials and to improve the relevancy of the data collected:
  - Prior to fielding the benchmark study, a series of cognitive labs was conducted with test users to ensure the survey questions were easily understood and correctly interpreted. Revisions were made to the survey based on test user feedback (as per OMB Guideline 1.4.1).
  - After the benchmark study and prior to fielding the first year of the tracking study, VR&E Service and JDP conducted a review of the survey instruments and modified the surveys to improve the relevancy of data collected (as per OMB Guideline 1.4.2).

1.2 Approach 2: Correcting Unit Non-Response Bias with Sample Weighting and Survey Raking

As stated above, the two approaches to tackling non-response bias include implementing measures to maximize response rates during the fielding period and making post hoc statistical adjustments to the survey results afterwards. The following section discusses the statistical adjustments approach, which includes weighting the data or imputing scores to correct the amount of non-response bias. An example of this approach would be the survey raking procedure described earlier in this report. See the associated references in the Survey Raking Procedure for Sample Weightings section for more information.

The procedure known as raking adjusts a set of data so that its marginal totals match specified control totals on a specified set of variables. The term “raking” suggests an analogy with the process of smoothing the soil in a garden plot by alternately working it back and forth with a rake in two perpendicular directions (Izrael and Battaglia (2004)).

If non-response bias was identified in the survey data, the non-response bias could be corrected mathematically with a post-stratification survey weight. JDP would weigh the survey data based on certain demographics (such as age, gender, region, etc.) of the total sample so that the weighted survey data would conform more to the demographics of the total sample. The implicit assumption in this approach is that the distributions of characteristics of the non-respondents within an adjustment class (such as an age group) are the same, on average, as those of the respondents within the same adjustment class.

See Appendix B for the item response rate for each question in the survey. If the item response rate was not lower than 70%, as per OMB standards, the imputation of data is not necessary.

In the case that a particular item-level response was less than 70%, JDP would recommend conducting additional analysis to determine the potential for other factors (i.e., missing or skip patterns in the survey instrument) to be the cause of non-response.

Strategies to Improve Response Rate

In addition to the strategies listed above, JDP recommends the following strategies to improve response rates going forward:

- Issue ongoing public communications (e.g., press releases, information posted on the VA website) to spread awareness and confirm the legitimacy of the VA VR&E Study.
- Educate VA employees and VSOs about the survey to encourage participation. Provide a list of frequently asked questions and answers to VSOs and VA employees to enable them to answer Veterans' questions regarding the survey.
- Send email invitations to Veterans rather than mailing postcards to make it easier for Veterans to complete the survey online.
- Reduce the length of the survey to improve respondents' willingness to respond.
  - Reduce overall number of questions and number of response options for each question
- To encourage participation, increase the number of contacts to respondents with additional reminders about the survey.
  - Provide respondents with an additional paper survey questionnaire
- Reduce the frequency of mailings to reduce the opportunities for delays and errors in the GPO Print process.
- Revise the cover letter and postcard to express the importance of participation in the survey.
- Provide sample from the 30-day period immediately prior to the mailing rather than sample from 90 days prior in order to improve the recency of their experience with the VR&E benefit, which improves both participation and recollection.
- Change the location of the sequence number to directly follow the survey link on the postcard and cover letter.
- Transfer the responsibility of sample file generation from VR&E to PA&I. A data pull from PA&I will increase consistency.
- To increase participation, enhance formatting on postcard and cover letter to include color print to make materials more readable.

Appendix E

Impact of FAR 8.8

Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 8.8 requires that printing must be conducted through the Government Printing Office (GPO). The following section outlines limiting factors of the VOV Line of Business Tracking Satisfaction Research Study that occurred as a result of the FAR requirement.

Through the utilization of the GPO Print Vendor, the following occurred in FY15:

- Quality issues included:
  - Survey instruments were printed and mailed:
    - Utilizing the sample population from one survey, but receiving a different survey (e.g., potential respondents from the pool of one business line received the survey for a different business line)
    - Using a version of the instrument that was outdated; this version did not contain the current questions or responses that were being fielded
    - Mixing content between survey versions
    - Using shells from one survey printed with a different survey
- Ongoing timeliness delays occurred with each set of orders placed, as the order fulfillment process took a minimum of 2-4 weeks

1.1 Impact

The project experienced ongoing delays in the printing and mailing of postcards and survey packets for VBA's lines of business. The delays affected the critical processes required to execute the VOV Program to its fullest potential.

A multitude of quality issues were experienced throughout FY15 that negatively impacted the VOV Program response rates. The issues that occurred impacted access to the online survey; readability of mail materials; level of effort required by respondents to take the survey; relevancy of survey; and the diminishment of brands (VA/JDP) associated with poor quality materials.

Appendix F

NOTE: Questionnaire is not shown in the formatted version that respondents used to fill out survey.

Survey Questionnaires

[DO NOT DISPLAY/IDENTIFY SECTION HEADERS. DISPLAY SINGLE QUESTION PER PAGE.]

[RESPONSE CODES APPEAR IN BRACKETS AT THE END OF EACH RESPONSE FOR SINGLE RESPONSES AND IN THE PROGRAMMING INSTRUCTIONS FOR MULTIPLE RESPONSES.]

Servicing Questionnaire

Benefit Information

1. How did you FIRST learn about the VR&E benefit programs? (Mark only one) *If you are unsure, please indicate the first way you remember learning about the VR&E benefit programs.* **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
   a. VA website **[1]**
   b. eBenefits.va.gov **[3]**
   c. Veterans Employment Center in eBenefits **[2]**
   d. Social media websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.) **[11]**
   e. Internet (excluding VA and social media sites) **[14]**
   f. Mail (from VA) **[4]**
   g. VA phone number (800-827-1000) **[5]**
   h. In person at a Regional Office **[10]**
   i. VA medical center **[8]**
   j. VA Vet Center **[9]**
   k. Visit from a VA employee **[12]**
   l. Transition Assistance Program/Disabled Transition Assistance Program briefings **[6]**
   m. Veterans Service Organizations(e.g., Amer. Legion, DAV, VFW, PVA, MOPH, etc.) (Specify)_____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
   n. Other Veterans/Servicemembers
   o. Friends or family **[15]**
   p. Information came with notification/ratings letter **[16]**
   q. Other publications (e.g., Army Times, local newspapers, etc.)
   r. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.] [97]**
   s. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

2. What method(s) do you MOST FREQUENTLY use to obtain general information about VA's VR&E benefits or services? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES.**

MULTIPLE RESPONSE. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]

a. VA website
b. eBenefits.va.gov
d. Veterans Employment Center in eBenefits Social media websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
e. Other websites (excluding VA or social media sites)
f. Phone
g. Mail
h. Email
i. In person at a Regional Office
j. VA medical center
k. VA Vet Center
l. Veterans Service Organizations (e.g., Amer. Legion, DAV, VFW, PVA, MOPH, etc.) (Specify)_____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
m. Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program
n. Friends or family
o. Other Servicemembers
p. Other publications (e.g., Army Times, local newspapers, etc.)
q. School
r. VR&E Office
s. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
t. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**
u. None of the above **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

3. How frequently would you like to receive communications (e.g., emails, letters, newsletters, etc.) from VA about VR&E benefits or services? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Weekly
b. Monthly
c. Quarterly (every 3 months)
d. Semiannually (twice per year)
e. Annually (once per year)
f. Never
g. Don't know or not sure

4. How would you like to receive information from VA about VR&E benefits or services? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

a. Phone
b. Mail
c. Email
d. VA website
e. Social media websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
f. In person at a Regional Office

g. Veterans Service Organizations (e.g., Amer. Legion, DAV, VFW, PVA, MOPH, etc.) (Specify)_____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
h. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
i. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

The following question asks you to rate various aspects of your experience with Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average. **[SHOW ON SAME PAGE AS THE QUESTION THAT FOLLOWS]**

5. When thinking about your most frequently used methods of communication, please rate your experience in obtaining information about your VR&E benefit on the following items: (Mark only one per row) **[SHOW RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND ATTRIBUTES/RESPONSES IN ROWS (SEE JDPA CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, ALTERNATE SHADES IN ROWS. SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW. RANDOMIZE ALL ATTRIBUTES EXCEPT THE LAST ONE.]**
   a. Ease of accessing information **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
   b. Availability of information **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
   c. Clarity of information **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
   d. Usefulness of information **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
   e. Frequency of information provided by VA **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
   f. **Overall rating of information**

Contact with VA

6. During the past 6 months, did you contact anyone from VA about your VR&E benefit, excluding any contacts with your Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Counselor? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
   a. Yes **[1]**
   b. No **[0]**

(Ask Q7-Q12 if Q6 is yes, otherwise go to Q13)

7. Which of the following best describes the reason for your most recent contact? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
   a. Resolve a problem **[1]**
   b. Ask a question **[2]**
   c. Request a change to your records/provide information **[3]**

8. Can you briefly describe the nature of your most recent contact? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
   a. Receive help regarding a paperwork issue
   b. Receive help regarding a medical issue
   c. Receive help regarding a training issue
   d. Receive help regarding an employment issue
   e. Change your address or direct deposit information
   f. Report the death of an individual who received VA benefits
   g. Report a problem with counselor/case manager
   h. Report a problem with a VA customer service representative
   i. Ask a general question
   j. Obtain information about submitting/re-opening a claim
   k. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**

9. Thinking about your most recent contact, how did you contact VA? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
   a. Phone **[1]**
   b. Online Chat
   c. Website **[6]**
   d. Email **[7]**
   e. Mail **[9]**
   f. In person **[3]**

10. Was your most recent issue resolved? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**

(Ask Q11 if Q10 is No, otherwise go to Q12)

11. Why wasn't your most recent issue resolved? **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
    a. Did not receive all of the information required
    b. Received incorrect information
    c. Was referred to the incorrect office/person
    d. Waiting for follow-up from VA
    e. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
    f. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

12. Thinking of your most recent contact with the VA, how would you rate your overall customer service experience with the VA or VA representatives using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average?

[SHOW RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND SINGLE ROW (SEE JDPA CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW.][1-10]

Benefit Entitlement

13. Does/did your rehabilitation plan include an education or training phase? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

(Ask Q14-15 if Q13 is yes, otherwise go to Q16)

14. Did the same counselor who developed your rehabilitation plan also provide case management sessions during the education and training phase? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**
    d. Not applicable **[96]**

15. Were you given a time frame from VA for completing the education/training phase of your rehabilitation plan? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

16. How many times in the past 6 months has a counseling appointment been cancelled or rescheduled by your counselor? (Open Capture)
    a. Never been cancelled or rescheduled **[CHECK BOX; MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE]**
    b. Number of times (1-99)_____ **[CHECK BOX; MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[CHECK BOX; MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

(If your counseling appointment has been cancelled or rescheduled by your counselor 1 or more times, please answer Q17. Otherwise, please skip to Q18.)

17. If your counseling appointment was cancelled or rescheduled at least once, were you scheduled for a new appointment without having to ask? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**

c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

18. Which of the following types of counseling or referrals has your counselor provided? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
    a. Education/Training enrollment assistance
    b. Career counseling
    c. Personal counseling
    d. Financial counseling
    e. Problem-solving techniques
    f. Referrals to potential employers (e.g., government, private, etc.)
    g. Referrals to employment agencies or job banks
    h. Referrals to health providers (e.g., medical, dental, optical)
    i. Referrals to other counseling programs
    j. Referrals to Veterans Service Organizations (e.g., American Legion)
    k. None of the above **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

The following question asks you to rate various aspects of your experience with Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E), using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average. **[SHOW ON SAME PAGE AS THE QUESTION THAT FOLLOWS]**

Please answer the following question based on your best ability to recall your experience with your VR&E counselor(s). **[SHOW ON SAME PAGE AS THE QUESTION THAT FOLLOWS]**

19. Please rate your experience with VR&E counselors on the following items: (Mark only one per row) **[SHOW RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND ATTRIBUTES/RESPONSES IN ROWS (SEE JDPA CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, ALTERNATE SHADES IN ROWS. SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW. RANDOMIZE ALL ATTRIBUTES EXCEPT THE LAST ONE.]**
    a. Promptness of scheduling appointments or returning calls **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
    b. Courtesy of the counselor **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
    c. Knowledge of the counselor **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
    d. Counselor's concern for your needs **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
    e. Timeliness of completing your initial evaluation **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
    f. Overall counselor experience

20. Why did you give your overall experience with your counselor that rating? (Open Capture) **[OPEN-END. TEXT BOX. 1000 CHARACTERS MAX. ALLOW NO COMMENT, MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE CHECK BOX. CODE NO COMMENT AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

21. Which of the following benefits did you or will you receive as part of your rehabilitation plan? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
    a. Tuition
    b. Subsistence allowance
    c. Books/Supplies
    d. Computer equipment/software
    e. Health services (e.g., medical, dental, optical)
    f. Tutoring
    g. Independent Living services
    h. Employment services (e.g., resume preparation, interview skills, obtaining licenses/certifications, etc.)
    i. None of the above **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

22. Which of the following types of employment services did/will you receive as part of your rehabilitation plan? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
    a. Resume preparation
    b. Interview skills
    c. Obtaining licenses/certifications
    d. Job hunting strategies
    e. Information interview with potential employers
    f. Job placement assistance
    g. None of the above **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

23. Were you given a time frame from VA for completing your VR&E rehabilitation plan? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

(Ask Q24 if Q23 is yes, otherwise go to Q25)

24. How long was/is the time frame for completing your VR&E rehabilitation plan? (Open Capture) *Please respond using any or all of the following categories*
    a. Months (0-99 months) _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX; ACCEPTABLE RANGE [0-99]]**
    b. Years (0-99 years) _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX; ACCEPTABLE RANGE [0-99]]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[CHECK BOX; MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

25. Were the amount of services you received as part of your VR&E program more than, less than, or what you expected? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Less than **[1]**
    b. What I expected **[2]**

c. More than **[3]**

The following question asks you to rate various aspects of your experience with Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average. **[SHOW ON SAME PAGE AS THE QUESTION THAT FOLLOWS]**

26. Please rate your VR&E benefit (e.g., training and counseling) on the following items: (Mark only one per row) **[SHOW RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND ATTRIBUTES/RESPONSES IN ROWS (SEE JDP CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, ALTERNATE SHADES IN ROWS. SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW. RANDOMIZE ALL ATTRIBUTES EXCEPT THE LAST ONE.]**

a. Amount of benefits **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
b. Effectiveness of benefit/service in preparing and obtaining suitable employment **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
c. Timeliness of receiving benefit payment **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
d. **Overall rating of benefit payment**

Overall Experience with Benefit Program

27. Thinking about ALL aspects of your experience with Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefits, please rate VA overall, using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average. (Mark only one) **[SHOW RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND SINGLE ROW (SEE JDPA CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW.][1-10]**

Overall Experience with VA

28. Taking into consideration all of the non-medical benefits (e.g., education, compensation, pension, home loan guaranty, vocational rehabilitation and employment, insurance, etc.) you have applied for or currently receive, please rate your experience with VA overall, using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average. (Mark only one) **[SHOW RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND SINGLE ROW (SEE JDPA CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW.][1-10]**

29. How likely are you to inform other Veterans about your experience with VA benefits or services? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Definitely will not **[1]**
    b. Probably will not **[2]**
    c. Probably will **[3]**
    d. Definitely will **[4]**

About You

30. What is your current status in the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Completed program successfully **[1]**
    b. Currently participating in program **[2]**
    c. VA initiated interruption in program **[3]**
    d. VA initiated discontinuation (withdrawal) from program **[4]**
    e. Voluntary interruption in program **[5]**
    f. Voluntary discontinuation (withdrawal) from program **[6]**
    g. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

(Ask Q31 if Q30 is voluntary interruption or withdrawal, otherwise go to Q32)

31. Why did you interrupt or withdraw from your rehabilitation program? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
    a. Medical difficulties
    b. Financial difficulties
    c. Family responsibilities
    d. Found a job prior to program completion
    e. Transportation difficulties
    f. Program did not meet needs
    g. Program requirements were too difficult
    h. VA initiated interruption/discontinuation (withdrawal)
    i. Problems with counselor
    j. Lost interest
    k. To pursue another education benefit (CH33, State Vocational Rehabilitation, etc.)
    l. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
    m. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

32. Do you plan to complete your rehabilitation program now or in the future? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**
    d. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

33. At any point during the VR&E program, did you register for the Veterans Employment Center in eBenefits? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    - **a.** Yes **[1]**
    - **b.** No **[0]**
    - c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

(Ask Q34 if Q33 is No, otherwise go to Q35)

34. Why didn't you register for the Veterans Employment Center in eBenefits? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
    - a. Not aware of the Veterans Employment Center
    - b. Opted not to use the Veterans Employment Center
    - c. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
    - d. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

35. Are you currently enrolled in a 2-year college (e.g., community college), 4- year college (e.g., university), postgraduate program, technical or trade school, flight school or on-the-job training program? **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    - a. Yes **[1]**
    - **b.** No **[0]**

36. Are you a … **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    - a. Part-time student **[1]**
    - b. Full-time student **[2]**
    - c. Not currently enrolled **[3]**
    - d. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

(Ask Q37-39p if Q36 is a or b, otherwise go to Q40)

37. What is the format of the program you are enrolled in? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    - a. Traditional (classes in classroom/school facility) **[1]**
    - b. Online (classes on the Internet) **[2]**
    - c. Mixed (classroom and online) **[3]**

38. What type of degree/training program are you currently pursuing? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    - a. On-the-job training or apprenticeship **[1]**
    - b. Certificate/License **[2]**
    - c. Associate degree **[3]**
    - d. Bachelor's degree **[4]**
    - e. Master's degree **[5]**
    - **f.** Doctorate **[6]**

39. What type of academic institution or training facility are you enrolled in? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. 2-year college (e.g., community college) **[1]**
b. 4-year college (e.g., university) **[2]**
c. Postgraduate program **[3]**
d. Technical or trade school **[4]**
e. Flight school **[5]**
f. Job training site **[6]**
g. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.] [97]**

(Ask Q39a if enrolled in a 2-year college in Q39, otherwise go to Q39b)
39a..(Online only) Do you plan on attending a 4-year college in the future? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Yes **[1]**
b. No **[0]**
c. Prefer not to state **[98]**

39b. (Online only) Prior to the current program, what was the last year of school you completed? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. High school graduate or equivalent **[1]**
b. Trade/Technical school **[2]**
c. Some college (2-year program) **[3]**
d. Some college (4-year program) **[4]**
e. 2-year college degree **[5]**
f. 4-year college degree **[6]**
g. Some graduate courses **[7]**
h. Advanced degree **[8]**
i. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

39c. (Online only) Why did you select your current school/training facility? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

a. Lower tuition/program costs
b. Good counselors
c. Convenient location
d. Easy initial application process
e. Convenient course/program enrollment process
f. Variety of course/training offerings
g. Variety of available student support
h. School specialization in subject of interest
i. Reputation of school/training facility
j. Reputation of instructors
k. Past experience
l. Recommendation from friends/relatives

m. Availability of online classes
n. Flexibility of course/training scheduling
o. Financial aid
p. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**

39d. (Online only) When did you first enter into your current degree/training program? (Open Capture)

a. Please enter the month and year: mm _____ yy _____ **[TWO NUMERICTEXT BOXES; ONE FOR MONTHS [ACCEPTABLE RANGE 1-12) AND ONE FOR TWO-DIGIT YEAR (ACCEPTABLE RANGE 00-99)]**
b. Prefer not to answer **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

39e. (Online only) How many years have you completed in your current degree/training program? (Open Capture) *If you have completed less than 1 year, enter 0.*

a. Number of years _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-99]**
b. Prefer not to answer **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

39f. (Online only) Why did you select your current degree/training program? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

a. Preparation for career
b. Salary/Wages in associated careers
c. Status/Esteem associated with type of degree/program
d. Personal growth/development
e. Interested in subject matter
f. Number of course requirements
g. Preparation for advanced degree
h. Ease of completion requirements
i. Reputation of instructors
j. Recommendation from friends/relatives
k. Availability of online classes
l. Flexibility of course/training scheduling
m. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**

39g.. (Online only) Have you ever taken any time off from your current degree/training program? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Yes **[1]**
b. No **[0]**
c. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

(Ask Q39h-Q39iif Q39g is yes, otherwise go to Q39j)
39h. (Online only) How much time have you taken off from your current degree/training program? (Open Capture) *Please respond using any or all of the following categories.*

a. Days (0-99 days) _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-99.]**
b. Months (0-99 months) _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-99.]**
c. Years (0-99 years) _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-99.]**
c. Don't know or not sure **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

39i. (Online only) Why did you take time off? (Open Capture**) [OPEN-END. TEXT BOX. 1000 CHARACTER MAX. ALLOW NO COMMENT, MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE CHECK BOX. CODE NO COMMENT AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**
_____
_____

39j. (Online only) Have you been called to active duty at any point during your current degree/training program? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Yes **[1]**
b. No **[0]**
c. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

(Ask Q39k if Q39j is yes, otherwise go to Q39l)
39k. (Online only) How long was your call to active duty? (Open Capture)

a. Months (0-99 months) _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-99.]**
b. Don't know or not sure **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

39l. (Online only) Have you ever been on academic probation or had less than satisfactory standing with your school/training program? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Yes **[1]**
b. No **[0]**
c. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

39m. (Online only) Do you plan to obtain a degree or completion certificate in your current field of study/training? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Yes, from the degree/training program at my current school/facility **[1]**
b. Yes, from a degree/training program at another school/facility **[2]**
c. No **[0]**
d. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

(Ask Q39n if Q39m is yes, otherwise go to Q39o)

39n. (Online only) When do you expect to complete or graduate with a degree or completion certificate in your current field of study/training? (Open Capture)

a. Please enter the month and year: mm _____ yy _____ **[TWO NUMERICTEXT BOXES; ONE FOR MONTHS [ACCEPTABLE RANGE 1-12) AND ONE FOR TWO-DIGIT YEAR (ACCEPTABLE RANGE 12-99)]**
b. Prefer not to answer **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

39o. (Online only) Do you plan to continue your enrollment as a full-time student until you complete or graduate your degree/training program? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Yes **[1]**
b. No **[0]**
c. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

39p. (Online only) Which of the following services are available from your current school/training facility? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

a. Academic counseling
b. Tutoring
c. Financial counseling
d. Dependent care services (e.g., babysitting, elder care)
e. Employment counseling
f. Financial aid
g. Technology assistance (e.g., internet access, computer, etc.)
h. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
i. Don't know **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

39q. (Online only) What concerns, if any, do you have about achieving your educational goals? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

a. Academic requirements
b. Difficulty of subject matter
c. Financial requirements
d. Family obligations

e. Employment obligations
f. Course scheduling
g. Time commitment (i.e., amount of time required)
h. Availability of technology (e.g., access to internet/computer)
i. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
j. Do not have concerns **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

39r. (Online only) Which of the following services would you like or expect in order to achieve your educational goals? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

a. Academic counseling
b. Tutoring
c. Financial counseling
d. Dependent care services (e.g., babysitting, elder care)
e. Employment counseling
f. Financial aid
g. Technology assistance (e.g., internet access, computer, etc.)
h. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
i. Don't know **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

39s. (Online only) What are your personal career goals? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

a. Obtain financial security
b. Achieve work-life balance
c. Become an independent business owner
d. Become a manager
e. Become an executive
f. Work internationally
g. Contribute to society
h. Work in a specialized field (e.g., technology, medicine, etc.)
i. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**

40. Are you currently employed? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Yes **[1]**
b. No **[0]**
c. Prefer not to answer**[98]**

(Ask Q41-Q42b if Q40 is Yes, otherwise go to Q42d)

41. Which of the following were the three most important resources in obtaining your current job? (Mark top three) **[CHECK BOX; MULTIPLE RESPONSE; ONLY ACCEPT 3 RESPONSES; CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

a. VR&E Counselor/Contract Counselor
b. Employment Coordinator
c. Veterans Employment Center in eBenefits
d. Newspaper
e. Online job site
f. Recommendations of friends/family
g. School
h. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
i. None of the above **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

42. Relative to when you began to receive Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment services, when did you obtain employment? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Prior to program completion **[1]**
b. After program completion **[2]**
c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

42a. (Online only) How many hours do you currently work in a typical week? (Open Capture)

a. Hours (0-40 hours) _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-40.]**
b. Don't know or not sure **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

42b. (Online only) Are you currently employed in a field related to your current degree/training program? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Yes **[1]**
b. No **[0]**
c. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

42c. (Online only) Are you pursuing employment in your current field of study? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Yes **[1]**
b. No **[0]**
c. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

(Ask Q42d if Q42c is yes, otherwise go to Q43)
42d. (Online only) Upon completion of your current degree/training program, what will be your primary method of obtaining employment information? **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. VA counselor **[1]**
b. Recommendations of friends/family **[2]**
c. Student career/employment center **[3]**
d. Local or state job services **[4]**
e. Federal job services **[5]**
f. Newspaper **[6]**
g. Online job site **[7]**
h. Private employment agency **[8]**
i. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.] [97]**
j. Don't know **[99]**

43. Do you have any other comments or concerns about your experience? (Open Capture) **[OPEN-END. TEXT BOX. 1000 CHARACTER MAX. ALLOW NO COMMENT, MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE CHECK BOX. CODE NO COMMENT AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

_____

As a reminder, your responses will be kept completely confidential and your email address will not be sent to VA with any responses on this survey. **[SHOW ON THE SAME PAGE AS THE QUESTION THAT FOLLOWS]**

44. Would you like to provide an email address so VA can contact you with general information about VA benefits and services? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Yes **[1]**
b. No **[0]**
c. I do not have an e-mail address **[96]**
d. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

(Ask Q45 if Yes in Q44)
45. Please enter your preferred email address where you would like to be contacted: (Open Capture)

a. Email: **[OPEN CAPTURE. 100 CHARACTER MAX.]**

Access Questionnaire

Benefit Information

1. How did you FIRST learn about the VR&E benefit programs? (Mark only one) *if you are unsure, please indicate the first way you remember learning about the VR&E benefit programs .* **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. VA website **[1]**
    b. eBenefits.va.gov **[2]**
    c. Veterans Employment Center in eBenefits **[3]**
    d. Social media websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.) **[11]**
    e. Internet (excluding VA and social media sites) **[14]**
    f. Mail (from VA) **[4]**
    g. VA phone number (800-827-1000) **[5]**
    h. In person at a Regional Office **[10]**
    i. VA medical center **[8]**
    j. VA Vet Center **[9]**
    k. Visit from a VA employee **[12]**
    l. Transition Assistance Program/Disabled Transition Assistance Program briefings **[6]**
    m. Veterans Service Organizations (e.g., Amer. Legion, DAV, VFW, PVA, MOPH, etc.) (Specify)_____ [**TEXTBOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX. [7]**
    n. Other Veterans/Servicemembers **[13]**
    o. Friends or family **[15]**
    p. Information came with notification/ratings letter **[16]**
    q. Other publications (e.g., Army Times, local newspapers, etc.)
    r. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.] [97]**
    s. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

2. What method(s) do you MOST FREQUENTLY use to obtain general information about VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) benefits or services? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
    a. VA website
    b. eBenefits.va.gov
    c. Veterans Employment Center in eBenefits
    d. Social media websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
    e. Other websites (excluding VA or social media sites)
    f. Phone
    g. Mail
    h. Email
    i. In person at a Regional Office
    j. VA medical center
    k. VA Vet Center

l. Veterans Service Organizations(e.g., Amer. Legion, DAV, VFW, PVA, MOPH, etc.) (Specify)_____ [**TEXTBOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX. [7]**
m. Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program
n. Friends or family
o. Other Veterans/Servicemembers
p. School
q. Other publications (e.g., Army Times, local newspapers, etc.)
r. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
s. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**
t. None of the above **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

3. How did you receive information about the application process for your most recent Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefit application? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES, MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
   a. Transition Assistance Program
   b. Disabled Transition Assistance Program briefings
   c. Integrated Disability Evaluation System
   d. Phone
   e. Mail
   f. Email
   g. Pamphlets/Brochures
   h. VA website
   i. VA medical center
   j. VA Vet Center
   k. In person at a Regional Office
   l. Veterans Service Organizations (e.g., Amer. Legion, DAV, VFW, PVA, MOPH, etc.) (Specify)_____ [**TEXTBOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX. [7]**
   m. Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program
   n. IRIS (Inquiry Routing & Information System)
   o. Compensation briefing
   p. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
   q. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**
   r. Did not receive information about application process **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

4. How did you receive the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefit application? (Mark only one) *if you are unsure, please indicate the first way you remember learning about the VR&E benefit programs.* **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
   a. Transition Assistance Program **[1]**
   b. Disabled Transition Assistance Program briefings **[2]**

c. Integrated Disability Evaluation System **[3]**
d. Phone **[4]**
e. Mail [**5]**
f. Email **[6]**
g. Pamphlets/brochures **[7]**
h. VA website **[8]**
i. VA medical center **[9]**
j. VA Vet Center **[10]**
k. In person at a Regional Office **[11]**
l. Veterans Service Organizations(e.g., Amer. Legion, DAV, VFW, PVA, MOPH, etc.) (Specify)_____ [**TEXTBOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX. [7]**
m. Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program **[13]**
n. IRIS (Inquiry Routing & Information System) **[14]**
o. Compensation briefing [**15]**
p. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.] [97]**
q. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE] [99]**
r. Did not receive information about application process **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE] [98]**

5. How frequently would you like to receive communications (e.g., emails, letters, newsletters, etc.) from VA about VR&E benefits or services? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS, SINGLE RESPONSE]**
   a. Weekly **[1]**
   b. Monthly **[2]**
   c. Quarterly (every 3 months) **[3]**
   d. Semiannually (twice per year) **[4]**
   e. Annually (once per year) **[5]**
   f. Never **[6]**
   g. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

6. How would you like to receive information from VA about applying for VR&E benefits or services? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES, MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
   a. Phone
   b. Mail
   c. Email
   d. VA website
   e. Social media websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
   f. In person at a Regional Office
   g. Veterans Service Organizations (e.g., Amer. Legion,DAV, VFW, PVA, MOPH, etc.).) (Specify)_____ [**TEXTBOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX. [7]**

h. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
i. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

The following question asks you to rate various aspects of your experience with Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average. **[SHOW ON SAME PAGE AS THE QUESTION THAT FOLLOWS]**

7. When thinking about your most frequently used methods of communication, please rate your experience in obtaining information about your VR&E benefit application on the following items: (Mark only one per row) **[SHOW RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND ATTRIBUTES/RESPONSES IN ROWS (SEE JDPA CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, ALTERNATE SHADES IN ROWS. SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW. RANDOMIZE ALL ATTRIBUTES EXCEPT THE LAST ONE.]**
   a. Ease of accessing information **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
   b. Availability of information **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
   c. Clarity of information **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
   d. Usefulness of information **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
   e. Frequency of information provided by VA **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
   f. **Overall rating of information**

Contact with VA

8. During the past 6 months, did you contact anyone from VA about the VR&E benefit application process (excluding any contacts with your Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment counselor)? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE]**
   a. Yes **[1]**
   b. No **[0]**

(Ask Q9-14 if Q8 is yes, otherwise go to Q15)

9. Which of the following best describes the reason for your most recent contact? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE]**
   a. Resolve a problem **[1]**
   b. Ask a question **[2]**
   c. Request a change to your records/provide information **[3]**

10. Can you briefly describe the nature of your most recent contact? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
   a. Questions about the application form

b. Receive help regarding a paperwork issue
c. Receive help regarding a medical issue
d. Receive help regarding a training issue
e. Receive help regarding an employment issue
f. Change your address or direct deposit information
g. Report the death of an individual who received VA benefits
h. Report a problem with counselor/case manager
i. Report a problem with a VA customer service representative
j. Ask a general question
k. Obtain information about submitting/re-opening a claim
l. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**

11. Thinking about your most recent contact, how did you contact VA? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE]**
    a. Phone **[1]**
    c. Online Chat Website **[6]**
    d. Email **[7]**
    e. Mail **[9]**
    f. In person **[3]**

12. Was your most recent issue resolved? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**

(Ask Q13 if Q12 is No, otherwise go to Q14)

13. Why wasn't your most recent issue resolved? **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKE]**
    a. Did not receive all of the information required
    b. Received incorrect information
    c. Was referred to the incorrect office/person
    d. Waiting for follow-up from VA
    e. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
    f. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

14. Thinking of your most recent contact with VA, how would you rate your overall customer service experience with VA or VA representatives using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average? **[SHOW RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND SINGLE ROW (SEE JDPA CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW.] [1-10]**

15. What is the primary reason you applied/will apply for the VR&E program? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE]**
    a. Get any job **[1]**
    b. Get a better job **[2]**
    c. Further my education **[3]**
    d. Get training for a new job **[4]**
    e. Get a job that accommodates my disability **[5]**
    f. Improve job-seeking skills [**6]**
    g. Career counseling **[7]**
    h. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.] [97]**

16. Thinking about your most recent VR&E benefit application, what method did you use to apply for your benefit? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE]**
    a. **V**eterans **On**line **App**lication/eBenefits **[1]**
    b. Mail **[2]**
    c. In person at a Regional Office **[3]**
    d. In person at a Veterans Service Organization(e.g., Amer. Legion,DAV, VFW, PVA, MOPH, etc.)) **[4]**
    e. Veteran Employment Center in eBenefits **[5]**
    f. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.] [97]**
    g. Do not remember filling out an application (SKIP TO Q31) **[96]**
    h. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

17. Did you receive a letter confirming the receipt of your application with information about your initial meeting with your counselor?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don't know or not sure

(Ask Q18 if Q17 is Yes, otherwise go to Q19)

18. Thinking about the letter, was it clear and easy to understand?
    a. Not at all clear
    b. Somewhat clear
    c. Completely clear
    d. Don't know or not sure
    e. I did not read the letter

19. Were you updated on the status of your VR&E benefit application without having to ask? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Yes **[1]**
b. No **[0]**
c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

20. During the application process, did you have to provide the same information or documentation more than once? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

(Ask Q21-Q22 if Q20 is Yes, otherwise go to Q23)

21. How many times did you have to provide the same information? (Open Capture)
    a. Number of times (0-99)_____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-99]**
    b. Don't know or not sure **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE] [CODE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

22. What information did you have to provide more than once? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
    a. Discharge papers (DD214)
    ~~b.~~ Documentation of education/training completed
    c. Private medical records
    d. Resume
    e. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
    f. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

23. During your initial evaluation appointment, did the counselor have you participate in any testing? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

(Ask Q24 if Q23 is Yes, otherwise go to Q25)

24. Did the counselor explain the following…? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
    a. Purpose of the test
    b. Results of the test
    c. Next steps in the process
    d. None of the above **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**
    e. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

25. How many appointments did you have with a counselor before an entitlement decision was made? (Open Capture)

a. Number of appointments (0-99)_____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-99.]**
b. Don't know or not sure **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

(Ask Q26 if Q25 is 2 or more, otherwise go to Q27)

26. Why was it necessary for you to have more than one appointment? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
    a. To provide additional paperwork/documentation (e.g., medical documents)
    b. Additional tests
    c. To follow up with questions/concerns
    d. Initial appointment took too long
    e. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
    f. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.]**

27. Was the counselor during the planning phase of your program the same counselor who conducted your initial evaluation? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

28. Did your counselor provide you with information about the Veterans Employment Center in eBenefits? **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

29. Did you register for the Veterans Employment Center in eBenefits? **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

(Ask Q30 if Q29 is No, go to Q31 if Yes)

30. Why didn't you register for the Veterans Employment Center in eBenefits? **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
    a. Not aware of the Veterans Employment Center
    b. Opted not to use the Veterans Employment Center
    c. Other (Specify)_____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
    d. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.]**

(Paper Questionnaire Only: Ask Q31-Q34 if started the rehabilitation program/plan selection and found entitled, otherwise go to Q35)

31. Did your final rehabilitation plan include your original vocational training choice? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**
    d. Not Applicable, have not started plan selection and been found entitled(Online Only Response, if selected, go to Q34) **[96]**

(Ask Q32 if Q31 is No or Don't know, otherwise go to Q33)

32. Why didn't your final rehabilitation plan include your original vocational training option? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**
    a. Missing documentation
    b. Poor labor market
    c. Medical reasons
    d. Another vocational option suited my needs better
    e. Other (Specify)_____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
    f. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.]**

(Paper Questionnaire Only: Ask Q33 if started one of the five tracks, otherwise go to Q34)

33. From the time you signed your rehabilitation plan, how long did it take before you started your program of vocational rehabilitation (e.g., one of the five rehabilitation program options)? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Less than one month **[1]**
    b. 1-3 months **[2]**
    c. 4-6 months **[3]**
    d. More than 6 months **[4]**
    e. Don't know or not sure **[99]**
    f. Not applicable, have not started program of vocational rehabilitation (Online Only Response) **[96]**

The following questions ask you to rate various aspects of your experience with Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average. **[SHOW ON SAME PAGE AS THE QUESTION THAT FOLLOWS]**

34. Please rate your experience with the VR&E benefit application process on the following items: (Mark only one per row) **[SHOW RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND ATTRIBUTES/RESPONSES IN ROWS (SEE JDPA CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF**

LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, ALTERNATE SHADES IN ROWS. SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW. RANDOMIZE ALL ATTRIBUTES EXCEPT THE LAST ONE.]

a. Ease of completing the application **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
b. Timeliness of eligibility/entitlement notification **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
c. Flexibility of application methods **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
d. Overall rating of application process

35. Using the same 1 to 10 scale, where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average, please rate your experience with Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment counselors during the initial evaluation of your benefit application on the following items: (Mark only one per row) **[SHOW RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND ATTRIBUTES/RESPONSES IN ROWS (SEE JDPA CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, ALTERNATE SHADES IN ROWS. SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW. RANDOMIZE ALL ATTRIBUTES EXCEPT THE LAST ONE.]**

a. Promptness of scheduling appointments or returning calls **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
b. Courtesy of the counselor **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
c. Knowledge of the counselor **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
d. Counselor's concern for your needs **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
e. Timeliness of completing your initial evaluation **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
f. **Overall counselor experience**

36. Why did you give your overall experience with your counselor that rating? (Open Capture) **[OPEN CAPTURE. 1000 CHARACTER MAX. ALLOW NO COMMENT, MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE CHECK BOX. CODE NO COMMENT AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

37. If you were previously found not to be entitled to VR&E benefits, why were you found not entitled? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

a. Did not meet eligibility requirements
b. Found suitable employment
c. Exceeded 12-year eligibility period
d. Disability rate less than 20%
e. No remaining entitlement—used 48 months
f. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
g. Don't know or not sure **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**
h. Not applicable **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

Benefit Entitlement

As a reminder, your responses will be kept completely confidential and will not affect any current or future benefits you may receive. **[SHOW ON THE SAME PAGE AS THE QUESTION THAT FOLLOWS]**

The following question asks you to rate various aspects of your experience with Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average. **[SHOW ON THE SAME PAGE AS THE QUESTION THAT FOLLOWS]**

38. Please rate your Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefit on the following items: (Mark only one per row) **[SHOW RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND ATTRIBUTES/RESPONSES IN ROWS (SEE JDPA CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, ALTERNATE SHADES IN ROWS. SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW. RANDOMIZE ALL ATTRIBUTES EXCEPT THE LAST ONE.]**
    a. Amount of benefits received **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
    b. Effectiveness of benefit/service in preparing and obtaining suitable employment **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
    c. Timeliness of receiving benefit payment **[ALLOW N/A RESPONSE] [1-10, N/A=99]**
    d. **Overall rating of benefit payment**

Overall Application Experience

39. Thinking about ALL aspects of your experience applying for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefits, please rate VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment overall, using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average. (Mark only one) **[SHOW RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND SINGLE ROW (SEE JDPA CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW.] [1-10]**

Overall Experience with VA

40. Taking into consideration all of the non-medical benefits (e.g., education, compensation, pension, home loan guaranty, vocational rehabilitation and employment, insurance, etc.) you have applied for or currently receive, please rate your experience with VA overall, using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is Unacceptable, 10 is Outstanding, and 5 is Average. (Mark only one) **[SHOW**

RESPONSES IN GRID WITH 10-POINT SCALE IN COLUMNS AND SINGLE ROW (SEE JDPA CONVENTIONS DOCUMENT PG. 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS OF LAYOUT). EVENLY SPACED RADIO BUTTONS/COLUMNS, SINGLE RESPONSE PER ROW.] [1-10]

41. How likely are you to inform other Veterans about your experience with VA benefits or services? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Definitely will not **[1]**
    b. Probably will not **[2]**
    c. Probably will **[3]**
    d. Definitely will **[4]**

As a reminder, your responses will be kept completely confidential and your e-mail address will not be sent to VA with any responses on this survey. **[SHOW ON THE SAME PAGE AS THE QUESTION THAT FOLLOWS.]**

42. Would you like to provide an e-mail address so VA can contact you with general information about VA benefits and services? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**
    c. I do not have an email address **[96]**
    d. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

(Ask Q44 if Yes in Q43)

43. Please enter your preferred email address where you would like to be contacted: (Open Capture)
    a. Email: **[TEXT BOX. 100 CHARACTER MAX.]**

About You

44. Are you currently enrolled in a 2- year college (e.g., community college), 4-year college (e.g., university), postgraduate program, technical or trade school, flight school or on-the-job training program? **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Yes **[1]**
    b. No **[0]**

(Ask Q45-49p if Q44 is yes, otherwise go to Q49q)

45. Are you a … **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
    a. Part-time student **[1]**
    a. Full-time student **[2]**
    b. Not currently enrolled **[3]**
    c. Don't know or not sure **[99]**

46. What is the format of the program you are enrolled in? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
   a. Traditional (classes in classroom/school facility) **[1]**
   b. Online (classes on the Internet) **[2]**
   c. Mixed (classroom and online) **[3]**

47. What type of degree/training program are you currently pursuing? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
   a. On-the-job training or apprenticeship **[1]**
   b. Certificate/License **[2]**
   c. Associate degree **[3]**
   d. Bachelor's degree **[4]**
   e. Master's degree **[5]**
   f. Doctorate **[6]**

48. What type of academic institution or training facility are you enrolled in? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
   a. 2-year college (e.g., community college) **[1]**
   b. 4-year college (e.g., university) **[2]**
   c. Postgraduate program **[3]**
   d. Technical or trade school **[4]**
   e. Flight school **[5]**
   f. Job training site **[6]**
   g. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.] [97]**

(Ask Q49a if enrolled in a 2-year college in Q49, otherwise go to Q49b)

49a. (Online only) Do you plan on attending a 4-year college in the future? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
   d. Yes **[1]**
   e. No **[0]**
   f. Prefer not to state **[98]**

49b. (Online only) Prior to the current program, what was the last year of school you completed? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**
   a. High school graduate or equivalent **[1]**
   b. Trade/Technical school **[2]**
   c. Some college (2-year program) **[3]**
   d. Some college (4-year program) [**4]**
   e. 2-year college degree **[5]**
   f. 4-year college degree **[6]**
   g. Some graduate courses **[7]**
   h. Advanced degree **[8]**
   i. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

49c. (Online only) Why did you select your current school/training facility? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

q. Lower tuition/program costs
r. Good counselors
s. Convenient location
t. Easy initial application process
u. Convenient course/program enrollment process
v. Variety of course/training offerings
w. Variety of available student support
x. School specialization in subject of interest
y. Reputation of school/training facility
z. Reputation of instructors
aa. Past experience
bb. Recommendation from friends/relatives
cc. Availability of online classes
dd. Flexibility of course/training scheduling
ee. Financial aid
ff. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**

49d. (Online only) When did you first enter into your current degree/training program? (Open Capture)

c. Please enter the month and year: mm _____ yy _____ **[TWO NUMERICTEXT BOXES; ONE FOR MONTHS [ACCEPTABLE RANGE 1-12) AND ONE FOR TWO-DIGIT YEAR (ACCEPTABLE RANGE 00-99)]**
d. Prefer not to answer **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

49e. (Online only) How many years have you completed in your current degree/training program? (Open Capture) *If you have completed less than 1 year, enter 0*.

d. Number of years _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-99]**
b. Prefer not to answer **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

49f. (Online only) Why did you select your current degree/training program? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

n. Preparation for career
o. Salary/Wages in associated careers

p. Status/Esteem associated with type of degree/program
q. Personal growth/development
r. Interested in subject matter
s. Number of course requirements
t. Preparation for advanced degree
u. Ease of completion requirements
v. Reputation of instructors
w. Recommendation from friends/relatives
x. Availability of online classes
y. Flexibility of course/training scheduling
z. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**

49g. (Online only) Have you ever taken any time off from your current degree/training program? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

d. Yes **[1]**
e. No **[0]**
f. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

(Ask Q49h-49i if Q49g is yes, otherwise go to Q49j)

49h. (Online only) How much time have you taken off from your current degree/training program? (Open Capture) *Please respond using any or all of the following categories.*

d. Days (0-99 days) _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-99.]**
e. Months (0-99 months) _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-99.]**
f. Years (0-99 years) _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-99.]**
d. Don't know or not sure **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

49i. (Online only) Why did you take time off? (Open Capture) **[OPEN-END. TEXT BOX. 1000 CHARACTER MAX. ALLOW NO COMMENT, MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE CHECK BOX. CODE NO COMMENT AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

_____
_____

49j. (Online only) Have you been called to active duty at any point during your current degree/training program? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

d. Yes **[1]**

e. No **[0]**
f. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

(Ask Q49k if Q49j is yes, otherwise go to Q49l)

49k. (Online only) How long was your call to active duty? (Open Capture)

c. Months (0-99 months) _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-99.]**
b. Don't know or not sure **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

49l. (Online only) Have you ever been on academic probation or had less than satisfactory standing with your school/training program? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

d. Yes **[1]**
e. No **[0]**
f. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

49m. (Online only) Do you plan to obtain a degree or completion certificate in your current field of study/training? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

e. Yes, from the degree/training program at my current school/facility **[1]**
f. Yes, from a degree/training program at another school/facility **[2]**
g. No **[3]**
h. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

(Ask Q49n-49o if Q49m is yes, otherwise go to Q49p)

49n. (Online only) When do you expect to complete or graduate with a degree or completion certificate in your current field of study/training? (Open Capture)

c. Please enter the month and year: mm _____ yy _____ **[TWO NUMERICTEXT BOXES; ONE FOR MONTHS [ACCEPTABLE RANGE 1-12) AND ONE FOR TWO-DIGIT YEAR (ACCEPTABLE RANGE 12-99)]**
b. Prefer not to answer **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

49o. (Online only) Do you plan to continue your enrollment as a full-time student until you complete or graduate your degree/training program? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

d. Yes **[1]**
e. No **[0]**
f. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

49p. (Online only) Which of the following services are available from your current school/training facility? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

j. Academic counseling
k. Tutoring
l. Financial counseling
m. Dependent care services (e.g., babysitting, elder care)
n. Employment counseling
o. Financial aid
p. Technology assistance (e.g., internet access, computer, etc.)
q. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
r. Don't know **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

49q. (Online only) What concerns, if any, do you have about achieving your educational goals? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

k. Academic requirements
l. Difficulty of subject matter
m. Financial requirements
n. Family obligations
o. Employment obligations
p. Course scheduling
q. Time commitment (i.e., amount of time required)
r. Availability of technology (e.g., access to internet/computer)
s. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
t. Do not have concerns **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

49r. (Online only) Which of the following services would you like or expect in order to achieve your educational goals? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

j. Academic counseling
k. Tutoring
l. Financial counseling
m. Dependent care services (e.g., babysitting, elder care)
n. Employment counseling
o. Financial aid
p. Technology assistance (e.g., internet access, computer, etc.)
q. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**
r. Don't know **[MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE]**

49s. (Online only) What are your personal career goals? (Mark all that apply) **[CHECK BOXES. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. CODE EACH RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

j. Obtain financial security
k. Achieve work-life balance
l. Become an independent business owner
m. Become a manager
n. Become an executive
o. Work internationally
p. Contribute to society
q. Work in a specialized field (e.g., technology, medicine, etc.)
r. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.]**

50. Are you currently employed? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

a. Yes **[1]**
b. No **[0]**
c. Prefer not to state **[98]**

(Ask Q50a-50b if currently employed, otherwise go to Q50c)

50a. (Online only) How many hours do you currently work in a typical week? (Open Capture)

c. Hours (0-40 hours) _____ **[NUMERIC TEXT BOX. ACCEPTABLE RANGE 0-40.]**
d. Don't know or not sure **[CHECK BOX. MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RESPONSE.] [CODE RESPONSE AS 0 IF UNCHECKED OR 1 IF CHECKED]**

50b. (Online only) Are you currently employed in a field related to your current degree/training program? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

d. Yes **[1]**
e. No **[0]**
f. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

50c. (Online only) Are you pursuing employment in your current field of study? (Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

d. Yes **[1]**
e. No **[0]**
f. Prefer not to answer **[98]**

(Ask Q50d if Q50c is yes, otherwise go to Q51)

50d. (Online only) Upon completion of your current degree/training program, what will be your primary method of obtaining employment information?(Mark only one) **[RADIO BUTTONS. SINGLE RESPONSE.]**

k. VA counselor **[1]**
l. Recommendations of friends/family **[2]**
m. Student career/employment center **[3]**
n. Local or state job services **[4]**
o. Federal job services **[5]**
p. Newspaper **[6]**
q. Online job site **[7]**
r. Private employment agency **[8]**
s. Other (Specify) _____ **[TEXT BOX, FORCE TEXT IF RESPONSE IS SELECTED, 50 CHARACTER MAX.] [97]**
t. Don't know **[99]**

51. Do you have any other comments or concerns about your experience? (Open Capture) **[OPEN-END. TEXT BOX. 1000 CHARACTER MAX. ALLOW NO COMMENT, MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE CHECK BOX. CODE NO COMMENT AS 0 IF UNCHECKED AND 1 IF CHECKED]**

Appendix G
List of Acronyms

AAPOR	American Association for Public Opinion Research
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BAS	Benefits Assistance Service
BPA	Blanket Purchase Agreement
BRE	Business Reply Envelope
CAPS	Centralized Account Processing System
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
DTA	Data Transfer Agreement
EDIPI	Electronic Data Interchange Personal Identifier
EDX	Enterprise Data Exchange
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulations
FY	Fiscal Year
GPO	Government Printing Office
ICR	Information Collection Request
JDP	J.D. Power
LGY	Loan Guaranty Service
LWO	Letter Work Order
MAR	Missing At Random
MCAR	Missing Completely At Random
MCMC	Markov chain Monte Carlo algorithm
MNAR	Missing Not At Random
NPC	NPC, Inc. Integrated Print and Digital Solutions
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OSAT	Overall Satisfaction Index
RO	Regional Office
SSN	Social Security Number
US	United States
USA	United States of America
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs
VADIR	VA DoD Identity Repository
VAPSD	VA Publications Services Division
VBA	Veterans Benefits Administration
VOV	Voice of the Veteran
VR&E	Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service
VSO	Veterans Service Organizations