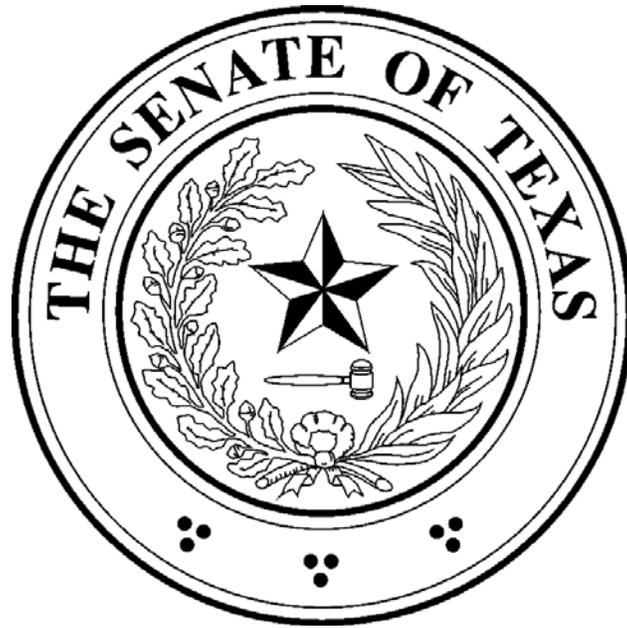


**THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
VETERAN AFFAIRS AND MILITARY INSTALLATIONS**



**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE
83RD TEXAS LEGISLATURE**

JANUARY 2013



The Senate Committee on
Veteran Affairs & Military Installations

Leticia Van de Putte, R.Ph.
Chair
Brian Birdwell
Vice Chair

Suite No. 345, Sam Houston Building
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711-2068
Voice: (512) 463-0126

Members:
Wendy Davis
Craig Estes
José Rodríguez

January 31, 2013

The Honorable David Dewhurst
Lieutenant Governor of Texas
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst:

The Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs and Military Installations hereby submits our interim report, including recommendations to the 83rd Texas Legislature.

Respectfully submitted,

Senator Leticia Van de Putte, Chair

Senator Brian Birdwell, Vice Chair

Senator Wendy Davis

Senator Craig Estes

Senator José R. Rodríguez

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	5
Interim Charge 1.....	8
Veteran Employment Situation.....	8
Employment of Veterans at State Agencies.....	8
Employment Resources Available to Veterans.....	8
Transfer of Employment Services to Texas Veterans Commission (TVC).....	10
Recommendations.....	11
Interim Charge 2.....	11
US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Claims Back Log.....	11
Recommendations.....	12
Interim Charge 3.....	12
Higher Education Benefits.....	13
Federal Education Benefits.....	13
Hazelwood Benefit.....	13
Federal Benefits and Hazelwood Act.....	14
Veteran Resource Centers.....	15
Veteran Friendly College Designation.....	15
Recommendations.....	16
Interim Charge 4.....	16
Mental Health Service Available to Veterans and Texas Military Forces.....	16
Peer-To-Peer Counseling Services.....	17
Texas Military Forces Peer-to-Peer Program.....	19
"After-Care Services".....	19
Secondary Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.....	19
Recommendations.....	20
Interim Charge 5.....	20
Economic Impact of Select Military Installations.....	20
Commander's Council.....	21
Defense Economic Assistance Adjustment Grants.....	21
Texas Military Value Revolving Loan Fund.....	21

Recommendations.....	21
Interim Charge 6.....	21
Role of Texas Military Forces (TXMF).....	22
Border Security Operations.....	22
Recommendation.....	22
Interim Charge 7.....	22
Veteran Courts.....	23
Local Law Enforcement Training.....	24
Recommendations.....	24
Interim Charge 8.....	24
College Credit for Heroes.....	25
Veterans Housing Assistance Program.....	26
Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services.....	26
Recommendations.....	27

APPENDIX A

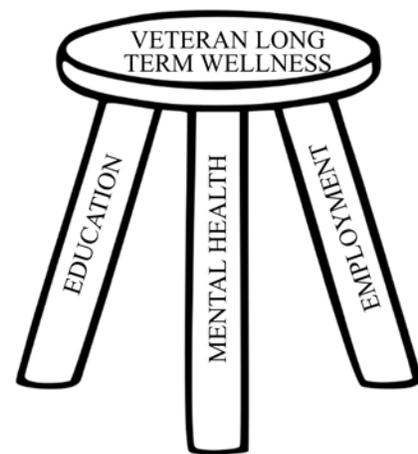
Items included in this Appendix:

Economic Impact of Certain Military Installations in Texas.....	28
---	----

Introduction

The Global War on Terror has included two separate campaigns, countless clandestine actions and military operations other than war (OOTW). Operation Iraqi Freedom closed on 15 December 2011 replaced by Operation New Dawn. The International Security Assistance Force – Afghanistan (ISAF) mission is scheduled to conclude on 31 December 2014.¹ Other operations throughout Asia, Africa and the Middle East will continue, dictated by the need to combat radicalism, totalitarianism, drug trafficking and piracy. As combat operations draw to a close in Afghanistan, new crises are emerging from Syria to Algeria. Most of North Africa is in turmoil. World events coupled with the looming specter of Sequestration, underscores the requirement to address our returning veterans' needs during reintegration and long term wellness.

Texas has made strides in assisting our returning veterans. Legislative initiatives such as the In-State Tuition bill (S.B. 297, 81R) and the Hazelwood Legacy Act (S.B. 93, 81R) have provided educational opportunities that many veterans and their families would not have otherwise had. Yet there is still much to be done. Texas has the largest number of veterans in the nation exceeding 1.7 million former service members.² And while education is one leg supporting veterans' long term wellness, more effort must be placed on the other two legs; employment and mental health. The current unemployment rate for Gulf War II-era veterans is at 10.8% compared to the general populace's rate of 7.8%. The challenges are stark when addressing our Gulf War II-era female veterans' unemployment rate of 15.7%.³



While veterans' unemployment has consequences in the present; today's veterans' physical and mental wellbeing will have profound consequences in the near future. These concerns are driven straight from battlefields of Central Asia, the Horn of Africa and the Middle East to the door step of our State Capital.

Unlike previous conflicts, the Global War on Terror has seen increased tour lengths, less dwell time at home, multiple deployments and significant Guard and Reserve participation.⁴ Much of the combat has been in the harshest of environments ranging from urban terrain prevalent in Iraq to extreme altitudes of the Hindu Kush and triple canopy jungles of Mindanao. Even the nature of combat has changed. Today's warfare rarely consists of force on force engagements with a clearly defined enemy pursuing political ideologies.

¹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization Chicago Summit on Afghanistan (2012). http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-2FA93455-CDF9576F/natolive/official_texts_87595.htm?

² U.S. Census Bureau. 2009-2011 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates. http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_11_3YR_S2101&prodType=table

³ United States Department of Labor: Bureau of Labor Statistics Table A-5 (2012). <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empst.t05.htm>

⁴ Committee on the Assessment of Ongoing Effects in the Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder; Institute of Medicine. *Treatment for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Military and Veteran Populations*. (2012) Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. American Press. Washington D.C.

Even traditional tactics in combat have changed. Sustained gun battles have been replaced by quick strike ambushes triggered by improvised explosive devices. Improved equipment and medical treatment are now employed to great effect, increasing survival rates of our service members. Wounds that would have resulted in death, such as blast force traumas, means that service members are coming home with needs that often times exceed the capabilities of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Injuries such as traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress are being diagnosed at ever increasing rates. Yet the financial impact of long term care of these under-researched chronic conditions is poorly understood.⁵

Another group who has lived in the shadow behind our warriors yet served our nation in quiet perseverance; are the families. No parades have been dedicated to these selfless patriots; and few studies have been completed to understand the financial, emotional and physical impact placed upon these children and spouses. Yet clearly they have given like no other group in our State. Perhaps it is time to ensure Texas honors these silent heroes as well.⁶

Texas at a Glance

- o Number of veterans: 1,701,675
- o VA expenditures in Texas: \$8 billion
 - o Compensation and pensions: \$4 billion
 - o Readjustment benefits: \$355 million
 - o Medical and construction programs: \$2.9 billion
 - o Insurance and indemnities: \$78 million
- o Number of veterans receiving disability compensation or pension payments: 297,319
- o Number of Texas veterans using GI Bill education benefits: 40,402
- o Number of home loans in Texas backed by VA guarantees: 32,415
- o Value of Texas home loans guaranteed by VA: \$5.6 billion
- o Number of VA life insurance policies held by Texas residents: 75,287
- o Value of VA life insurance policies held by Texas residents: \$883 million
- o Number of Texas participants in vocational rehabilitation: 8,778
- o Number of veterans buried in Texas's VA national cemeteries: 10,648
- o Number of headstones and markers provided for graves of Texas veterans and survivors: 24,693⁷

⁵ Kotrla, Kathryn J., M.D. *Community Response for Returning Veterans and their Families*. (2010) Texas A&M Health Science Center. Round Rock, TX. Lecture.

⁶ Howell, Alison, Zoe H. Wool. *The War Comes Home: The Toll of War and the Shifting Burden of Care*. (2011) Providence, RI. Watson Institute for International Studies.

http://costsofwar.org/sites/default/files/articles/12/attachments/Howell_and_Wool_The_War_Comes_Home_Veterans.pdf

⁷ Office of Public Affairs Media Relations. Texas and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (2010) U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Washington D.C. Pg. 1. http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/ss_texas.pdf

Texas - VA Rated Disabilities and Pensions

- o Number of veterans receiving monthly disability compensation: 272,109
- o Number of VA pensions to veterans in Texas: 25,210
- o Number of disability compensation claims processed: 72,433⁸

Texas is recognized as one of the most veteran friendly states in the Union.⁹ This is due in large measure to our State Government's dedication to the warriors who have served us so honorably. Only six months ago Governor Rick Perry, Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst and State House Speaker Joe Straus in conjunction with VAMI and TVC instituted "State Strike Force Teams" to work alongside VA personnel to reduce the backlog of Texas veterans' claims for disability benefits. This is just one example of the type of support Texas is willing to provide in order to ensure veteran long term wellness. VAMI is dedicated to the mission of providing world class support for Texas veterans and ensuring the best possible assistance to meet the needs of our returning heroes.

"The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the Veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation."

- George Washington

⁸ Ibid Pg.3.

⁹ Military Officer Association of America. State-By-State Assessment. (2012) MOAA. Alexandria, VA. http://www.moaa.org/uploadedFiles/MOAA_Main/Main_Menu/Publications/Books_and_Guides_-_MOAA_Info_Exchange%20AE/State_Report_Card/State%20Report%20Card.pdf

INTERIM CHARGE 1

Study the employment rate of Texas veterans, and consider ways to better coordinate federal, state, local and private resources to enhance employment services. Examine the transfer of Veteran Employment Services (VES) from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC), and include an assessment of the impact on Texas veterans and their families. Make recommendations for improving services and possible expansion of services to potential additional returning veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

I. VETERAN EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

The United States Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics releases an annual report on the national veteran employment situation. Some of the highlights of the 2011 report include:

- The unemployment rate of veterans in 2011 (8.3 percent) was not statistically different from the rate in 2010 (8.7 percent). The rate for Gulf War-era II veterans was little different from a year earlier.
- Young male veterans (those ages 18 to 24) who served during Gulf War era II had an unemployment rate of 29.1 percent in 2011, higher than that of young male nonveterans (17.6 percent).
- Among all veterans, those with a service-connected disability had an unemployment rate of 8.5 percent in August 2011, about the same as the rate for veterans with no disability (7.9 percent).
- One in three employed veterans with a service-connected disability worked in the public sector in August 2011, compared with about one in five veterans with no disability.
- Gulf War-era II veterans who were current or past members of the Reserve or National Guard had an unemployment rate of 9.1 percent in August 2011, little different than the rate for those veterans who had not been members (11.0 percent).
- Gulf War-era II veterans who served in Iraq, Afghanistan, or both had an unemployment rate of 11.6 percent in August 2011.¹⁰

Employment of Veterans at State Agencies

According to the US Office of Personnel Management, in 2010 veteran hiring increased to more than 25 percent of federal Executive Branch employees, with nearly 8 percent being disabled veterans. Comparatively, the Texas Comptroller's annual veteran Workforce Summary of veterans working in Texas state agencies and universities shows that only 5 percent of state employees are veterans.

Texas Government Code mandates that public entities or public works of the state must give veteran's employment preference until at least 40 percent of the employees of the public entity are veterans.

Employment Resources Available to Veterans

Texas Veterans Commission

The premier state employment service dedicated to veterans is the Veterans Employment Services (VES) program at the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC). The VES staff provide employment services to all veterans, particularly recently separated and disabled veterans, and eligible persons in Texas. All VES staff are veterans themselves, with a large number of them disabled veterans.

The VES staff is specifically trained to provide a full range of employment services such as assistance with job applications, resume preparation, job matching, job searches, and other employment services.

¹⁰ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, March 12, 2012, Employment Situation of Veterans

They are located in more than 75 cities throughout Texas and offer one-on-one assistance to veterans at local workforce solutions offices.

Texas Workforce Solutions

Texas Workforce Solutions (TWS) is comprised of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), a statewide network of 28 Workforce Development Boards for regional planning and service delivery, their contracted service providers and community partners, and the TWC unemployment benefits Tele-Centers. This network gives customers local access to workforce solutions and statewide services at numerous TWS offices and six Tele-Centers.

The TWS provides workforce development services that help workers find and keep good jobs and also helps employers hire the skilled workers they need to grow their businesses. Workforce partners include community colleges, adult basic education providers, local independent school districts, economic development groups, businesses and other state agencies. Collaboration and coordination among all partners is critical for the success of the Texas workforce system.

Both Federal and state law require that veterans receive a priority for services at local TWS offices. Priority of service means that veterans receive services before other non-veterans.

Texas Veterans Leadership Program

Started in 2008, the Texas Veterans Leadership Program (TVLP) is a TWC resource and referral network that serves to connect returning veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan. Veterans Resource and Referral Specialists (VRRSs) work to find ancillary services in local communities, some of which will be community service organizations, veteran service organizations, and faith-based programs. The VRRSs also will link federal to local governmental agencies and programs as well as community leaders and employers.

All VRRS staff are veterans of Iraq and/or Afghanistan. This network of returning veterans play an integral role in addressing the needs of other returning veterans, including referrals to address employment, training, medical, educational, and other needs of veterans. One VRRS is assigned to each of the 28 local workforce development areas. Located in a TWS, each local project director works closely with TWS office staff and TVC staff.

Job Connection Education Program - Texas Military Forces

The Job Connection Education Program (JCEP) began in 2010 and helps National Guard and Reserve Service Members and their spouses who are unemployed or under-employed find careers. Offered by the Army National Guard, dedicated training development specialists, and a skilled business advisor assist participants in making their job connections. Texas was selected as the first site for the JCEP with offices in the Fort Worth Sandage Armory and the Houston Westheimer Armory.

Employer Outreach and Education

According to a Society of Human Resources Managers (SHRM) poll of employers, 78 percent of human resources professionals said that translating military jargon into civilian job skills would be at least "somewhat helpful." When asked what would help their organization recruit and hire veterans, the number one response was "assistance identifying and reaching out to qualified veterans."¹¹

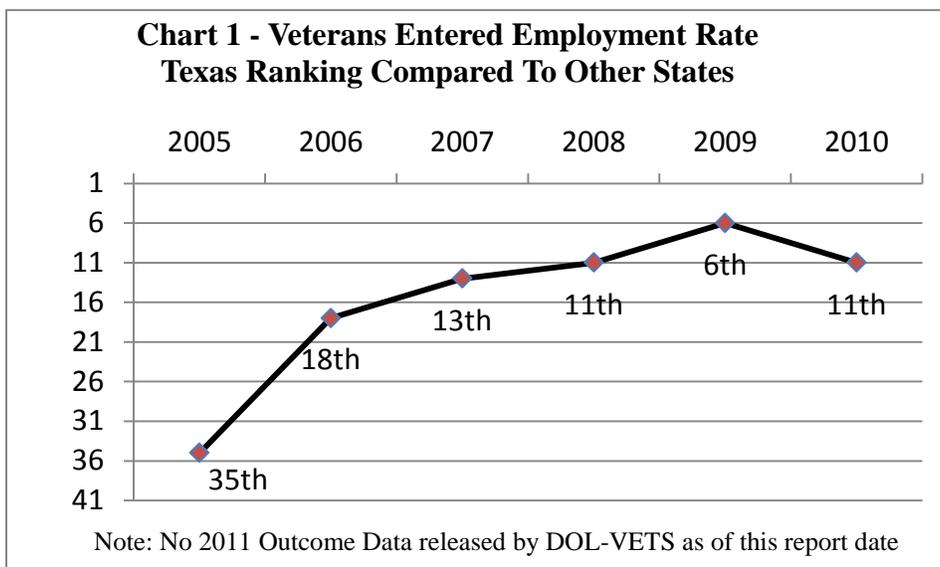
Additional Employment Services for Veterans

¹¹ SHRM Poll: February 20, 2012, Military Employment Poll.

In addition to these major programs designed to assist veterans, a number of state agencies have staff and/or programs in place to help veterans, such as the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) and the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS). Numerous non-profit organizations also assist veterans with their employments needs. Some of these non-profit organizations include: American GI Forum; Goodwill Industries; Texas Center Point; Military Warrior Support Foundation; Grace After Fire; and many more.

II. TRANSFER OF VETERANS EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO THE TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

The transfer of the Veterans Employment Services (VES) program to the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) in 2006 is an unqualified success. Nearly every aspect of the transfer was seamless because of the cooperation of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), local Texas Workforce Solutions (TWS) offices, the TVC, and the US Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Services (DOL-VETS).



Texas is the only state in the nation to have VES as part of the veteran advocacy agency. This “Texas Model” streamlines the entire employment process by making services provided to veterans more effective. A significant factor in the success of the transfer is based on TVC having direct supervision and control over VES staff, unlike TWC that allows local TWS contract staff to supervise their state employees.

Chart 1 tracks outcome data from DOL-VETS to compare Texas with other states. Immediately after the transfer, there was a rapid increase in the Veterans Entered Employment Rate accompanied by steady improvement, with a slight dip in national comparison during the period of Great Recession.

There are two parts to the employment equation: veterans and veteran-friendly employers. Established in July 2011, TVC's Veteran Business Representatives (VBRs) enhance the services offered by TVC staff by acting on behalf of the employer to recruit qualified veterans for new career opportunities. Also, VBRs work with TWS offices, the TWC, DOL-VETS and all partners to ensure businesses are educated on the benefits of hiring veterans. Four VBRs currently serve all of Texas and are strategically located in Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth, San Antonio and Austin. Companies taking advantage of VBR staff include: USAA; AT&T; Lowes; and Spitzer Industries.

Texas is facing an influx of veterans due to the drawdown of troops overseas, most of who will be looking for employment. It is imperative that those veterans are aware of the full range of employment service programs. Therefore, TVC must conduct outreach to as many veterans as possible to provide information about employment opportunities and services. Outreach activities include:

- Yellow Ribbon events;
- Job fairs;
- Veteran Service Organizations; and
- Chambers of Commerce.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. State agencies and universities should lead the way in hiring veterans. The Legislature should consider making it easier for state agencies and colleges to hire qualified veterans.
2. Require licensing agencies to issue an expedited professional licenses or certifications to veterans and their spouses who have separated from the military within one year and have a professional license or certification issued by the Department of Defense or another state.
3. The Legislature should provide funding to enhance services provided by TVC to outreach and educate both public and private sector employers on how to find and hire quality veteran job seekers. This funding will help build employer awareness of the value and hiring veterans and teach veterans to properly translate military training and skills into civilian language that is critical to reducing unemployment among veterans.
4. In light of the great success from the transfer of the Veterans Employment Services (VES) program to TVC, the Legislature should continue the current model by keeping these services at TVC. To ensure proper emphasis on veterans, the Legislature may consider further consolidating veteran-specific programs at the TVC.

INTERIM CHARGE 2

Review the benefits claims process for filing with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) through the Texas Veterans Commission's (TVC's) Claims Representation and Counseling program and make recommendations to improve the quality of life for veterans and their families. Coordinate with the Senate Finance Committee to identify and maximize funding options, reduce claims backlogs, and increase the benefits received by Texas veterans.

As major combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), drawdown, the expectation is for more veterans to file first-time claims for disability with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This expectation is based on VA data showing that recently separated veterans are submitting claims at a much higher rate than previous generations of veterans. In 2008, 36 percent of all veterans received VA benefits and services while 52 percent of OIF/OEF veterans access VA benefits and services. Over 83 percent of these OIF/OEF veterans were under 45 years old - meaning services to these veterans will need to be delivered for the next 50-60 years in the future.

I. US DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) CLAIMS BACKLOG

The TVC Claims Representation and Counseling Program assists veterans prepare compensation and pension claims with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). In 2011, TVC claims counselors handled 179,981 benefit cases on behalf of veterans and dependents, filed 125,179 new monetary claims, and 16,101 new appeals.

In November 2009, Governor Rick Perry and the TVC launched the special Claims Processing Assistance Team (CPAT) project to assist Texas veterans who had their claims for monetary benefits pending with the two VA regional offices in Texas (Waco and Houston). This project built upon the success of a pilot project between the TVC and VA in 2008. At the time the CPAT project was announced, a total pending caseload of 39,000 federal benefit claims existed in Texas' two VA

regional offices. These CPAT Teams consisted of 12 additional claims counselors (6 at each regional office). They targeted specific areas within the claims process, doing all development needed on the individual claims and working directly with the claimants in identifying and acquiring necessary evidence. The project was funded for the period from November 2009 to July 2011. These special CPAT teams returned to the VA 17,325 cases ready for decision or award action.

Since that time, the situation has become measurably worse. On July 16, 2012, the Veteran Affairs and Military Installations (VAMI) Committee received testimony from TVC regarding the state of the backlog in Texas. According to the VA, in January 2010, the total pending caseload in Texas was 50,934 claims and 15,644 appeals. The number of cases that had been pending over 125 days, the number the VA considers backlogged, was 16,803 claims. On July 14, 2012, the total pending caseload in Texas was 107,279 claims and 28,183 appeals. The number of cases that had been pending over 125 days, was 68,612 claims. *In essence, in Texas, the total pending caseload has more than doubled while the backlog has more than quadrupled from 2010 to 2012.* Presently, the real world average for getting a decision on a VA claim is 18 to 24 months.

Following that VAMI hearing, and at the urging of committee members, Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst, working with Governor Rick Perry and State House Speaker Joe Straus, directed the TVC to reinstitute the "State Strike Force Teams" that were implemented in 2009 to help reduce this federal backlog of veterans' claims for disability benefits. The state leadership also directed the TVC to help the backlog by assisting veterans in filing fully developed claims, which are processed faster by the VA, and to address critical staffing needs in areas where veterans need additional access to TVC Claims Counselors. On July 25, 2012, Governor Perry provided \$100,000 to the TVC to immediately implement these teams. On July 26, 2012, Governor Perry, Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst, and Speaker Straus authorized the TVC to utilize \$1,511,267 in the 2012-2013 biennium to address the backlog of federal disability claims.

II. RECOMMENDATION

1. The 83rd Legislature should continue funding the Strike Force Teams established through joint leadership action. However, this funding should come only if the state is unable to secure federal funding through a cooperative agreement with the VA.
2. Review and possibly eliminate riders in the appropriation of the Texas Veteran Commission that shift funding away from their core functions. Examples include the PARIS initiative, visitation program, and Call Center funding for the Texas Veterans Land Board.

INTERIM CHARGE 3

Examine methods to support veteran participation in higher education. Examine the use of the Hazelwood Act by Texas veterans, and include recommendations to maximize programs to effectively serve veterans and their families. Determine the efficacy of establishing Veteran Resource Centers at institutions of higher education to assist in student veteran academic achievement, provide additional funding for institutions from increased Montgomery GI Bill revenue, and better integrate veterans on college campuses.

I. HIGHER EDUCATION BENEFITS

Federal Education Benefits

The Post-9/11 GI Bill began in August 2009 and is an educational entitlement of unparalleled breadth. The Post-9/11 GI Bill provides the following for an eligible veteran:

- Payment of tuition and fees for 36 months of enrollment at an institution of higher learning.
- Monthly housing allowance determined by the zip code where the school the veteran or family member is enrolled. As of June 2012, monthly amounts for metropolitan areas were approximately \$1,300 with rural areas generally closer to \$1,000 each month.
- Students receive a yearly books and supplies stipend.
- Transferability to spouse or children. An eligible veteran may transfer all or a portion of his or her earned educational benefits to a spouse or dependent child.

In contrast to the Post-9/11 benefits, the Montgomery GI Bill provides a monthly maximum of \$1,564 to defray all educational and living expenses.

Hazelwood Benefit

The purpose of the Hazelwood Act is to provide an education to honorably discharged or separated Texas veterans, as well as to eligible children and spouses of Texas veterans. Hazelwood provides an exemption of tuition and mandatory fees for up to 150 credit hours. The benefit is available at public institutions, but does not apply to courses for which the institution does not receive formula funding unless the college or university chooses to do so.

According to Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) data, 17,869 veterans and 4,716 spouses and children of eligible veterans received Hazelwood benefits during FY2011. Since the implementation of the Post 9/11 GI Bill in 2009, there has been a rapid increase in the use of both federal and state education benefits. As seen in Charts 2 and 3 below, Hazelwood and federal educational benefits have followed a similar pattern.

The use of federal education benefits grew by 65.9 percent in 2010 and another 14.7 percent in 2011¹². Increases in Hazelwood mirrored federal increases. In 2010, there were 45.3 percent more people using Hazelwood benefits than in 2009 and another increase of 63.2 percent in 2011 in Hazelwood benefits.

It is important to note that while the number of Hazelwood benefit recipients has recently increased, basic eligibility for the program has remained consistent. Like Post 9/11 GI Bill, Hazelwood was made transferable to spouses and children; however, the benefit remains based on the veteran's military service and original eligibility for the benefit.

¹² U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics.

Chart 2
Total Number of Veterans, Spouses and Children Using
Hazlewood Act Benefits

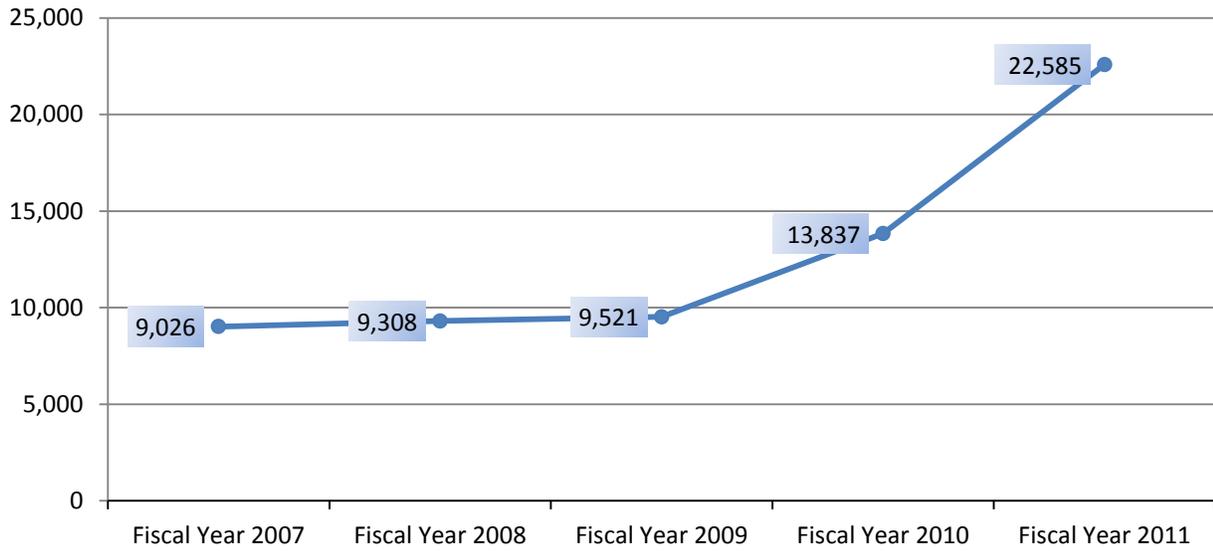
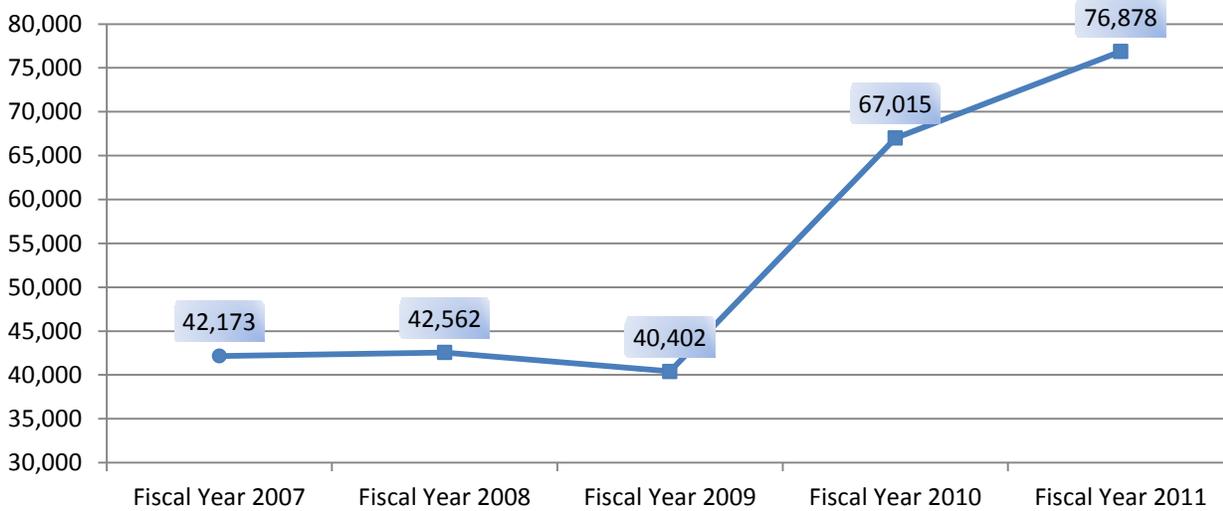


Chart 3
Total Number of Veterans, Spouses and Children Using
Federal Educational Benefits in Texas



Federal Benefits and the Hazelwood Act

In April 2012, an Attorney General (AG) opinion was requested by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) because statutory changes that required veteran students to apply for federal Chapter 33 (Post 9/11) benefits before determining their eligibility for Hazelwood inadvertently caused students that also qualify for federal Chapter 30 (Montgomery GI Bill) benefits to forego their remaining months of eligibility.

Federal law does not allow students to concurrently receive their Montgomery and Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits. Under federal law, a student who accepts Post 9/11 benefits before exhausting Montgomery benefits forfeits any remaining Montgomery GI Bill benefits.

The requested AG opinion asked whether the THECB had the authority to promulgate a rule that would permit a veteran who is entitled to two kinds of federal education benefits to be eligible to apply for Hazelwood based on the federal benefit the veteran chooses to apply.

The AG concluded that the THECB can adopt rules which allows a veteran applying for Hazelwood benefits that are otherwise entitled to federal benefits, to not first exhaust his or her Post 9/11 benefits.¹³

II. VETERAN RESOURCE CENTERS

Veterans Resource Centers provide an easily accessible focal point on college and university campuses to assist veterans in determining the essential services available to them and their families during their educational experience. Veterans Resource Centers positively enhance the success of veterans as they pursue their educational goals and endeavors.

Some colleges and universities have already established Veterans Resource Centers. Yet, the services available to veterans and their families vary widely and are not standardized throughout the state. Additionally, community colleges may be faced with challenges, based on location, and student population, and funding as they work to establish a Veterans Resource Center.

Community colleges which are co-located with a senior institution of higher learning in an urban center could develop a relationship so that essential veterans' services (student Veterans organizations, disability health and mental health services, faculty and staff training, and career services) would be provided to their veterans. In this manner the schools could incorporate the strengths of each campus while developing relationships to provide veterans' services.

Veteran Friendly College Designation

The passage of the Post 9/11 GI Bill and the subsequent growth of veterans attending Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) resulted in the "Veteran Friendly" recognition becoming sought-after by IHLs. The criteria for garnering the "Veteran Friendly" recognition vary depending on the awarding entity. Veterans are conscientious consumers. They want to attend school where they are wanted, where they will receive consideration for their military service, and where they can succeed and, ultimately, achieve their goals.

The Service members Opportunity College (SOC) has developed criteria to identify IHLs that are "military friendly." Originally, the SOC was established to provide educational opportunities to service members who had trouble completing college degrees. It functions with the support of 15 higher education associations, the Department of Defense (DoD), and the active and reserve components of the military services to sponsor programs which accommodate the unique requirements of the active duty service member and veteran.

¹³ Texas Attorney General Opinion No. GA-0969.

In conjunction with the SOC, the American Council on Education (ACE) has developed a “Toolkit for Veteran Friendly Institutions” to use as a measure of how “Veteran Friendly” an institution is. The IHLs self-report their compliance with the toolkit to a central web site.

Executive Order 13607, issued by President Obama on April 27, 2012, outlined services and procedures which would define “Principles of Excellence” for colleges/universities which received funding from federal military and veterans educational benefits programs. To date, there is no universally accepted set of standards which define “military friendly” or “Veteran Friendly” institutions.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue the existing transferability of Hazelwood benefits earned by Texas veterans to their spouse and dependents (Hazelwood Legacy). The Legislature should consider funding for colleges and universities that have a significant percentage of their student body using Hazelwood Legacy benefits.
2. Establish a Texas-specific Veteran Friendly College designation by authorizing the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) to establish criteria for a tiered system of recognition for colleges and universities to voluntarily achieve. The TVC should be responsible for the maintenance and publication of the list. The highest level of achievement should include the establishment of a Veteran Resource Center. Other factors may include:
 - Participation in College Credit for Heroes
 - Admissions and enrollment policies specifically for veterans
 - Access to disability health and mental health services, including peer-to-peer networks
 - Veterans advisory board
 - Central point of contact for veterans
 - VA work study program
 - Veteran-specific orientation
 - Student Veteran's organization
 - Academic support services
 - Veterans housing priority
 - Faculty and staff training specific to Veterans’ needs
 - Career services targeting veterans

INTERIM CHARGE 4

Evaluate the status of mental health services for veterans and Texas Military Forces (TXMF). Include an assessment of peer counseling programs, "aftercare" provided for units within their local communities following a trauma within the group, and efforts to address the secondary mental health and substance abuse issues caused by post-traumatic stress disorders and other combat-related disorders.

I. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE AVAILABLE TO VETERANS AND TEXAS MILITARY FORCES

The US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is the primary resource for veterans seeking mental health services; however, Texas' efforts are vital to fill the substantial gaps in those services. Gaps in VA service are created by the considerable backlog in VA Disability Claims and the stigma associated with seeking mental health services for active TXMF’s members.

Since 2001, 30,675 members of TXMF service members have deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation New Dawn (OND). An additional 22,764 have been deployed in support of state missions¹⁴. The Texas National Guard reports that approximately 22% of National Guard Soldiers returning from deployments exhibit mental health issues and would benefit from psychological healthcare.

While a number of services exist to support the physical and mental health needs of TXMF service members, connecting to those services remains one of the largest challenges. The TXMF service members reside all over the state, typically not near an active duty installation or Military Treatment Facility (MTF) such as Fort Hood, Fort Sam Houston, or Fort Bliss; all of which have immediately available resources for active duty service members. The lack of access to installation-based services for geographically dispersed service members translates into their lack of knowledge of programs such as those provided to the local community through state funding. Furthermore, for those service members living outside reasonable commuting distances from major metropolitan areas, the mental health services available are much harder to access.

The Texas Army National Guard (TXANG) is currently only allocated one federally contracted Director of Psychological Health and one locally contacted licensed counselor through FY2013 in the service of over 19,000 geographically dispersed service members. Federal resources consist mainly of VA and TRICARE with state and legal resources focused at community mental health centers. TXMF service members and their families depend primarily on the immediate care and counseling provided by one Director of Psychological Health, one contracted licensed counselor, and one Mental Health Specialist.

While the State of Texas has made great strides to develop a coordinated infrastructure of collaborative referral, services, and support, there is more work to be done and there are still gaps in the services provided. Ongoing support is needed to sustain the improvements made to date and to continue to improve the state's ability to effectively provide health and mental health services to veterans with complex injuries before they are in crisis.

With the war in Iraq having now drawn to a close and the U.S. military commitment to Afghanistan soon coming to an end, the Department of Defense (DoD) has already begun to execute force-shaping initiatives in order to reduce the size of the active military force. Given the substantial number of Texans who have already returned from service abroad and the many more who will return home in the next few years, continued support for such programs will be pivotal to ensure that veterans and their family members are properly served, and that the services are delivered as efficiently as possible.

II. PEER-TO-PEER COUNSELING SERVICES

Due to the stressful and unique nature of the work of service members, particularly those who have seen combat, the military has created a culture in which service members take care of each other. This mentality easily lends itself to an environment where service members rely on the natural support of their colleagues to cope with stress. In a recent behavioral health survey of more than 28,000 active-duty military personnel, "talking with friends and family" was the second most common coping strategy for dealing with stress, with 73 percent responding to using that strategy frequently or

⁵Texas Adjutant General, Major General John Nichols, April 12, 2012, VAMI Testimony.

sometimes. Strong social support networks have been linked to resilience, which is a fundamental component of successfully managing stress¹⁵

Experience has shown that individuals transitioning out of military service who have been wounded in war and have untreated brain injuries are much more likely to engage in risky behaviors such as excessive use of alcohol and illicit pharmaceuticals.

Peer-to-peer programs use peer support as a primary intervention for veterans, especially for those who are in crisis and for those who are in adjustment phases. In a formalized peer-to-peer program, the peer providing the support has received some level of training and has access to more intensive support services. Although peer support discussions can improve the mental health of a veteran, peer support is not professional counseling. Some individuals may have needs that are beyond the scope of a peer-to-peer program and require professional support. Providing peer-to-peer support training to service members and veterans, many of whom are already providing informal social support, could increase the effectiveness of the individual providing the support as well as increase his or her ability to identify a potential high-risk situation before a crisis event occurs.

The 81st Legislature passed, and Governor Perry signed, Senate Bill 1325, which established the state Military Veteran Peer Network (MVPN) at the Department of State Health Services (DSHS). The 82nd Legislature authorized continued funding for MVPN in order to maintain and enhance the peer-to-peer program for veterans and their families, to expand existing mental health programs for veterans and their families, and to recruit and train volunteers and practitioners for veterans' mental health treatment and peer support.

To date, DSHS has trained nearly 700 veterans in the peer support program, "Bring Everyone in the Zone," Table Talk (for women veterans) and Warrior's Roundtable who now lead community based Veteran-to-Veteran support groups or provide one-on-one peer support in more than 50 Texas counties, and more than 50 of those veterans and their family members participate in an education curriculum known as "Operation Resilient Families" to help educate peers in building family resiliency, accessing community resources, and employing interpersonal communication skills to better cope with the stress of deployments.

Veterans who participate in the peer programs are reporting to DSHS that they are experiencing very positive responses to the creation of Veteran One-Stop Resource Centers (VOSRC). There are at least four such VOSRC in Texas where veteran response has been positive: Cedar Park, Tyler, Seguin, and Waco. At these VOSRCs, the County Veterans Service Officers are typically on-site at least a few days a week. Other service providers have also leased space to provide employment assistance, financial, legal, educational counseling, medical and mental health care, as well as making referrals to a wide range of services from acupuncture, to horse therapy, to finding a service dog. The VOSRCs are perceived as far less stigmatizing than conventional mental health care facilities. Veterans who need, but otherwise might resist seeking those services, therefore can learn about them even if their first visit is to see someone about a job lead. Veterans who are returning to civilian life typically have many and disparate needs, having trained trusted peers on site can be a first step to a healthy return from military service.

¹⁵ Texas Coordinating Council for Veteran Services, October 1, 2012, Final Report.

Texas Military Forces Peer-to-Peer Program

The TXMF Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Training Program strives to train at least 5% (1,000) of their service members at the unit level annually to: (1)IDENTIFY potential warning signs of mental distress; (2) perform unit level INTERVENTION; and (3)INITIATE referrals for ongoing care. According to TXMFs, over 825 Peer-to-Peer Specialists have been trained since August of 2010 and a number of these specialists have aided in crisis interventions with fellow service members.

The TXMFs Joint Family Support Services is host to other programs including:

- The Yellow Ribbon Program - This is a congressionally mandated program which focuses on preparing, sustaining, and reintegrating service members and their families before and after deployment. During deployment sessions, family members receive resources focused on stress management, healthy communication skills, reintegration, and the needs of children. Once a service member has returned home, training is focused on identifying warning signs for Post Traumatic Service Disorder (PTSD), depression, substance abuse, and other deployment related stressors.
- The Strong Bonds Program - This Chaplain led program offers weekend retreats for veterans and their spouses, entire families, and solely for veterans. The retreats provide learning tools and educational seminars that enhance family and marital relationships.

III. “AFTER-CARE SERVICES”

"After-Care" refers to the need for services to service members following a suicide or attempted suicide within a military unit. Fourteen TXMFs service members have committed suicide in the past three years (FY10, 11, 12) despite enhanced "Leader and Unit Suicide Prevention" training efforts. Following a suicide, suicide intervention, or ideation, the members of a particular unit are prone to trauma with the knowledge that one of their own, a "battle buddy" has or may have taken a permanent action to deal with a temporary problem. Partnering with Department of State Health Services (DSHS), the TXMF Resilience Team and the Director of Psychological Health created a unit response team to provide trauma support and training for the unit over a timeline of several months.

Local Mental Health Agency (LMHA) professionals are involved in the trauma response team initially, as a local resource for the unit, but due to their strict eligibility for services, there often is a gap in follow-on care at LMHA facilities. Expanding the scope of eligibility for services at LMHAs to veterans in crisis or who have experienced trauma would greatly increase the mental health services available to service members and veterans in geographically remote areas.

IV. SECONDARY MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

The TXMFs Office of the State Army Surgeon conducts health assessments at various stages in a service member's deployment cycle and military career, commonly known as Post Deployment Health Assessment (PDHA) and Post Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA). It is unlike any other health screening offered by the Army, and it examines for physical and mental health concerns that may arise following a deployment. It provides a snapshot of a service member's mental and physical health at various stages in the deployment cycle, and allows Medical Officers and Commanders to identify changes in a service member and proactively addresses any conditions which may affect the individual readiness. This screening allows the State Army Surgeons office and other mental health departments to identify those who may be at risk of mental health and substance abuse issues following a deployment.

Additionally, the TXMF Joint Substance Abuse Prevention Program is responsible for providing guidance and leadership on all non-clinical alcohol and other drug policy issues; developing, establishing, administering, and evaluating non-clinical alcohol and other drug abuse prevention, education, and training programs; overseeing the Military, Drug Free Workplace and Department of Transportation biochemical testing programs.

The VA provides a federally funded drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility in Temple, Texas for service members which unfortunately has a long waiting period and is a voluntary program. Statewide, service members are eligible for rehabilitation through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), if they are not eligible for services from the Vet Center or the VA. Other providers include local state and federal resources, non-profit entities such as the Samaritan Center, TVC, and Heroes Night Out.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Improve the accountability of the Military Peer Network by streamlining the service delivery methods to ensure maximum funding is used for direct services.
2. Provide additional funding to support Texas Military Forces service member's needs for mental health professionals.
3. Ensure that professional credentials and licenses issued by the Department of Defense for health and mental health professionals are accepted by Texas licensing agencies.

INTERIM CHARGE 5

Consider establishing a "Commander's Council" in conjunction with the Office of the Governor's Texas Military Preparedness Commission, to allow commanders of Texas' military forces and installations to better coordinate and communicate with the Texas Legislature and state leadership. Develop a comprehensive communication plan with Texas military installations, and recommend any legislative initiatives necessary to support the installations, active-duty service members and their families on and around the installations, and the partnerships between the defense community and the community within which the military installations reside.

Chart 4 - Economic Impact of Select Military Installations¹⁶

Installation	City	Direct Jobs	Additional Jobs	Economic Output
Dyess AFB	Abilene	5,104	13,894	\$3,217,000,000
Fort Bliss	El Paso	39,962	115,384	\$25,480,000,000
Fort Hood	Killeen	68,942	214,344	\$44,490,000,000
Goodfellow AFB	San Angelo	7,320	18,427	\$4,345000,000
Joint Base San Antonio	San Antonio	83,162	209,294	\$46,390,000,000
Laughlin AFB	Del Rio	3,216	6,862	\$1,651,000,000
Total		207,706	578,205	\$125,573,000,000

Texas is the home of 13 major military installations, including two of the largest in the world at Fort Bliss, El Paso and Fort Hood, Killeen. Chart 4 demonstrates the significant economic impact of some of the active duty military installations around the state.

¹⁶ Generated by Comptroller's Economic Development and Analysis Division. Additional detail in Appendix A.

I. COMMANDER'S COUNCIL

Established in 2011, the Texas Commander's Council plays a vital role in facilitating intergovernmental dialogue between all branches of service and the State of Texas. This consortium affords Commanding Officers from installations located within Texas the opportunity to communicate goals and challenges the installations are facing and to develop innovative solutions aimed at improving the military climate in the state.

The Texas Military Preparedness Commission (TMPC) consists of 13 members, appointed by the Governor, charged with the following core missions:

- Develop strategies to attract, locate and maintain Department of Defense (DoD) missions to military installations located within the state.
- Defend the state's military installations from any future, negative Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) actions.
- Utilize the Texas Military Value Revolving Loan Fund and the Defense Economic Adjustment Assistance Grants (DEAAG) programs, to assist defense-dependent communities previously affected by BRAC processes.

Defense Economic Assistance Adjustment Grants.

These grants award from \$50,000 to \$2 million for economic development initiatives in defense-dependent communities. However, they received no appropriation for the current biennium.

Texas Military Value Revolving Loan Fund.

In 2011, the 82nd Legislature, Special Session, made the Texas Military Value Revolving Loan Fund remaining balance of approximately \$200 million available to communities which have been positively or negatively impacted since Base Realignment and Closing (BRAC) 2005 and to any Texas military community undertaking a project to enhance an installation's military value.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The TMPC should be the conduit for increased coordination among the Commander's Council and relevant state agencies such as the Texas Veterans Commission, Texas Veterans Land Board, Public Utility Commission, and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to improve access to services for families of active duty service members and transitioning service members.
2. Expand eligibility and access to Defense Economic Assistance Adjustment Grants to allow communities to prepare for formal or informal actions at the federal level that may result in the gain or loss of military or defense-related industry within the state.
3. Require Texas Military Preparedness Commission (TMPC) to meet with the Commander's Council at least once per year.

INTERIM CHARGE 6

Study the appropriate role of Texas Military Forces (TXMF) in enhancing the safety of all Texans, and make recommendations for improving the coordination, accountability, and effectiveness of all components of our state military forces, including the national, state, and air guards. Identify limitations on the forces providing border security and other operations, and make recommendations for better coordination with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. (Joint Charge with the Transportation & Homeland Security Committee)

I. ROLE OF TEXAS MILITARY FORCES (TXMF)

Texas Adjutant General, Major General John Nichols, testified that one of the missions of the Texas National Guard is to provide the manpower and equipment necessary to support the Governor in responding to state and local emergencies, natural or man-made. To accomplish that mission, the Texas Military Forces (TXMF) supports and coordinates with the Texas Division of Emergency Management, Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Texas Forest Service, Department of Public Safety (DPS), Texas Task Force One, Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT), Texas Rangers, and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

One of the primary assets used by TXMF to protect not only Texas, but the entire Gulf Coast region, are the eight C-130 aircraft that are a part of the 136th Airlift Wing. The C-130s are the only aircraft that can be called to action by the Governor in a state of emergency and can react more quickly than federal forces. Over the past 15 years, the TXMF have conducted more than 180 missions involving over 22,000 service members in response to events such as Hurricanes Ike, Katrina, and Alex, the Shuttle Columbia clean-up effort, along with responses to various wildfire, floods, and tornados¹⁷.

II. BORDER SECURITY OPERATIONS

Beginning in July 2010, TXMF established the Southwest Border Task Force in Operation River Watch I. During that operation, TXMF provided support to US Department of Homeland Security operations along the Texas-Mexico border with the mission of disrupting international criminal organizations and drug trafficking and to deter and prevent the expansion of violence into Texas. Operation River Watch I concluded in February 2012 and Operation River Watch II is now underway.

During FY2010 - FY2012, the combined Operation River Watch missions have seized 16,337 pounds of marijuana valued at more than \$13 million. Marijuana eradication in 2011 removed more than 91,000 plants, worth more than \$136 million. General Nichols added that in 2011 the Border Star program logged nearly 800 flight hours and led to apprehensions of more than 1,000 illegal immigrants while providing support to the Texas Rangers.

Further, TXMF is involved in a Texas Military Forces Counterdrug Taskforce and the Joint Operations Intelligence Center. The TXMF provides administrative and analytical support to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) in several locations with 38 service members stationed at seven locations. Their support of DPS allows troopers to focus on law enforcement.

III. RECOMMENDATION

1. Continue the TXMF role of support to traditional local, state and federal law enforcement authorities including DHS, DPS, Police, etc.

INTERIM CHARGE 7

Study the use and impact of Veterans Courts throughout Texas. Make recommendations relating to potential funding sources, staffing requirements, additional direct services not provided by the US Department of Veterans Administration, and possible expansion.

I. VETERAN COURTS

On December 9, 2009, the first Veterans Court program in Texas commenced in Houston, with the Honorable Marc Carter presiding. Currently, there are 10 Veterans Court Programs operating in Texas as reported to the Criminal Justice Division (CJD) of the Office of the Governor (see Table below). El Paso County is developing a second program within the 346th District Court to handle felony cases.

¹⁷ Texas Adjutant General, Major General John Nichols, April 12, 2012, VAMI Testimony.

State law allows the District Judge of a county to establish a Veterans Court Program for veterans or current service members of the United States Armed Forces charged with any misdemeanor or felony offense if the veteran or service member, “suffers from a brain injury, mental illness, or mental disorder, including post-traumatic stress disorder, that (1) resulted from the defendant’s military service in a combat zone or other similar hazardous duty area; and (2) materially affected the defendant’s criminal conduct at issue in the case.”¹⁸ If Veteran or service member successfully completes a Veterans Court Program, the court in which the criminal case is pending will dismiss the criminal action against the defendant after determining that the dismissal is in the best interest of justice.

While most combat veterans reintegrate into their civilian lives without any encounters with law enforcement, traumatic brain injury or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) may lead some veterans to have contact with law enforcement officers and into the criminal justice system.

Veteran Court participants may also receive services which include, but are not limited to: assisting veterans in obtaining monetary VA disability benefits through the TVC’s Claims Counseling and Representation Program; acting as a resource to the judge and court manager concerning VA benefits and services to assist the Veteran; facilitating enrollment into the VA health care system; seeking and obtaining employment; acquiring educational benefits through state or federal programs; and providing local points of contact for organizations that assist Veterans.

Judicial Circuit	Court Name	County Served	Court Start Date	Presiding Judge
County Court #6	Veterans' Court Program	Bexar	9/1/2010	Hon. Wayne Christian
Criminal District Ct #7	Dallas County Veterans Court	Dallas	9/1/2010	Hon. Michael Snipes
Multiple Courts	Denton County Veterans Court	Denton	12/16/2009	Hon. Jim Crouch
County Court at Law #1	El Paso Veterans Mental Health Court	El Paso	3/7/2010	Hon. Ricardo Herrera
County Court at Law	Guadalupe County Veterans Treatment Court	Guadalupe	12/1/2010	Hon. Linda Z. Jones
228th District Court	Harris County Veterans Court	Harris	12/9/2009	Hon. Marc Carter
430th District Court	Hidalgo County Veterans Court	Hidalgo	8/4/2011	Hon. Israel Ramon
319th District Court	Veterans' Court Program	Nueces		Hon. Tom Greenwell
Tarrant County Criminal Court #9	Tarrant County Veterans Court	Tarrant	1/1/2010	Hon. Brent Carr
County Court at Law #4	Travis County Veterans Court	Travis	11/1/2010	Hon. Mike Denton

¹⁸ Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 617.002.

In February 2012, Governor Rick Perry signed Executive Order 77 re-authorizing the establishment of the Criminal Justice Advisory Council. The Criminal Justice Advisory Council will advise the Governor on the creation, staffing, operations, and performance of specialty courts to ensure the rights of participants are protected. Veterans Court programs are included under the umbrella of specialty courts; thus, the Criminal Justice Advisory Council will consider the performance of Veterans Courts and its recommendations will apply to Veterans Court programs.

Local Law Enforcement Training

The Office of Acquired Brain Injury in the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) has partnered with the VA and the Austin Police Department (APD) to create educational tools that equip police with basic knowledge of brain injury and stress disorders, the ability to recognize these issues during trouble calls or arrests, and ways to apply that knowledge in de-escalating dangerous situations. The centerpiece of the effort is a training, Veterans Tactical Response, which has been developed and is available to law enforcement agencies. The HHSC-funded Veteran Tactical Response training kits combine DVD-based presentations and dramatic reenactments with trainers' syllabi, fact sheets, role-playing exercises, group discussions, resources for assistance, and more.

Armed with this knowledge, law enforcement officers in tense situations with veterans who may have a brain injury or stress disorder will be able to ask the right questions, establish trust, cool down heated encounters, and possibly save lives. The training will help veterans with traumatic brain injury and PTSD by first helping them avoid harming themselves and others. It also will bring law enforcement officers into a key role of helping direct former service members to the medical and psychiatric care they need.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Clarify the requirements for Veteran Courts to ensure a county of any size can establish, without specific staffing, such as forensic psychologist or other highly specialized staff.
2. Support replication of the Veteran Tactical Response training tool for replication by local law enforcement entities.

INTERIM CHARGE 8

Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs & Military Installations (VAMI), 82nd Legislature, Regular and Called Sessions, and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the following:

- *the "College Credit for Heroes" program as administered by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).*
- *the administration of the Veterans Housing Assistance Program (VHAP) by the Texas Veterans Commission's (TVC) Fund for Veterans' Assistance.*
- *The Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services (TCCVS), authorized by SB 1796, 82nd Regular Legislative Session.*

I. COLLEGE CREDIT FOR HEROES

The College Credit for Heroes initiative seeks to maximize college credits awarded to veterans for their military experience in order to expedite each veteran's transition into the Texas workforce. Administered by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), this workforce development initiative is designed to recognize the exceptional knowledge and skills gained by military service members and award them college credits for their military experience, allowing these veterans to more easily re-enter the workforce. To help veterans translate their military service skills into college credits and certifications, seven Texas community colleges help create standards for assessing military training that can then be used by any college in the state.

According to TWC, veterans received an average of 34 semester hours of college credit in academic, workforce, and other credits when their military training was evaluated by the College Credit for Heroes website (www.collegecreditforheroes.org).¹⁹ However, some colleges reported concerns from the regional accrediting body for Texas colleges and universities regarding the transferability of awarded credits to any college or university.

The following colleges are laying the groundwork to create standardized practices for awarding veterans college credits or certifications based on their military experiences:

Alamo Colleges - Veterans Associate Degree Programs

Alamo Colleges is developing an Associate of Applied Sciences degree in health professions to streamline transferable credits and accelerate attainment of a degree for service members and veterans. Alamo Colleges also is developing a career mobility track program that will provide active duty service members and veterans an accelerated path to an Associate of Applied Sciences in nursing.

Central Texas College - Online Military Training Evaluation System

Central Texas College has developed a web-based application and database for veterans and service members to receive additional college credit hours with an official transcript that can be used by colleges throughout the state.

Houston Community College - Accelerated Alternate Delivery Program

Houston Community College is developing and implementing an accelerated refresher program for surgical technicians who were trained in the military to sit for the national accrediting exam and receive credit toward an Associate's Degree in Allied Health.

Lee College - Model Program for Individual Education Plan for Veterans

Lee College is developing an Education Plan for Veterans in which they will identify, develop and support methods to maximize college credit for veterans and service members using prior learning assessments and credit by examination.

Lone Star College - Texas Inter-College Council on Veterans and Best Practices

Lone Star College is convening and organizing the Texas Inter-College Council on Veterans, composed of representatives from the seven colleges participating in the College Credit for Heroes program.

¹⁹ Texas Workforce Commission's College Credit for Heroes report, November 28, 2012, the 83rd Legislature.

San Jacinto College - Allied Health Programs Analysis Project and Summit

San Jacinto College is developing a comprehensive analysis of allied health profession offerings at all Texas community colleges and will outline its analyses of training gaps, existing and needed transfer credit opportunities, barriers to awarding credit for military experience, and external barriers such as certification, licensing or accreditation processes.

Temple College - Accelerated Emergency Services Program for Veterans Temple College is developing and implementing an accelerated program in Emergency Medical Services (EMS) for veterans and service members with military medical experience.

II. VETERANS HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Veterans Housing Assistance Program was implemented by TVC as Housing4TexasHeroes Grants awarded through the competitive process established in the Fund for Veterans' Assistance. The General Appropriations Act provided \$1 million over the biennium, and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) transferred \$2 million in existing unexpended funds already designated for veterans' housing assistance. With a total of \$3 million for the program, the Veterans Housing Program was designated Housing4TexasHeroes Program.

The Housing4TexasHeroes program awards grants to organizations that provide veterans with permanent and temporary housing. Organizations receiving grants for temporary housing may provide:

- Transitional housing to homeless veterans
- Short-term rental assistance to low income veterans
- Assistance to families of Veterans who are undergoing long-term treatment at a medical facility in Texas

Organizations receiving grants for permanent housing may provide disabled veterans with a physical disability or severe injury new home construction, home renovation, or modification.

As of September 30, 2012, Housing4TexasHeroes grantees had reached 75% of their grant periods. In that time, they have reported serving 845 veterans, dependents, and surviving spouses, or 157% of the projected number of veterans and family members to be served.

Additionally, through September 30, 2012, these grantees have requested reimbursement for over \$1,348,584 or approximately 46% of the total amount awarded. This is typical considering that half of the funds awarded are for construction or modification programs.²⁰

III. TEXAS COORDINATING COUNCIL FOR VETERANS SERVICES

The Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services (TCCVS) was established as the result of legislation passed by the 82nd Legislature in order to:

- Coordinate the activities of state agencies that assist veterans, service members, and their families;
- Coordinate outreach efforts that ensure that veterans, service members, and their families are made aware of services; and
- Facilitate collaborative relationships among state, federal, and local agencies and private organizations to identify and address issues affecting veterans, service members and their families.

The legislation initially created the TCCVS with the composition of the executive heads of the five following agencies as members:

²⁰ Texas Coordinating Council, November 2012, Veteran Services Report.

- Texas Veterans Commission (TVC), Chair;
- Texas Veterans Land Board (TVLB);
- Office of the Adjutant General;
- Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC); and
- State Bar of Texas

Ten additional agencies joined TCCVS as the result of the creation of workgroups established to focus on specific issues affecting veterans that include; the Department of State Health Services (DSHS); Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS); Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS); Texas Workforce Commission (TWC); Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC); Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB); Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments; Texas Commission on Jail Standards; Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA); and Texas Department of Agriculture.

The legislation enabled the members of TCCVS to establish workgroups to focus on specific issues affecting veterans, service members, and their families. The members of the TCCVS elected to establish six such workgroups:

1. Mental Health
2. Employment
3. Higher Education
4. Criminal Justice
5. Housing
6. Women Veterans

The TCCVS submitted their report on October 1, 2012. This report identified six issues that are considered to cross all workgroups. The report contains numerous recommendations from each workgroup.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Expand the College Credit for Heroes program allowing more colleges and universities to participate and identify additional career fields that may benefit from accelerated professional accreditation or licensing.
2. Support continued funding for the Housing4TexasHeroes grants. The TVC has effectively administered these grants and reported tangible outcomes for serving veterans and their families.
3. Continue the TCCVS and encourage them to review additional issues important to Texas veterans and their families.

APPENDIX A

Economic Impact of Certain Military Installations in Texas

**ESTIMATED
CONTRIBUTION OF
Dyess Air Force
Base
ON THE TEXAS
ECONOMY²¹**

The purpose of this note is to provide an estimate of the contributions of Dyess Air Force Base on the economy of Texas.

Data utilized in this analysis was based on information obtained by the Dyess Air Force Base's economic resource impact statement for FY 2011. This Information was incorporated into the REMI²² model for the State of Texas in order to generate estimates of the facility's impacts on state-level employment, gross domestic product²³, output²⁴ and disposable personal income²⁵.

Table 1: Input Data (FY 2011)

Item	Number of Persons	Total Payroll (\$ Millions)
Active Duty Military ²⁶	4,325	\$228.695
Government Civilian Employees ²⁷	713	\$33.799
Contractors	66	\$3.511
Family Members	6,048	
Expense Items²⁸		Cost (\$ Millions)
Retiree Pensions/Payments		\$81.288
Construction Projects		\$33.889
Medical Construction, Facilities Maintenance, and Utilities		\$0.602
Services & Commodities		\$19.482
Commissary & AAFES		\$0.485
Official Travel		\$0.029
Health Care		\$3.008
Educational Impact Aid & Tuition Assistance		\$3.569
TOTAL DIRECT SPENDING		\$408.357

SOURCE: "Economic Resource Impact Statement Fiscal Year 2011," 7th Comptroller Squadron, Financial Management Analysis, Dyes Air Force Base, Texas.

According to information presented in Table 1, total direct employment at Dyess Air Force Base stood at 5,104 active duty military, civilian, and contract personnel in FY 2011. Complementing this working population was 6,048 family members.

²¹ The economic impacts generated in the reports/studies developed by the Economic Development and Analysis Division is subject to the disclaimers outlined in the following link: <http://www.texasahead.org/texasedge/help.php#data>.

²² Regional Economic Models, Inc. (<http://www.remi.com/>).

²³ This represents the total value of all final goods and services produced in Texas.

²⁴ This represents the total value of all goods and services (both final and intermediate) produced in Texas.

²⁵ This represents post income-tax income.

²⁶ The majority of the active duty military on base are from the air force (4,314). The navy has an 11-person complement at the air base.

²⁷ This category is composed of appropriated and non-appropriated funds employees.

²⁸ One expense item was not included as input data. This represents government purchase card expenses (\$8.5 million). There was not enough information in this particular category to determine the industries impacted. Exclusion of this information does

not necessarily decrease the installation's impact. This expenditure is captured by the REMI model which incorporates an average cost of operation per worker.

In terms of payroll, Dyess Air Force Base paid its military personnel over \$228 million in FY 2011. Civilian employees (federal and contract) received over \$37 million in the same time period. Furthermore, Dyess Air Force Base spent close to \$81.3 million in retiree and veterans payments/benefits.

In addition to payroll and retiree/veteran payments, the joint base spent over \$61 million on various expenditure items. These range from about \$33.9 million in construction projects to over \$19 million on services/commodities and over \$6.5 million on health care, tuition assistance and educational impact aid.

Taking the employment, income, and expenditure values together and using these as inputs in the REMI model, estimates of their contributions to the Texas economy are presented in the next table.

TABLE 2: Estimated Contributions of Dyess Air Force Base to the Texas Economy²⁹.

Variable	Total Statewide Impact
Total Employment	18,998
Output (\$Billions)	\$3.217
Gross Domestic Product (\$Billions)	\$1.785
Disposable Personal Income (\$Billions)	\$1.034

SOURCE: REMI Model for Texas.

From Table 1, 5,104 direct jobs were attributed to Dyess Air Force Base’s operations. Based on the REMI model’s estimation, an additional 13,894 jobs in the state were indirectly impacted by the base’s operations. These jobs can be traced to industries that supply inputs to the fort’s operations and to industries that cater to the consumer needs of the workers at the fort and workers in industries in the state that provide inputs for the fort’s operations.

The operations of Dyess Air Force Base were directly and indirectly associated with the production of over \$3.217 billion in total industry output in Texas. In terms of final goods and services (Gross Domestic Product) produced in- state, \$1.785 billion worth of economic activity could be attributed to the base’s operations.

In terms of disposable income, over \$1.034 billion was directly and indirectly linked to Dyess Air Force Base’s operations. As noted above, this disposable income accrued to Dyess Air Force Base workers, workers in in-state industries that provide inputs to the base’s operations, and in-state industries that cater to the consumer needs of on-post workers at the base and workers of its input suppliers.

²⁹ These values were estimated for 2011 to coincide with the installation’s most current input information.

**ESTIMATED
CONTRIBUTION OF
Fort Bliss
ON THE TEXAS
ECONOMY**

The purpose of this note is to provide an estimate of the contributions of Fort Bliss on the economy of Texas.

Data utilized in this analysis was based on FY 2012 information obtained from Fort Bliss by the Texas Military Preparedness Commission. This Information was incorporated into the REMI model for the State of Texas in order to generate estimates of the facility's impacts on state-level employment, gross domestic product, output and disposable personal income.

Table 1: Input Data (FY 2012)

Item	Number of Persons	Total Payroll (\$ Millions)
Active Duty Military ³⁰	28,700	\$2,385.42
Government Civilian Employees ³¹	8,109	\$710.56
Contractors	3,153	\$173.28
Family Members	43,685	
Expense Items ³²		Cost (\$ Millions)
Contracts – Medical		\$46.60
Contracts – Base Operations		\$173.28
Construction – Military		\$590.67
Construction – Family Housing		\$56.00
Supplies – Office and Subsistence		\$55.76
Equipment/Vehicles		\$89.75
Utilities		\$29.84
TOTAL DIRECT SPENDING		\$4,311.16

SOURCE: Fort Bliss Installation Analysis Variables for Texas Military Preparedness Commission Report: FY 2011 and FY 2012 (August 31, 2012). Data provided by Fort Bliss to the Texas Military Preparedness Commission.

According to information presented in Table 1, Fort Bliss employed 39,962 full-time equivalent direct workers in FY 2012. These workers are complemented by 43,685 family members. In addition to these numbers are approximately 5,364 reserve military, temporary duty/transient/rotational military and civilian personnel. It should be noted that this latter group is not included in the analysis given the short-term nature of their assignments at Fort Bliss.

³⁰ This number represents personnel from the Army (27,444), other services (587), and permanent change of station students (669).

³¹ This category is composed of appropriated and non-appropriated funds employees. Included in this number is the full-time equivalent (458) of 572 part-time workers at the installation. The full-time equivalent number was estimated by Ms. Shannon Navarro, Chief of the Plans analysis and Integration Office of Fort Bliss.

³² One expense item was not included as input data. This represents other expenses (\$345.4 million). In e-mail communications with Ms. Navarro, this category represented an assortment of expenses ranging from travel and transportation to supplies other than office supplies. Given its sundry nature, it was excluded from the analysis. Exclusion of this information does not necessarily decrease the installation's impact. This expenditure is captured by the REMI model which incorporates an average cost of operation per worker.

In terms of payroll, Fort Bliss paid its military personnel over \$2.38 billion in FY 2012. Civilian employees received close to \$710.56 million in the same time period. Furthermore, Fort Bliss spent approximately 173.28 million on contract services.

In addition to payroll and contractor services, the fort spent over \$1.04 billion on various expenditure items. These range from about \$590.67 million in military construction projects to over \$9.5 million on subsistence supplies.

Taking the employment, income, and expenditure values together and using these as inputs in the REMI model, estimates of their contributions to the Texas economy are presented in the next table.

TABLE 2: Estimated Contributions of Fort Bliss to the Texas Economy³³.

Variable	Total Statewide Impact
Total Employment	155,346
Output (\$Billions)	\$25.48
Gross Domestic Product (\$Billions)	\$14.24
Disposable Personal Income (\$Billions)	\$8.53

SOURCE: REMI Model for Texas.

From Table 1, 39,962 direct full-time jobs were attributed to Fort Bliss’s operations. Based on the REMI model’s estimation, an additional 115,384 jobs in the state were indirectly impacted by the fort’s operations. These jobs can be traced to industries that supply inputs to the fort’s operations and to industries that cater to the consumer needs of the workers at the fort and workers in industries in the state that provide inputs for the fort’s operations.

The operations of Fort Bliss were directly and indirectly associated with the production of over \$25.48 billion in total industry output in Texas. In terms of final goods and services (Gross Domestic Product) produced in-state, \$14.24 billion worth of economic activity could be attributed to the fort’s operations.

In terms of disposable income, over \$8.53 billion was directly and indirectly linked to Fort Bliss’s operations. As noted above, this disposable income accrued to Fort Bliss workers, workers in in-state industries that provide inputs to the fort’s operations, and in-state industries that cater to the consumer needs of on-post workers at the fort and workers of its input suppliers.

³³ These values were estimated for 2012 to coincide with the installation’s most current input information.

**ESTIMATED
CONTRIBUTION OF
Fort Hood
ON THE TEXAS
ECONOMY**

The purpose of this note is to provide an estimate of the contributions of Fort Hood on the economy of Texas.

Data provided by Mr. William H. Parry, III (Executive Director of the Heart of Texas Defense Alliance) and the Office of the Garrison Commander of Fort Hood from was incorporated into the REMI model for the State of Texas to obtain estimates of the facility's impacts on state-level employment, gross domestic product, output and disposable personal income.

Table 1: Input Data (FY 2011)

Item	Number of Persons	Total Payroll (\$Millions)
Military - Active Duty	46,734 ³⁴	\$2,686.67
Military – Civilian Employees	7,470 ³⁵	\$455.57
Contractors	13,965	\$514.27
KISD Staff and Employees	773 ³⁶	
Family Members	79,454 ³⁷	
Expense Item		Cost (\$Millions)
Retiree and Annuitant Payments		\$3,863.83
Utilities		\$40.02
Construction Projects		\$1,360.47
Government Travel Card		\$136.83
Other Input Information		Value (\$Millions)
Federal Impact Aid to School Districts in the Fort Hood Region		\$75.25
TOTAL DIRECT SPENDING		\$9,132.91

SOURCES:

- (1) Employment, family members, retirees, and survivor data was obtained from the USAG Fort Hood Fact Sheet (Sept. 5, 2012);
- (2) Payroll, contracts, construction project costs, and expenditures were obtained from the correspondence from the Office of the Garrison Commander to Mr. Parry (Sept. 5, 2012); and,
- (3) Federal Impact Aid to School Districts data was provided in a correspondence from Mr. Parry to the Comptroller's Office (Sept. 5, 2012).

According to information presented in Table 1, total direct employment at Fort Hood stood at 68,942 active duty military, federal civilian, contract personnel, and Killeen Independent School District

³⁴ This includes 2,800 service members who are currently deployed.

³⁵ This includes civilian employees paid from appropriated funds (AF) and non-appropriated funds (NAF). Furthermore, Fort Hood based employees of the Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) and the Defense Military Commissary Agency are also included.

³⁶ ⁸ These workers represent employees of the Killeen Independent School District who are on-post at Fort Hood and provide educational services to school-age family members. While they are not directly paid by the fort, should a reduction in troop levels (and their family members) occur, it is possible that the number of KISD staff and employees could be reduced, as well.

This could lead to increased area unemployment.

³⁷ This number includes family members who live on-post (18,627) and off-post (60,827).

(KISD) staff and employees in FY 2011. Complementing this working population was 79,454 family members.

In terms of payroll, Fort Hood paid its active duty military personnel and civilian workers over \$3.14 billion in FY 2011. In addition, the fort spent over \$514.27 million and over \$3.86 billion to its contractors and veteran retirees/annuitants (within 175 zip codes in TX), respectively.

Other direct expenses attributed to the fort include construction and utility payments that stood at over \$1.40 billion; travel expenses of over \$136.83 million; and, federal aid to area school districts totaling close to \$75.25 million.

Taking the employment, income, and expenditure values together, estimates of their contributions to the Texas economy are presented in the next table.

TABLE 2: Estimated Contributions of Fort Hood to the Texas Economy³⁸.

Variable	Total Statewide Impact
Total Employment	283,286
Output (\$Billions)	\$44.49
Gross Domestic Product (\$Billions)	\$25.26
Disposable Personal Income (\$Billions)	\$18.58

SOURCE: REMI Model for Texas.

From Table 1, 68,942 jobs were directly attributed to Fort Hood’s operations. Based on the REMI model’s estimation, an additional 214,344 jobs in the state are indirectly impacted by the fort’s operations. These jobs can be traced to industries that supply inputs to the fort’s operations and to industries that cater to the consumer needs of the workers at the fort and workers in industries in the state that provide inputs for the fort’s operations.

The operations of Fort Hood were directly and indirectly associated with the production of over \$44.49 billion in total industry output in Texas. In terms of final goods and services (Gross Domestic Product) produced in-state, \$25.26 billion worth of economic activity could be attributed to the fort’s operations.

In terms of disposable income, over \$18.58 billion was directly and indirectly linked to Fort Hood’s operations. As noted above, this disposable income accrued to Fort Hood workers, workers in in-state industries that provide inputs to the fort’s operations, and in-state industries that cater to the consumer needs of on-post workers at the fort and workers of its input suppliers.

³⁸ These values were estimated for 2011 to coincide with the installation’s most current input information (FY 2011).

**ESTIMATED
CONTRIBUTION OF
Goodfellow Air Force Base ON
THE TEXAS ECONOMY**

The purpose of this note is to provide an estimate of the contributions of Goodfellow Air Force Base on the economy of Texas.

Data utilized in this analysis was based on information obtained by the Texas Military Preparedness Commission from the installation. This Information was incorporated into the REMI model for the State of Texas in order to generate estimates of the facility’s impacts on state-level employment, gross domestic product, output and disposable personal income.

Table 1: Input Data (FY 2011)

Item	Number of Persons	Total Payroll (\$Millions)
Military - Active Duty	5,807 ³⁹	\$323.37
Government – Civilian Employees	1,102 ⁴⁰	\$46.07
Contract – Civilian	411 ⁴¹	\$14.34 ⁴²
Family Members	1,050 ⁴³	
Expense Item		Cost (\$Millions)
Construction Projects		\$75.19
Commissary and Base Exchange Materials, Supplies, and Equipment		\$1.02
Health (CHAMPUS, Gov’t Cost only)		\$5.44
Other Materials, Equipment, and Supplied (TDY)		\$XX ⁴⁴
Other Input Information		Value (\$Millions)
Federal Impact Aid to School Districts in the Goodfellow Air Force Base Region		\$1.09
TOTAL DIRECT SPENDING		\$466.52

SOURCE: Texas Military Preparedness Commission (October 2012).

According to information presented in Table 1, total direct employment at Goodfellow Air Force Base stood at 7,320 active duty military, federal civilian, and contract personnel in 2011. Complementing this working population was 1,050 family members.

In terms of payroll, Goodfellow Air Force Base paid its active duty military personnel close to \$323.37 million in 2011. In addition, the base spent approximately \$46.07 million on payroll for civilian employees. The base’s contractors paid its workers approximately \$14.34 million in payroll.

Other direct expenses attributed to the base include construction expenditures that stood at over \$75.19 million; commissary and exchange supply and material purchases at close to \$1.02 million; and, health insurance costs and education impact aid and tuition assistance amounting to over \$6.53 million.

³⁹ This number represents service members who are on Active Duty, Reserve/Air National Guard, and Trainees/Cadets.

⁴⁰ This includes civilian employees paid from appropriated funds (AF) and non-appropriated funds (NAF).

⁴¹ This includes employees of the base’s civilian contractors and other private businesses on base (branch bank/credit union and commissary contractors).

⁴² For the purpose of this analysis, the contract expenditures were assumed to be primarily salaries and wages for the contract employees. In the case of employees of on-base banks/credit unions and contract commissary workers, salary and wage data was provided. These were aggregated with the contract employees “salaries and wages.”

⁴³ This represents family members who live both on and off base.

⁴⁴ \$7,995.

Taking the employment, income, and expenditure values together, estimates of their contributions to the Texas economy are presented in the next table.

TABLE 2: Estimated Contributions of Goodfellow Air Force Base to the Texas Economy⁴⁵.

Variable	Total Statewide Impact
Total Employment	25,747
Output (\$Billions)	\$4.345
Gross Domestic Product (\$Billions)	\$2.408
Disposable Personal Income (\$Billions)	\$1.353

SOURCE: REMI Model for Texas.

From Table 1, 7,320 jobs were directly attributed to Goodfellow Air Force Base’s operations. Based on the REMI model’s estimation, an additional 18,427 jobs in the state are indirectly impacted by the base’s operations. These jobs can be traced to industries that supply inputs to the fort’s operations and to industries that cater to the consumer needs of the workers at the fort and workers in industries in the state that provide inputs for the fort’s operations.

The operations of Goodfellow Air Force Base were directly and indirectly associated with the production of over \$4.345 billion in total industry output in Texas. In terms of final goods and services (Gross Domestic Product) produced in-state, \$2.408 billion worth of economic activity could be attributed to the base’s operations.

In terms of disposable income, over \$1.353 billion was directly and indirectly linked to Goodfellow Air Force Base’s operations. As noted above, this disposable income accrued to Goodfellow Air Force Base workers, workers in in- state industries that provide inputs to the base’s operations, and in-state industries that cater to the consumer needs of on-post workers at the base and workers of its input suppliers.

⁴⁵ These values were estimated for 2011 to coincide with the installation’s most current input information.

**ESTIMATED
CONTRIBUTION OF
Joint Base San Antonio⁴⁶
ON THE TEXAS
ECONOMY**

The purpose of this note is to provide an estimate of the contributions of Joint Base San Antonio on the economy of Texas.

Data utilized in this analysis was based on information obtained by the Texas Military Preparedness Commission from the installation. This Information was incorporated into the REMI model for the State of Texas in order to generate estimates of the facility's impacts on state-level employment, gross domestic product, output and disposable personal income.

Table 1: Input Data (FY 2011)

ITE	Number of Persons	Total Payroll (\$Millions)
PERSONNEL		
Military Active Duty	50,043 ⁴⁷	\$2,128.72
Reserve/National Guard, International Military Students	9,175 ⁴⁸	\$141.45
Military Civilian Employees	23,720 ⁴⁹	\$1,652.92
Civilian Contractors	9,363	\$542.61
Family Members	52,197	
EXPENDITURES⁵⁰		
Retiree and Veterans Payments		\$2,817.29
Construction		\$917.21
Service Contracts		\$783.46
Commissary and Army-Air Force Exchange		\$35.92
Health Care (Tricare)		\$774.06
Tuition Assistance		\$34.79
Educational Impact Aid		\$21.16
TOTAL DIRECT SPENDING		\$9,849.59

SOURCE: Joint Base San Antonio Total Military Economic Impact Statement (FY 2011) as provided by the Texas Military Preparedness Commission (October 2012).

According to information presented in Table 1, total direct employment at Joint Base San Antonio stood at 83,162 active duty military, civilian, and contract personnel in FY 2011. Complementing this working population was 9,175 reserve/guard members, 1,129 international military students, and 52,197 family members.

⁴⁶ The following installations comprise Joint Base San Antonio: Fort Sam Houston, Lackland Air Force Base, and Randolph Air Force Base.

⁴⁷ This number represents both permanent party (24,205) and students/basic training (25,838).

⁴⁸ The number of reserve/national guard (8,046) and international military students (1,129) were not included in the analysis. The assumption is that these reservists and international students are not necessarily part of the permanent party at the installations comprising Joint Base San Antonio. However, their payroll is included in the analysis since it is assumed that these funds would be spent in-state.

⁴⁹ This includes appropriated funds civilian employees (20,127), non-appropriated funds civilian employees (2,106), and Army- Air Force Exchange Service civilian employees (1,487).

⁵⁰ One expense item was not included as input data. This represents other spending (\$49,288,081) due to the lack of information regarding the items making up this spending item. Exclusion of this information does not necessarily decrease the installation's impact. This expenditure is captured by the REMI model which incorporates an average cost of operation per worker.

In terms of payroll, Joint Base San Antonio paid its military personnel (permanent military, students/basic training, reservists/guardsmen, and international military students) over \$2.27 billion

in FY 2011. Civilian employees (federal and contract) received over \$2.19 billion in the same time period. Furthermore, Joint Base San Antonio spent close to \$2.82 billion in retiree and veterans payments/benefits.

In addition to payroll and retiree/veteran payments, the joint base spent over \$2.56 billion on various expenditure items. These range from \$917.21 million in construction to construction projects to over \$819.37 million on services and over \$830 million on health care, tuition assistance and educational impact aid.

Taking the employment, income, and expenditure values together and using these as inputs in the REMI model, estimates of their contributions to the Texas economy are presented in the next table.

TABLE 2: Estimated Contributions of Joint Base San Antonio to the Texas Economy⁵¹.

Variable	Total Statewide Impact
Total Employment	292,456
Output (\$Billions)	\$46.39
Gross Domestic Product (\$Billions)	\$26.04
Disposable Personal Income (\$Billions)	\$15.88

SOURCE: REMI Model for Texas.

From Table 1, 83,162 direct jobs were attributed to Joint Base San Antonio’s operations. Based on the REMI model’s estimation, an additional 209,294 jobs in the state are indirectly impacted by the base’s operations. These jobs can be traced to industries that supply inputs to the fort’s operations and to industries that cater to the consumer needs of the workers at the fort and workers in industries in the state that provide inputs for the fort’s operations.

The operations of Joint Base San Antonio were directly and indirectly associated with the production of over \$46.39 billion in total industry output in Texas. In terms of final goods and services (Gross Domestic Product) produced in-state, \$26.04 billion worth of economic activity could be attributed to the base’s operations.

In terms of disposable income, over \$15.88 billion was directly and indirectly linked to Joint Base San Antonio’s operations. As noted above, this disposable income accrued to Joint Base San Antonio workers, workers in in-state industries that provide inputs to the base’s operations, and in-state industries that cater to the consumer needs of on-post workers at the base and workers of its input suppliers.

⁵¹ These values were estimated for 2011 to coincide with the installation’s most current input information.

**ESTIMATED
CONTRIBUTION OF
Laughlin Air Force Base
ON THE TEXAS
ECONOMY**

The purpose of this note is to provide an estimate of the contributions of Laughlin Air Force Base on the economy of Texas.

Data utilized in this analysis was based on information obtained by the Texas Military Preparedness Commission from the installation. This Information was incorporated into the REMI model for the State of Texas in order to generate estimates of the facility's impacts on state-level employment, gross domestic product, output and disposable personal income.

Table 1: Input Data (FY 2011)

ITE	Number of Persons	Total Payroll (\$Millions)
PERSONNEL		
Military Active Duty	1,935	\$45.02
Air Force Reserve/National Guard	115 ⁵²	\$2.16
Appropriated Fund Civilian Employees	916	\$67.23
Non-Appropriated Fund Civilian Employees & Contractors	250	\$5.17
Family Members	980	
EXPENDITURES⁵³		
Communications		\$0.93
Equipment		\$1.59
Purchased Services		\$25.96
Supplies		\$15.52
Printing and Reproduction		\$0.13
Purchased Equipment Maintenance		\$0.17
Travel of Personnel and Transportation of Goods		\$3.34
Utilities		\$4.20
Commissary and Base Exchange		\$1.08
Health Care (Tricare)		\$1.20
Tuition Assistance and Educational Impact Aid		\$0.13
TOTAL DIRECT		\$173.83

SOURCE: Laughlin Air Force Base Total Military Economic Impact Statement (FY 2011) as provided by the Texas Military Preparedness Commission (October 2012).

According to information presented in Table 1, total direct employment at Laughlin Air Force Base stood at 3,216 active duty military, civilian, and contract personnel in FY 2011. Complementing this working population was 980 family members.

⁵² The number of reserve and national guard personnel was not included in the analysis. The reason for this is the fact that these reservists and guard personnel have other fulltime jobs in the state. This may overestimate the total job impact. However, since these personnel are receiving income for their services, this is counted in the analysis.

⁵³ One expense item was not included as input data. This represents other spending (\$49,288,081) due to the lack of information regarding the items making up this spending item. Exclusion of this information does not necessarily decrease the installation's impact. This expenditure is captured by the REMI model which incorporates an average cost of operation per worker.

In terms of payroll, Laughlin Air Force Base paid its military personnel (permanent military and reservists/guardsmen) over \$47 billion in FY 2011. Civilian employees (federal and contract) received over \$74 million in the same time period.

In addition to payroll, the base spent over \$54 million on various expenditure items. These range from over \$25.9 million in purchased services to \$126,788 in tuition assistance and educational impact aid.

Taking the employment, income, and expenditure values together and using these as inputs in the REMI model, estimates of their contributions to the Texas economy are presented in the next table.

TABLE 2: Estimated Contributions of Laughlin Air Force Base to the Texas Economy⁵⁴.

Variable	Total Statewide Impact
Total Employment	10,078
Output (\$Billions)	\$1.651
Gross Domestic Product (\$Billions)	\$0.916
Disposable Personal Income (\$Billions)	\$0.510

SOURCE: REMI Model for Texas.

From Table 1, 3,216 direct jobs were attributed to Laughlin Air Force Base’s operations. Based on the REMI model’s estimation, an 6,862 additional jobs in the state are indirectly impacted by the base’s operations. These jobs can be traced to industries that supply inputs to the fort’s operations and to industries that cater to the consumer needs of the workers at the fort and workers in industries in the state that provide inputs for the fort’s operations.

The operations of Laughlin Air Force Base were directly and indirectly associated with the production of over \$1.651 billion in total industry output in Texas. In terms of final goods and services (Gross Domestic Product) produced in-state, over \$916 million worth of economic activity could be attributed to the base’s operations.

In terms of disposable income, over \$510 million was directly and indirectly linked to Laughlin Air Force Base’s operations. As noted above, this disposable income accrued to Laughlin Air Force Base workers, workers in in-state industries that provide inputs to the base’s operations, and in-state industries that cater to the consumer needs of on-post workers at the base and workers of its input suppliers.

⁵⁴ These values were estimated for 2011 to coincide with the installation’s most current input information.