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The American Legion

For God and Country

bulletin

National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission
1608 K Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006
David Rehbein, Chairman - Iowa
Peter S. Gaytan, Director - Delaware

13-05

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Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) Consolidation

Earlier this year The American Legion was informed of the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) plan to consolidate the adjudication of disability claims received at military BDD sites by the end of this year. Approximately 140 military installations currently participate in the BDD program. At this time, claims received by separating service members out-processing at a BDD site are adjudicated at the VA Regional Office (RO) in the state where the base is located. By October 2005, VA plans to have all claims from East Coast military installations adjudicated by the Winston-Salem (North Carolina) RO. VA anticipates the adjudication of all West Coast BDD claims to take place at the Salt Lake City (Utah) RO by the end of the year. On April 26, 2005, VA issued Fast Letter 05-06, formally outlining its consolidation efforts.

As of June 4, 2005, there are 10,906 pending BDD claims. VA's BDD consolidation will challenge The American Legion's ability to represent separating service members participating in the BDD program. Since the BDD consolidation is a national initiative and the resources of our Department Service Officers at the Salt Lake City and Winston-Salem ROs are limited, National VA&R staff are currently monitoring the situation and exploring various options to ensure that BDD claimants with American Legion power of attorney (POA) receive the representation they deserve.

We have requested, and are currently waiting for, data from VA providing a breakdown of claimants by POA for the current BDD sites. This data will

provide a general idea of the number of BDD claims with Legion POA that will be received at the BDD Rating and Activity Sites at Winston-Salem and Salt Lake City. VA&R has also asked our service offices in Utah and Salt Lake City to provide us with data on the number of BDD claims they have worked, during the BDD consolidation pilot program and gradual phase-in, to date. We have also requested the VA to provide a briefing on the BDD consolidation to our Department Service Officers (DSOs) at the July 2005 DSO School in Indianapolis.

Please contact Steve Smithson, Deputy Director for Claims Service, at (202) 861-2700 or **ssmithson@legion.org** if you have any questions or concerns.

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PETER S. GAYTAN, Director
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Rehabilitation Commission