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Employing Our Veterans: Expediting Transition Through Concurrent Credentialing

Task Group
April 19, 2012

Agenda

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Terms of Reference

Study current methods and status of professional credentialing programs for Service members. Identify process improvements to consolidate, streamline, and facilitate credentialing and licensing and improve Service member access to credentialing and licensing programs.

Deliverables

Report with recommendations for the Secretary of Defense

Task Group Members

Mr. Ned Powell (Chairman)
Mr. Richard Spencer (Vice Chairman)
Mr. Fernando Amandi
Mr. Fred Cook
Lt Col Ed Lengel, USAF (Military Assistant)

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Executive Summary

Establish a process through which military training of Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve, and Coast Guard forces (hereafter referred to as military personnel) in certain trades/skills is certified by the Federal, state and civilian credentialing authorities and employers, therefore reducing the time to employment.

"We must renew our commitment to the Profession of Arms. We're not a profession simply because we say we're a profession. We must continue to learn, to understand, and to promote the knowledge, skills, attributes, and behaviors that define us as a profession." -- General Dempsey, October 2011

Assumptions

- Military training meets or exceeds (with limited exceptions) the requirements for Federal, state, and local credentialing

- Military members should receive credentialing commensurate with military education and training

- Implementation of concurrent credentialing will not be an undue burden on the Services, nor have an adverse impact on readiness

- Possession of professional credentials and licenses prior to separation will shorten the time to employment for military personnel during transition to the civilian work force

- Opportunities for credentials will likely improve recruitment across the Services and will benefit National Guard and Reserve employers

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Assumptions

- The veterans' unemployment rate should be lower than the national average due to the experience and skills they have acquired through their military service

- It is largely a pool of professional, mature job candidates

- Anticipated force reductions will affect a large spectrum of talent

- Credentialed members exiting service have a higher probability of a smooth and shorter transition to meaningful civilian employment than those without credentials

- Adoption of concurrent credentialing will feed into and facilitate transition from military to civilian employment

- Supports voluntary military service and the professionalization of the force

DoD spends $140B annually to train military personnel
An opportunity lost if not leveraged

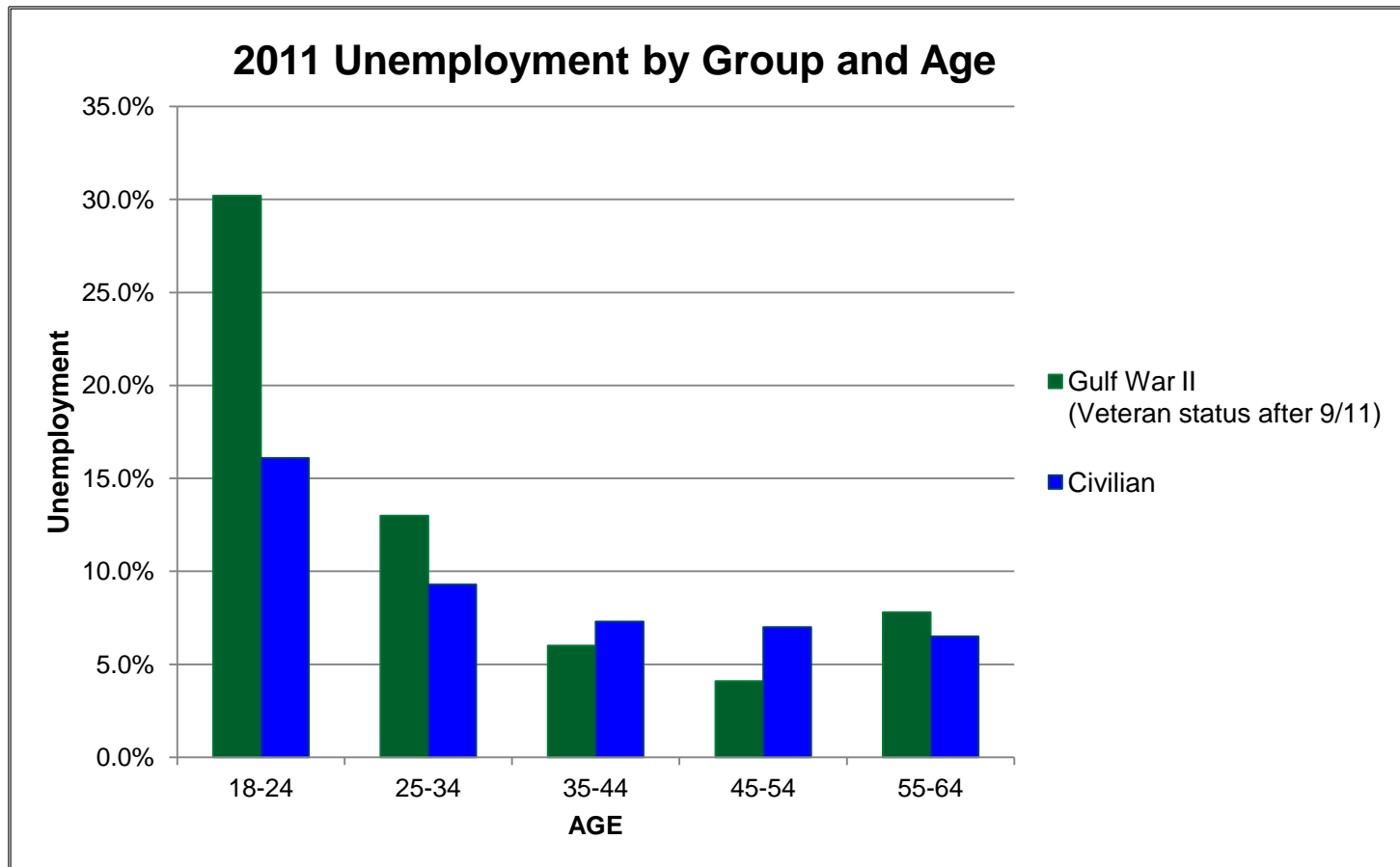DEFENSE BUSINESS BOARD

Guiding Principles

- Focus on <u>concurrent</u> credentialing
  - When military training and education standards meet or exceed the standards of the credentialing authority, credentials should be bestowed
  - When feasible, testing for credentialing and licensing should be incorporated into military training so that granting of professional credentials and licenses occurs at the successful completion of military training
  - The civilian community will recognize and accept military training standards if allowed to evaluate and certify military instruction
  - The study is aimed at active duty (to include Guard and Reserve) military personnel

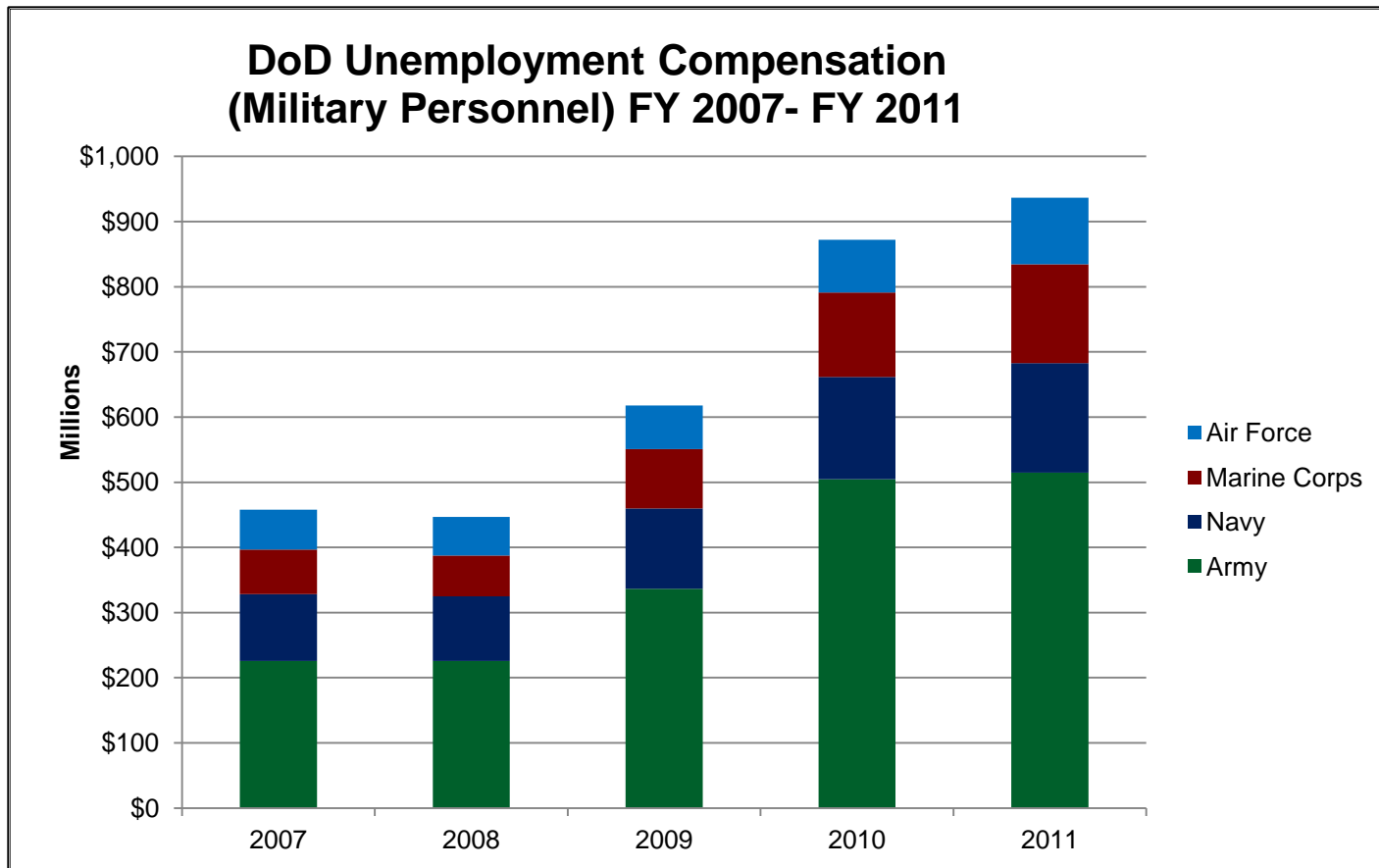- The tasking does not include specific implementation strategies

Time is of the essence

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Findings

2011 Unemployment by Group and Age

*Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics

Findings

DoD Unemployment Compensation (Military Personnel) FY 2007- FY 2011

Legend: Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy, Army

*Source: DoD Comptroller, based on Department of Labor Billings

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Findings

- Three specialties make up 50% of unemployed veterans
  - Combat Arms
  - Motor transport
  - Medical technician / medic
- Veteran frustration includes
  - Finding a job that matches what I want (61%)
  - Having employers understand my skills and experience (47%)
  - Applying military skills into non-military setting (45%)
- The top ten search terms used by veterans do not match the top ten search terms used by employers
- Employers need assistance to better translate military experience to civilian requirements
- 200,000 service members are transitioning to the civilian workforce each year

Source: Monster.com Veteran Talent Index

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Findings

- Access to credentialing programs is widely variable across military branch, occupational specialty, and program
  - Highly "stove-piped" programs; most require self-initiation
    - Multiple sources, while well intended, confuse and frustrate both the service member and the private sector
    - Lack of single-point repository to disburse "best practices"
    - There exist multiple, divergent, un-coordinated efforts to assist veterans in translating service skills to civilian terminology
  - Some communication occurs (Army joined Navy's "COOL"* program)
- Organizational structure/alignment of Personnel and Readiness functions are critically important

NAVY
Chief of Naval Personnel (N1) commands both Naval Education and Training Command
(Streamlined; promotes efficiency and effectiveness)
VS.
ARMY & AIR FORCE
Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (G1) does not command TRADOC
Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff, Manpower, Personnel and Services (A1) does not command AETC

*COOL = Credentialing Opportunities On-Line   TRADOC = Training & Doctrine Command

11   AETC = Air Education and Training Command

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Findings

- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has incorporated military equivalency rules into the Federal Aviation Regulations

    - Initial Joint Service Aviation Maintenance Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2000

    - Credentialing and licensing opportunities are not widely exploited by service members

    - FAA testing is authorized at all DoD installations but is currently available at very few military installations

- Department of Energy - licensing of nuclear operators and engineers

- US Coast Guard – formal licensing program with Army vessel captains and engineers

- Marine Corps' newly launched TAMP(Transition Assistance Management Program) program provides career counseling at the Company level throughout enlistment and a resource management process prior to discharge

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Observations

- Barriers exist to implementing a standardized concurrent credentialing program

- Employers and service members have difficulty translating the vocational aspect of military service to their skills requirements

- The multiplicity of effort currently underway to address credentialing is confusing and in some cases contradictory

> *"Providing civilian credentialing concurrent with military training would enhance the value of National Guard service for our Guard members and civilian employers. The National Guard Association strongly supports this effort." – Maj Gen Gus Hargett, USA (ret), President, National Guard Association of the United States*

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Observations

- Support for veteran employment initiatives is high
  - Presidential support
    - Executive Order, November 9, 2009, Employment of Veterans in the Federal Government; President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness; Joining Forces
  - Congressional support
    - Vow to Hire Heroes Act, H.R. 674; 2012 NDAA Section 558
  - State government support
    - Council of Governors; National Conference of State Legislatures
  - Private support
    - 100,000 Jobs Mission sponsored by JP Morgan/Chase
  - Academia support
    - Syracuse University, Institute for Veterans and Military Families
- Credentialing clearly accelerates the employability of veterans
- Best practices are not shared among the Services

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Observations

- Focused applications may provide "quick wins"
  - Target credentialing programs for specialties with high member unemployment
    - State Commercial Drivers License (CDL) programs
    - Medical training equivalency credit for Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) qualification
  - Advance Guard/Reserve in-state opportunities
  - Programs where the credentialing authority is a Federal office
    - Advertise FAA, USCG and Department of Energy initiatives already in place with military services

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Recommendations

1. SECDEF direct the implementation of a DoD-wide common platform modeled upon the Navy COOL program

2. SECDEF direct existing available programs be utilized DoD-wide

   - FAA maintenance and operations (e.g. mechanics, pilots, air traffic controllers, and dispatchers)
   - State-level commercial drivers licenses / medical reciprocity agreements
   - Coast Guard mariner licenses

3. USD(P&R) designate a single senior program lead with responsibility to obtain acceptance of military training for Federal and State credentialing purposes within 12 months

4. SECDEF requests the White House direct other federal agencies to review and certify DoD training as qualification for their respective credentialing program requirements

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Conclusion

"Separating service members leave the military with documented training and experience that can prepare them for civilian employment; however, this documentation is not always used by state entities to qualify them for licenses required for their occupation or to provide them academic credit"

-- USA4 Military Families website, Key Issues, Issue #1

http://www.usa4militaryfamilies.dod.mil/pls/psgprod/f?p=USA4:ISSUE:0::::P2_ISSUE:1

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Outbriefs

- DEPSECDEF
- USD(P&R)
- Service Secretaries/Assistant Secretaries/Offices of Manpower and Reserve Affairs
- Service Chiefs/Deputies for Personnel
- Deputy Secretary, Veterans Administration

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- Further study of Service transition programs
  - Capitalize on best practices across DoD, link w/ VA, DoL
  - Initiate exit testing survey – as a way to compare skills the member had upon entry with skills and aptitudes gained during service
- Investigate a method to make Service member information available to hiring agents prior to departure from service
  - Demand appears to exist, but there is no broad, reliable system to feed the demand
- Accelerate development/implementation of electronic service records to facilitate access and career management for service members

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Questions?

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