



## DEFENSE BUSINESS BOARD

### Report to the Secretary of Defense

### **Employing Our Veterans: Expediting Transition through Concurrent Credentialing**

#### Report FY12-03

- **Recommendations to Improve  
Service Member Opportunities for  
Credentialing and Licensing  
Concurrent with Training**
-



## Employing Our Veterans: Expediting Transition through Concurrent Credentialing

### TASK

Concurrent credentialing will provide military members with a documented credential or license that can be used upon exiting Military Service without duplication of academics, training, and/or testing for skills that have already been accomplished as part of the Military Service member's military training. Concurrent credentialing focuses on credentialing at the point and time of training and not as a transition or post-service activity. It is anticipated that concurrent credentialing will neither add cost nor disrupt readiness and will reduce the amount of unemployment compensation paid by DoD.

The Secretary of Defense tasked the Defense Business Board (hereafter referred to as "the Board") to form a Task Group to provide recommendations to study current methods for Military Service member credentialing and provide recommendations to accomplish the following:

- Award professional credentials and licenses concurrent with military training
- Identify DoD-wide process improvements to consolidate, streamline, and facilitate credentialing and licensing
- Improve Military Service member access to credentialing and licensing programs

A copy of the Terms of Reference (TOR) outlining the scope and deliverables for the Task Group can be found at **Tab A**.

Edward (Ned) Powell served as the Task Group Chair. The other Task Group members were Fernando Amandi, Frederic Cook, and Richard Spencer. Colonel Edward Lengel, USAF, served as the Board Military Assistant.

## PROCESS

The Task Group conducted interviews with private sector organizations such as Monster.com, Indeed, Talent Development, Inc., and the staff of JP Morgan Chase 100,000 Jobs Mission. They also interviewed public sector organizations to include the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, (USD (P&R)), the United States Marine Corps Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Federal Aviation Administration Aircraft Maintenance and Aircraft Operations Division Managers, and the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Personnel.

The process also included a thorough review of DoD regulations, legislation concerning training and credentialing of Military Service members, and recent academic and press articles directly related to veteran employment and credentialing initiatives.

At the beginning of the study, the Task Group recognized three assumptions:

- (1) anticipated force reductions and the normal separation of Military Service members will result in a large number of veterans from a wide variety of occupational specialties entering the civilian job market,
- (2) credentialed Military Service members exiting the military have a higher probability of a smooth and shorter transition to meaningful civilian employment than those without credentials, and
- (3) concurrent credentialing supports voluntary Military Service and the professionalization of the force.

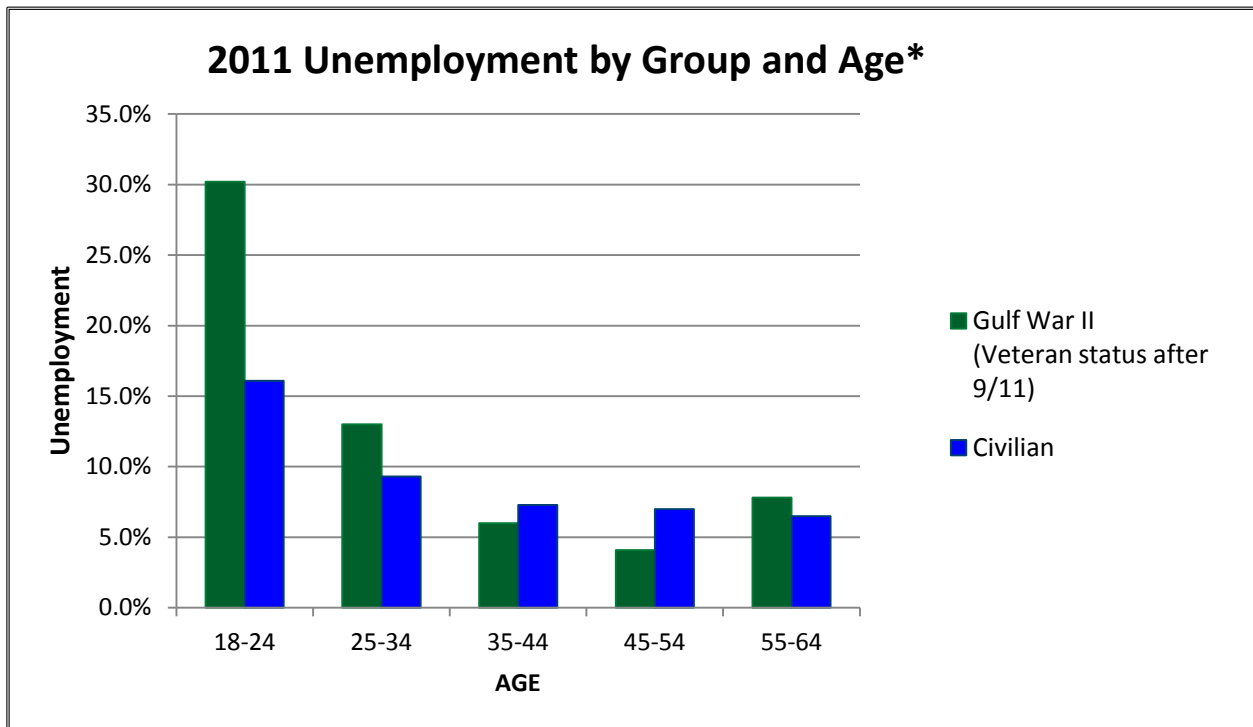
To focus the scope of the study, the Task Group limited discussion to credentialing opportunities concurrent with training of Military Service members. Spousal, post-service veteran, and government civilian credentialing opportunities are significant study topics, but were not discussed due to the scope of this study.

In developing recommendations, the Task Group did not intend to provide specific implementation strategies. The members explored strategic-level barriers and opportunities to credentialing commensurate with military training. Specific policy and implementation of DoD credentialing programs should be addressed by the Office of the USD (P&R) and implemented through the Military Services.

The Task Group’s draft findings and recommendations were presented to the Board for deliberation at the April 19, 2012 quarterly Board meeting where the Board voted to approve the recommendations. See **Tab B** for a copy of the brief approved by the Board.

**FINDINGS**

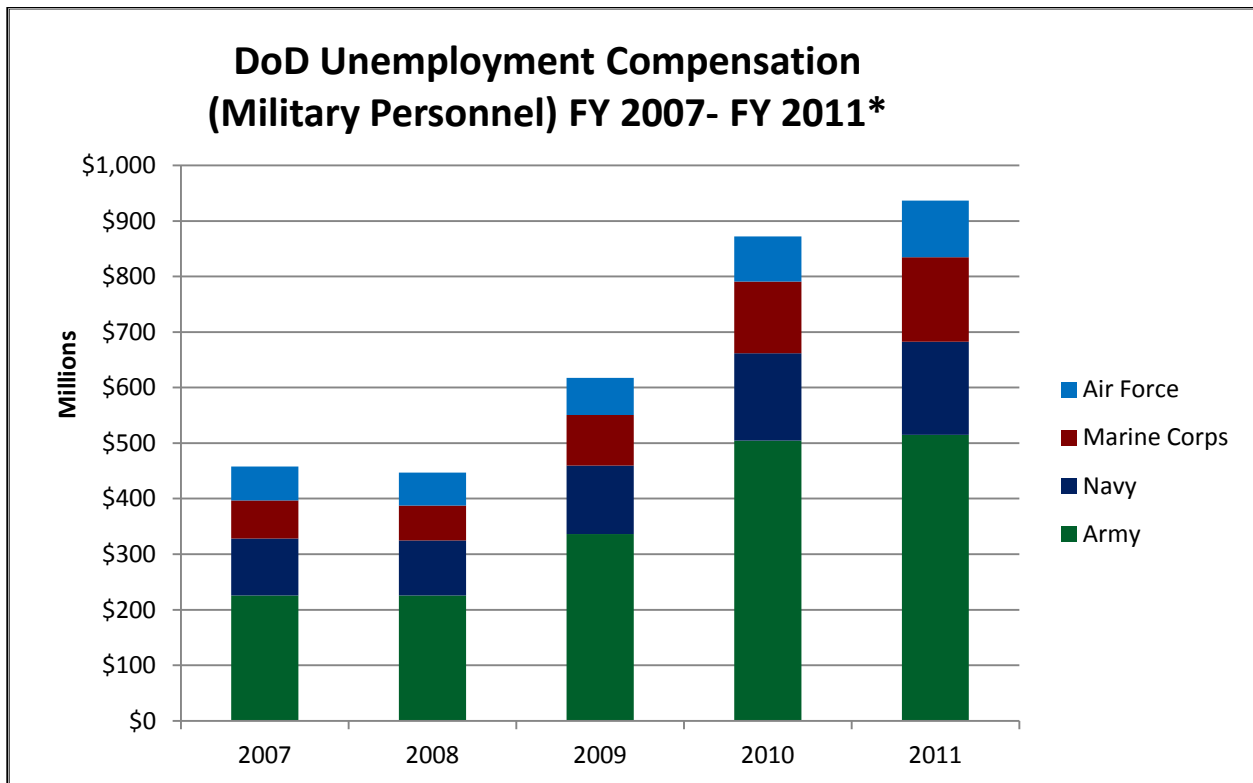
**Fig. 1 – Veteran Unemployment**



\*Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics

Historically, approximately 200,000 Military Service members depart Military Service and transition to the civilian workforce each year. Many achieve gainful employment in a short time period, but a large number do not. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics veteran employment database, unemployment of veterans is higher than their civilian counterparts, especially in the 18-34 year-old age group. This unemployment has a direct cost to DoD which is shown in the following chart.

**Fig. 2 – Unemployment Costs to DoD**



\*Source: DoD Comptroller Data; based on Department of Labor Billings

DoD’s cost of military unemployment compensation has grown steadily over recent years and increased nearly 50% since 2007, with 2011 costs in excess of \$936 million. When compared to the fact that DoD spends approximately \$140 billion each year training its military personnel, it is clear that not fully optimizing this training investment through concurrent credentialing is an expensive lost opportunity.

Military Service member access to credentialing programs varies widely across military branches, occupational specialties, and the particular credentialing programs. Many programs have been initiated but most are self-nominative, highly stove-piped, and lack Department-wide sharing of best practices. The U.S. Navy has one of the better, more organized credentialing programs; the Navy Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) program. Although this program allows Military Service members to obtain credentials, it is a self-service program. An integrated credentialing program that issues credentials as the Military Service member trains over the course of their career would ensure all Military

Service members have the appropriate credentials upon exiting the Military Service and should have an immediate impact on reducing DoD's compensation costs.

Several credentialing authorities, such as the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), are highly receptive to concurrent credentialing and have made efforts to establish programs. With the exception of the U.S. Coast Guard, the Military Services have not fully embraced these opportunities for FAA operational and maintenance credentialing.

Support for veteran employment initiatives is high, including support from The President of the United States, The United States Congress, State, private sector companies, and academia.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **SECDEF direct the implementation of a DoD-wide common platform modeled upon the Navy Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) program.**
  - U.S. Navy efforts are mature and accessible to Military Service members. Despite a low conversion rate of website "hits" to credentials conferred, the program offers an immediate avenue for personnel to obtain credentials.
  
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.**
  - A single lead would be beneficial in consolidating lessons learned and providing input to the many agencies outside DoD who are also working to increase credentialing and employment opportunities for Service members.
  
4. **SECDEF request the White House direct other Federal agencies to review and certify DoD training as qualification for their respective credentialing program requirements.**
  - With concurrent credentialing, certification of training will allow the award of credentials and licenses directly upon completion of training.

Respectfully submitted,



Edward Powell  
Task Group Chair



# Defense Business Board

TAB A

TERMS OF REFERENCE

## Defense Business Board

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SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

FEB 7 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR CHAIRMAN, DEFENSE BUSINESS BOARD

SUBJECT: Defense Business Board Terms of Reference – “Promoting Veterans’ Employment Through Concurrent Credentialing”

The United States military’s Service members are among the most highly trained individuals in their career fields and job specialties. However, as departing Service members seek post-service employment, they require a wide range of government and trade qualifications to meet private sector standards. Veterans could secure private sector jobs more expeditiously if the Military Services awarded professional credentials and licenses to Service members concurrent with their military training.

As the Department’s independent advisory board and resource for best business practices, I request you form a Task Group to study current methods for Service member credentialing and provide recommendations to accomplish the following:

- Award professional credentials and licenses concurrent with military training;
- Identify DoD-wide process improvements to consolidate, streamline, and facilitate credentialing and licensing; and
- Improve Service member access to credentialing and licensing programs.

The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness will provide technical assistance to the group. This effort should be completed by the Board’s April 2012 quarterly meeting.

As a subcommittee of the Board, and pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, the Government in the Sunshine Act of 1976, and other appropriate federal regulations, this Task Group shall not work independently of the Board’s charter and shall report its recommendations to the full Board’s public deliberation. The Task Group does not have the authority to make decisions on behalf of the Board, nor can it report directly to any federal officer who is not also a Board member. The Task Group will avoid discussing “particular matters” according to title 18, U.S.C, section 208.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "D. H. ...", written over a horizontal line.

cc:  
USD(P&R)



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## Defense Business Board

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Defense Business Board

TAB B

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PROVIDED TO THE BOARD ON APRIL 19, 2012

## Defense Business Board

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DEFENSE BUSINESS BOARD



# Employing Our Veterans: Expediting Transition Through Concurrent Credentialing

Task Group  
April 19, 2012

# Agenda

- **Terms of Reference**
- **Executive Summary**
- **Assumptions**
- **Guiding Principles**
- **Findings**
- **Observations**
- **Recommendations**
- **Conclusion**





# Task Group Overview

## 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

Col Ed Lengel, USAF (Military Assistant)

# 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



# 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 Service members exiting the Military 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*



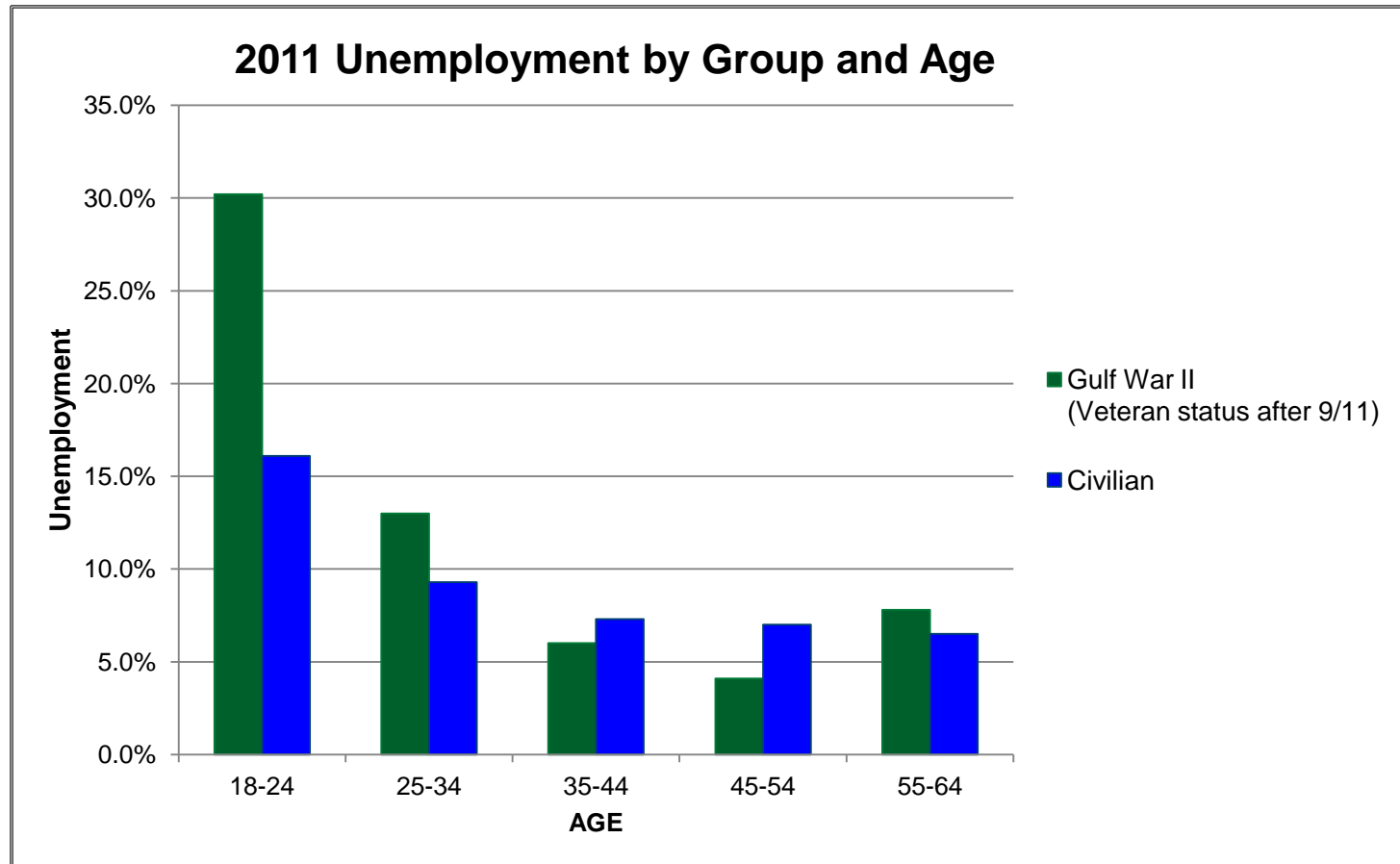
# Guiding Principles

- Focus on concurrent 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

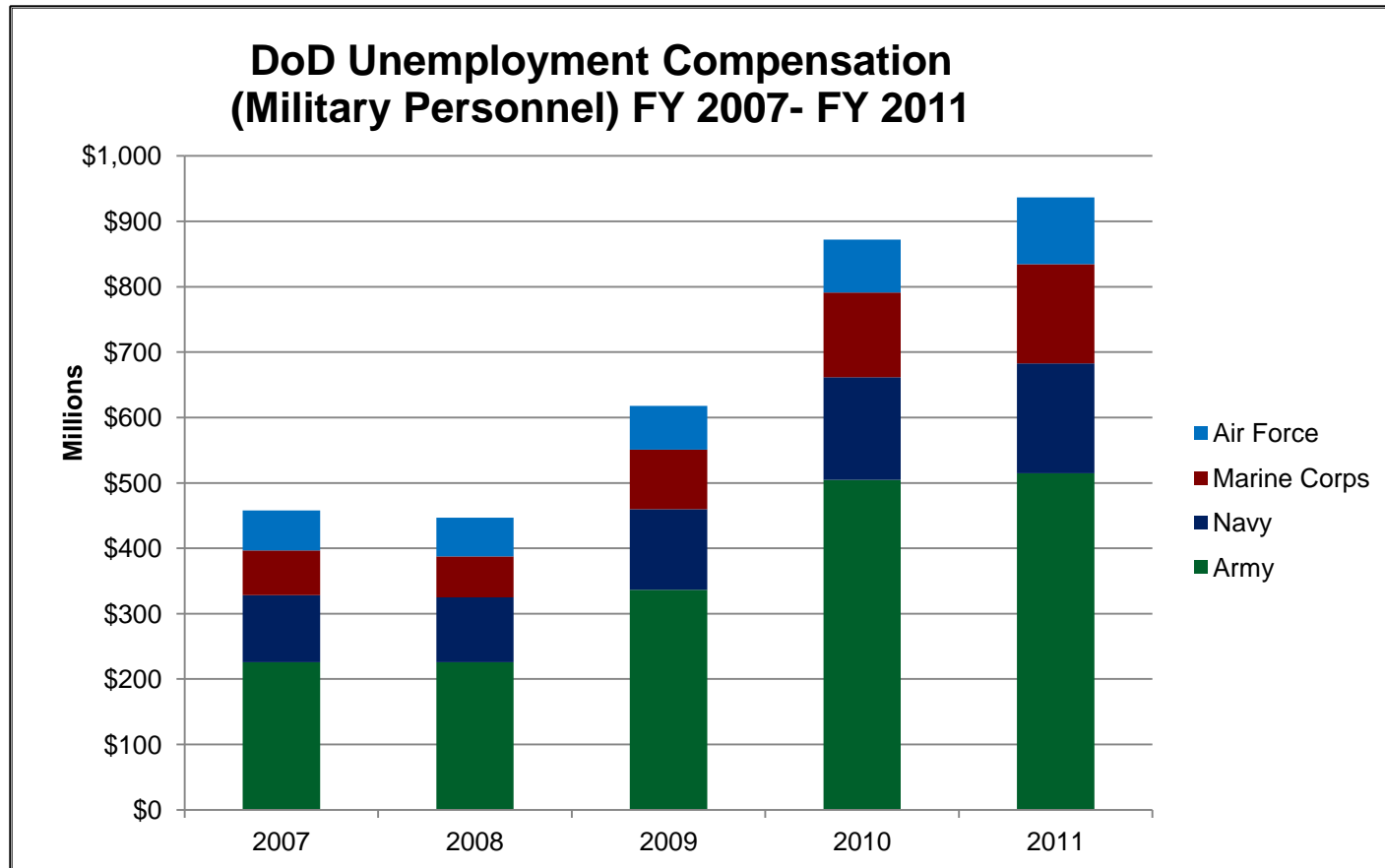


# Findings



\*Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics

# Findings



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

# 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





# Findings

- Access to credentialing programs varies widely 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”<sup>\*</sup> 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

<sup>\*</sup>COOL = Credentialing Opportunities On-Line

TRADOC = Training & Doctrine Command

AETC = Air Education and Training Command



# 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



# 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*

# 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

# 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



# 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

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

# Outbriefs

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



# Follow-on Opportunities

- 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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