

## 2021 Current Fiscal Year Report: Advisory Committee on Former Prisoners of War

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<b>1. Department or Agency</b>		<b>2. Fiscal Year</b>	
Department of Veterans Affairs		2021	
<b>3. Committee or Subcommittee</b>		<b>3b. GSA Committee No.</b>	
Advisory Committee on Former Prisoners of War		1330	
<b>4. Is this New During Fiscal Year?</b>	<b>5. Current Charter</b>	<b>6. Expected Renewal Date</b>	<b>7. Expected Term Date</b>
No	06/15/2020	06/15/2022	
<b>8a. Was Terminated During FiscalYear?</b>	<b>8b. Specific Termination Authority</b>	<b>8c. Actual Term Date</b>	
No			
<b>9. Agency Recommendation for Next FiscalYear</b>	<b>10a. Legislation Req to Terminate?</b>	<b>10b. Legislation Pending?</b>	
Continue	No	Not Applicable	
<b>11. Establishment Authority</b>	Statutory (Congress Created)		
<b>12. Specific Establishment Authority</b>	<b>13. Effective Date</b>	<b>14. Committee Type</b>	<b>14c. Presidential?</b>
38 U.S.C. 541	08/14/1981	Continuing	No
<b>15. Description of Committee</b>	Non Scientific Program Advisory Board		
<b>16a. Total Number of Reports</b>	No Reports for this FiscalYear		
<b>17a. Open Meetings and Dates</b>	<b>17b. Closed</b>	<b>17c. Partially Closed</b>	<b>Other Activities</b>
No Meetings	0	0	0

	Current FY	Next FY
<b>18a(1). Personnel Pmts to Non-Federal Members</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18a(2). Personnel Pmts to Federal Members</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18a(3). Personnel Pmts to Federal Staff</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18a(4). Personnel Pmts to Non-Member Consultants</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18b(1). Travel and Per Diem to Non-Federal Members</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18b(2). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Members</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18b(3). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Staff</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18b(4). Travel and Per Diem to Non-member Consultants</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18c. Other(rents,user charges, graphics, printing, mail, etc.)</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18d. Total</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00

## **19. Federal Staff Support Years (FTE)**

0.00 0.00

### **20a. How does the Committee accomplish its purpose?**

The Committee provides advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the care of and support for the rapidly decreasing former prisoners of war (FPOWs) community. The Committee closely monitors VA programs and policies to ensure that the needs of FPOWs are met. Committee recommendations are specifically tailored to address the unique circumstances of POW confinement, and those recommendations routinely require active collaboration among VA's respective administrations. The Committee continues to be very successful in affecting VA policies and federal legislation mandating improved services to FPOWs [This aligns to VA Strategic goal 1 Veteran choose VA for easy access, greater choices, and clear information to make informed decisions]. The Committee recommended, and VA implemented the automated processing of DIC claims for surviving spouses of FPOWs [This aligns to VA strategic goal 2: Veterans receive timely and integrated care and support that emphasizes their well-being and independence throughout their life journey]. The Committee also has concerns regarding the Care and Benefit teams' proper staffing at each VA medical center. Some of the challenges faced by the POWs include matters that are supported by the Secretary's current top priorities -- many POWs experience increased risk of death by suicide, adverse outcomes related to opiate usage, and getting access efficient and timely access to mental and physical healthcare. VA is committed to ensuring adequately trained employees are staffed at each hospital [This aligns to VA Strategic goal 4: VA will modernize systems and focus resources more efficiently to be competitive and to provide World Class capabilities to Veterans and its employees].

### **20b. How does the Committee balance its membership?**

The Committee will be comprised of approximately 12 members and includes representatives of Veterans who are former prisoners of war (FPOW); representatives of disabled Veterans; and authorities in fields pertaining to disabilities prevalent among FPOW's, including epidemiology, mental health, nutrition, geriatrics, and internal medicine. The Committee will also include ex officio members, the Under Secretary for Health and the Under Secretary for benefits, or their designees. Several members may be Regular Government Employees, but the majority of the Committee's membership will be Special Government Employees.

### **20c. How frequent and relevant are the Committee Meetings?**

The Committee host a minimum of two parent meetings a year. The meeting location varies and is based on the needs of the FPOW community. The purpose of meetings is for local FPOWs and Veterans service organizations to have the opportunity to meet and

interact with the Committee. This process has resulted in beneficial legislation and improved services for FPOWs and is expected to continue to do so. The Committee has received numerous briefings by senior and mid-level VA officials on how the Department addresses the unique needs of FPOWS, both nationally and at local VA facilities. They have received status reports on revised VA processes and policies designed to comply with the Committee's recommendations. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and travel restrictions, the committee meetings were impacted. In FY 2020, the Committee held two meetings. The first was an in-person meeting on December 11th – 13th, 2019 in Jackson, MS. The Second was a virtual meeting on May 26th – 28th, 2020.

**20d. Why can't the advice or information this committee provides be obtained elsewhere?**

The Committee represents a unique segment of our Veteran population which is able to review recommendations and ideas objectively. Proposals from the Committee are intended to assist all FPOWs regardless of age, war or personal circumstance.

**20e. Why is it necessary to close and/or partially closed committee meetings?**

The Committee meetings are open to the public. However, if the committee tours a VA facility, the meetings are closed to the public to protect patient privacy.

**21. Remarks**

NA

**Designated Federal Officer**

Leslie N Williams Designated Federal Officer

<b>Committee Members</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Member Designation</b>
Albano, John	05/27/2020	06/01/2022	Federal	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Black, Karen	12/19/2018	12/31/2021	Survivor of FPOW	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Lawrence, Paul	01/01/2020	12/31/2020	Under Secretary for Benefits	Ex Officio Member
Marshall, Marion	05/27/2020	06/01/2022	Retired	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
McClenney, Lucretia	12/19/2018	12/31/2021	Expertise VA Policy and Procedures	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
McDaniel, Norman	05/27/2020	06/01/2022	Retired	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Milligan, Joseph	05/27/2020	06/01/2022	Retired	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Newsome, Earl	12/19/2018	12/31/2021	SME VA Policy and Proceefdures	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Sherman, Marion	12/19/2018	12/31/2021	SME FPOW Heath/treatment	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Stokes, James	12/19/2018	12/31/2021	SME budget/finance	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Williams, James	12/19/2018	12/31/2021	FPOW	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member

**Number of Committee Members Listed: 11**

**Narrative Description**

The Committee advises the Secretary on the health and welfare of former POWs, and makes specific recommendations for the improvement of benefits and services as they

affect former POWs.

**What are the most significant program outcomes associated with this committee?**

Checked if Applies

- Improvements to health or safety
- Trust in government
- Major policy changes
- Advance in scientific research
- Effective grant making
- Improved service delivery
- Increased customer satisfaction
- Implementation of laws or regulatory requirements
- Other

**Outcome Comments**

NA

**What are the cost savings associated with this committee?**

Checked if Applies

- None
- Unable to Determine
- Under \$100,000
- \$100,000 - \$500,000
- \$500,001 - \$1,000,000
- \$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000
- \$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000
- Over \$10,000,000
- Cost Savings Other

**Cost Savings Comments**

NA

**What is the approximate Number of recommendations produced by this committee for the life of the committee?**

223

**Number of Recommendations Comments**

This is a total of recommendations for FY 2003 through FY 2020.

**What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Fully implemented by the agency?**

97%

**% of Recommendations Fully Implemented Comments**

NA

**What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Partially implemented by the agency?**

0%

**% of Recommendations Partially Implemented Comments**

NA

**Does the agency provide the committee with feedback regarding actions taken to implement recommendations or advice offered?**

Yes  No  Not Applicable

**Agency Feedback Comments**

VA responds specifically in writing to each recommendation made by the Committee.

**What other actions has the agency taken as a result of the committee's advice or recommendation?**

	Checked if Applies
Reorganized Priorities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reallocated resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Issued new regulation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Proposed legislation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Approved grants or other payments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Action Comments**

NA

**Is the Committee engaged in the review of applications for grants?**

No

**Grant Review Comments**

NA

**How is access provided to the information for the Committee's documentation?**

Checked if Applies

- Contact DFO
- Online Agency Web Site
- Online Committee Web Site
- Online GSA FACA Web Site
- Publications
- Other

**Access Comments**

N/A