

## BRIEFLY...

Highlights of Report Number 06-10-002-02-001, to the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training Service.

### WHY READ THE REPORT

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted a performance audit of the Veterans' Employment and Training Service's (VETS) management controls over the Transition Assistance Program (TAP). TAP was established in 1990 to provide employment assistance — such as resume preparation and interviewing techniques — to separating and retiring military personnel and their spouses during their period of transition from military service to the civilian workplace. Title 10, United States Code, Section 1144, requires the Department of Labor (DOL) to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with partner agencies to provide TAP workshops.

### WHY OIG CONDUCTED THE AUDIT

Due to the severe economic recession, the unemployment rate of separating and retiring military personnel rose from 9.8 percent in 2009 to 11.8 percent in 2010. The rate of unemployment among returning soldiers aged 18-24 is approximately 22 percent.

We conducted an audit of VETS TAP to answer the question: Did VETS' TAP have effective management controls to ensure it provided employment assistance to veterans?

### READ THE FULL REPORT

To view the report, including the scope, methodology, and full agency response go to: <http://www.oig.dol.gov/public/reports/oa/2010/06-10-002-02-001.pdf>

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## VETS NEEDS TO STRENGTHEN MANAGEMENT CONTROLS OVER THE TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

### WHAT OIG FOUND

The OIG found VETS did not have effective management controls to ensure TAP participants received the employment assistance needed to obtain meaningful employment. VETS could not substantiate the 124,700 participants that it reported as having attended TAP workshops with participant attendance documents and monitoring of 117 of 247 (47 percent) domestic and overseas TAP sites. We found a lack of consistent evaluation criteria and resolution tracking in VETS monitoring.

VETS also did not use measurable performance goals and outcomes to evaluate program effectiveness and lacked adequate controls over contracting for TAP workshop services. These deficiencies resulted in undermining VETS' ability to ensure it was providing a high-quality program, as required, to meet the assistance needed to ensure veterans succeed in obtaining meaningful employment, and may impact critical program decisions by Congress, VETS, and other stakeholders. In addition, deficiencies resulted in \$2.3 million in unsupported and other questioned costs; and \$713,000 that may have been put to better use.

### WHAT OIG RECOMMENDED

We made six recommendations to the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training. In summary, we recommended VETS develop and implement procedures to ensure accurate participant attendance, an effective monitoring process, measurement and reporting of outcome goals and appropriate controls over contract activities and administration. We also recommended recovery of unsupported and questioned contract costs.

The Assistant Secretary of Veterans' Employment and Training agreed VETS controls need to be strengthened and pointed to current and planned improvements.