

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY & VETERAN AFFAIRS
FY 2022-23 JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING AGENDA

Tuesday, December 14, 2021
9:00 am – 9:30 am

9:00-9:05 INTRODUCTIONS AND OPENING COMMENTS

Presenter: Brigadier General Laura Clellan, Executive Director

9:05-9:10 COMMON QUESTIONS

Main Presenters:

- Brigadier General Laura Clellan, Executive Director
- Greg Dorman, Interim Deputy Director and Resource Director and Legislative Liaison

Topics:

- COVID-19 Remote work planning: Page 1, Questions 1 in the packet, Slide 7
- One-time federal stimulus funds: Page 1, Questions 1 in the packet, Slide 7

9:10-9:25 STATE WOMEN VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER (R1)

Main Presenters:

- Brigadier General Laura Clellan, Executive Director
- Greg Dorman, Interim Deputy Director and Resource Director and Legislative Liaison

Topics:

- R-1: Location of Position, Women & minority veterans unique challenges - benefit difference, network availability, Page 2, Questions 1-7 in the packet, Slides 7-8
- Implications of Military sexual trauma (MST): Page 3, Questions 8- 9 in the packet, Slide 9

9:25-9:30 FY 2020-21 BUDGET BALANCING ACTIONS / R2 / R3

Main Presenters:

- Brigadier General Laura Clellan, Executive Director
- Greg Dorman, Interim Deputy Director and Resource Director and Legislative Liaison

Topics:

- R-2: Turnover within positions Page 4, Questions 11 in the packet, Slides 9
- R3: Technical Funding Adjustment Impact: Page 4, Questions 12 in the packet, Slides 10
- 2020 Budget Balancing: Page 4-5, Questions 13 in the packet, Slides 10

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FY 2022-23 JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING AGENDA

Tuesday, December 14, 2021

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Common questions For Discussion at Department Hearings

1. Please provide an update on how remote work policies implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have changed the Department's long-term planning for vehicle and leased space needs. Please describe any challenges or efficiencies the Department has realized, as well as to what extent the Department expects remote work to continue.

Response: The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs has been able to shift, but not reduce work models and locations. Remote work has limited application within our department; the majority of DMVA's state employees are in the labor, trades, and crafts category and cannot work remotely. Of the remaining employees, many are customer-facing (e.g., family programs, veterans service officers, Veterans Memorial Cemetery employees). The employees that are truly office based are located primarily within our headquarters campus which is shared with the federal government who pay for their share of the facility. As such, reutilization of those minimal spaces is neither cost effective or efficient.

2. Please describe the most significant one-time federal funds from stimulus bills (e.g., CARES Act and ARPA) and other major new federal legislation (e.g., Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act) that the Department has received or expects to receive. For amounts in new federal legislation that have not yet been distributed, please discuss how much flexibility the State is expected to have in use of the funds.

Response: The Department did not receive any federal funding.

NOTE: Additional detail has been requested in a separate written-only response.

STATE WOMEN VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER (R1)

3. [Ransom] Where would this person be located? How would women statewide be able to access the services provided by this person? (Add to hearing agenda for discussion.)

Response: This position would be advertised in the Denver Metro Area to be more accessible to women and other underserved veterans groups that they would be assisting.

4. [Ransom] Are the benefits for women veterans any different from those available to men?

Response: One of the primary benefits provided by the VA is medical care. As such, treatment can be very gender-specific and the options and resources available to a veteran can be difficult to track (i.e. treatments or items that the VA will provide or pay for vs. what they will not). One of the roles of this position would be to advise women veterans on options they have within the VA system that might not be self-evident.

5. [Moreno] The study by the Service Women's Action Network compared women veterans to non-service member women. Did they make any comparisons between male and female veterans to determine whether there is a disparity?

Response: The study was not a part of our research. We do note, from the VA Military Sexual Trauma (MST) fact sheet that 1 in 4 women experience MST whereas 1 in 50 men experience MST.

6. [Rankin] There is an implication that our current network does not serve women veterans. We do not treat women as minorities in the services. Ask the Department to discuss the study that is referenced in this issue brief and explain the basis for this request.

Response: Both the State and County Veteran Service Officers handle both male and female veterans. However, most County Veterans Service Officers are male. Some items more sensitive and some females prefer to speak only to females. This person would be accessible by phone from any veteran in the state.

7. [Hansen] Comment: I feel like there is a solid need for focus on this category of veterans. Question: Given the increase in the number of women veterans while other numbers are decreasing, could the Department reallocate existing resources to address this need?

Response: The Division of Veterans Affairs attempted to utilize a State Veterans Service Officer, who was female, to provide this service as an additional duty. This was not a sustainable course of action and it became evident that a dedicated person would be necessary. The Division is in need of greater resources across the board. While the overall number of veterans is decreasing, the percentage of veterans who use VA services is increasing. At least 62% of OIF/OEF veterans

utilize the VA (VA, 2015)¹. Additionally the Division has reorganized to support the 64 counties regionally. To take this resource out internally, we would have to go from an avg. of 12.8 counties per SVSO to 16 counties per SVSO.

8. [Moreno] What data supports the statement that women service members are more reluctant to access military benefits compared to men?

The Department has no data to suggest, nor has it asserted that women veterans are more reluctant to access military benefits compared to men. Rather, it is the rise in both utilization of benefits by women and the growth of women and other underserved groups within the veterans demographic that argues for a specialized veterans service officer to support them.

9. [Moreno] Statistics regarding military sexual trauma (MST): Provide any information available about how this affects the discharge of women veterans (i.e., do they still receive an honorable discharge?).

Female veterans experience Military Sexual Trauma at a rate of 1 in 3 (men are 1 in 50). The VA's MST Fact Sheet defines potential side effects of experiencing MST as follows:

- Strong emotions: feeling depressed; having intense, sudden emotional reactions to things; feeling angry or irritable all the time
- Feelings of numbness: feeling emotionally 'flat'; difficulty experiencing emotions like love or happiness
- Trouble sleeping: trouble falling or staying asleep; disturbing nightmares
- Difficulties with attention, concentration, and memory: trouble staying focused; frequently finding their mind wandering; having a hard time remembering things
- Problems with alcohol or other drugs: drinking to excess or using drugs daily; getting intoxicated or "high" to cope with memories or emotional reactions; drinking to fall asleep
- Difficulty with things that remind them of their experiences of sexual trauma: feeling on edge or 'jumpy' all the time; difficulty feeling safe; going out of their way to avoid reminders of their experiences
- Difficulties in relationships: feeling isolated or disconnected from others; abusive relationships; trouble with employers or authority figures; difficulty trusting others
- Physical health problems: sexual difficulties; chronic pain; weight or eating problems; gastrointestinal problems

Any one of these conditions, or a combination thereof could lead to a discharge.

¹ Prior research shows utilization of Veterans Affairs (VA) healthcare services increased from 20% in 2001 to 48% in 2016^{1,2}. From 2007 to 2016, the percent of female and male veterans utilizing VA services increased from 35% to 47% and 39% to 48% respectively.

10. [Rankin] Comment: I think every one of our veteran service officers should be able to address the needs of women veterans, rather than referring them to another officer.

Response: The state is making great strides in accreditation for all County and State Veterans Service Officers. While any qualified Veterans Service Officer can help any veteran, the prevalence of MST and the nature of female specific medical treatments creates the need for a resource at the state level.

R2 / R3 / 2020 BUDGET BALANCING

11. [McCluskie] R2: We are seeing high turnover rates in a number of areas, due in part to salaries that are below market. Are there other factors that affect the Department's ability to attract and retain staff? Where are the positions affected by R2 located? (Add to the hearing agenda for discussion)

Response: Pay for similar jobs outside of state government is higher. For this request in particular, a State Veterans Service Officer will make more working at a county in the Metro area than for the state. The Division recently reorganized to facilitate a regional approach supporting the County Veterans Service Officers. The Division's five regional offices will be located in Durango, Pueblo, Aurora (VA Medical Center), Grand Junction, and Greeley.

12. [Rankin] R3: Will the proposed shift of 1.0 FTE in the Long Bill affect the location of the individual who currently works in Grand Junction? If so, will staffing at that office be sufficient?

Response: This technical adjustment is moving the 1.0 FTE and spending authority from the Grand Junction One Source (WROS) line item to the Division Operations line item. The position will remain in Grand Junction. This change is being requested to protect the position in Grand Junction and decouple it from the WROS, which is currently up for sunset review in 2023.

13. [McCluskie] We took several budget balancing actions in 2020 that affected the Department, including making transfers out of the Veterans Assistance Grant Program Cash Fund and the Fort Logan Land Sale Cash Fund. Describe the impacts of these budget balancing actions on Department operations and services. Also, provide an update on the funding that has been set aside from the Fort Logan sale.

Response: There were three cash funds the Department had funds transferred from: \$3,000,000 from the Veterans Trust Fund; \$1,000,000 from the Veterans Assistance Grant Cash Fund; and \$4,908,395 from the Real Estate Proceeds Cash Fund. These balancing actions took approximately 50% of the fund balance from each fund. The VAG is a relatively new program so surplus cash funding has been suspended by recent legislation. The VAG still is an on-going

program to which you appropriate money annually. As for the VTF, if the Tobacco Master Settlement monies ever stopped, this program would have to live off the fund balance, thus not being able to self-sustain as long.

Real Estate Proceeds cash sweep has hurt our ability to move projects forward, particularly when land and the state's share must be "in-hand" to release federal funds. This sweep has significantly decremented our operational capability in terms of recapitalizing decades-old, undersized facilities.



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Joint Budget Committee *14 DEC 21*





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MISSION: Colorado's Department of Military and Veterans Affairs **supports** the Division of the Colorado National Guard in delivering land, air, space, and cyber power in support of state and federal operations; **enables** the Division of Veterans Affairs to deliver high quality service to the State's Veterans and their families; and **oversees** the operations of the Colorado Wing of the Civil Air Patrol in delivering aerospace education and emergency services.

VISION: We are an **inclusive** organization that earns and maintains the trust and confidence in those we serve at the local, state and federal levels; we are recognized for **excellence in service** to our Veterans, service members, and families; and, we are the state of choice for future force structure gains, equipment modernization, and infrastructure investment.



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Executive Director's Office
State FTE: 25.4
General Funds: \$5,014,242
Cash Funds: \$136,182
Federal Funds: \$2,274,194
Reappropriated Funds: \$5,305



Division of Veterans Affairs
State FTE: 22.1
General Funds: \$3,405,471
Cash Funds: \$1,527,470
Reappropriated Funds: \$119,615



Division of the National Guard
State FTE: 125.1
Service Members: 5,600
General Fund: \$3,167,267
Cash Fund: N/A
Federal Fund: \$15,622,675



Colorado Wing - Civil Air Patrol
State FTE: 1.0
Volunteers: 2,100
General Fund: \$148,242
Cash Fund: N/A
Federal Fund: N/A

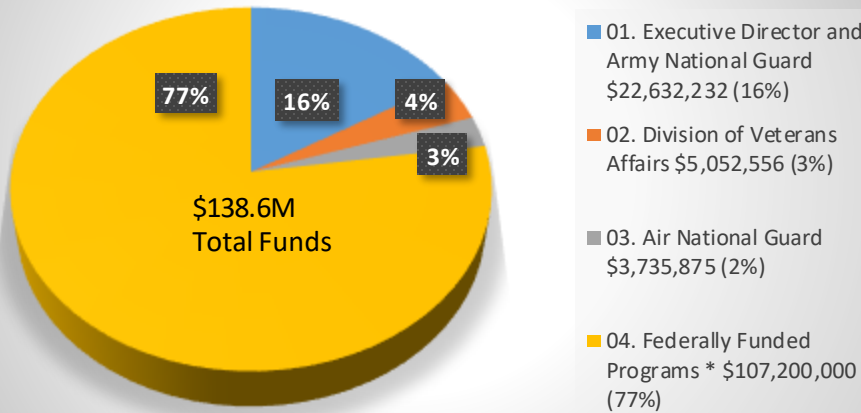


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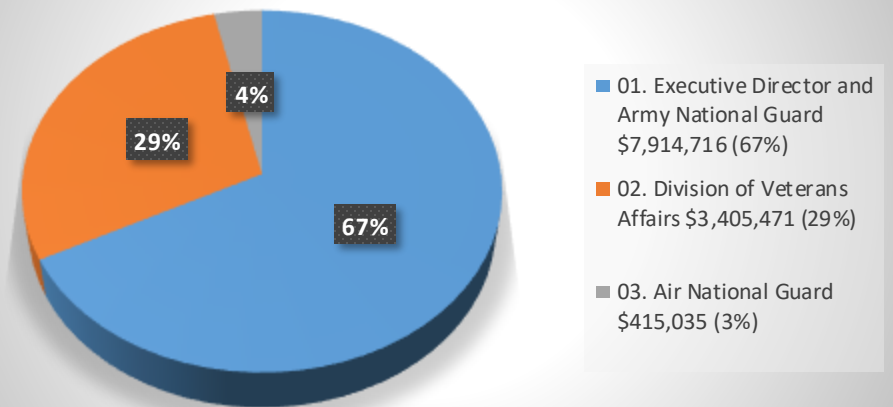
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs



Total Funding Request by Division



General Fund Allocation





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Department of Military and Veterans Affairs



MAJOR DOMESTIC OPERATIONS 2021

13 MAR 2020 – Present: **CONG COVID-19 Response**

- 15 different task forces totaling 1524 Colorado National Guardsmen have supported the State of Colorado through 642 operational periods (as of 14 DEC 21)

16 – 24JAN: **Operation Strong Guardian** (The 59th Presidential Inauguration – P159)

- TF Capitol Response; 222 Service members of the Colorado National Guard supporting Washington DC Capitol Police Department.

01 JAN - Present: **Task Force FireGuard**

- 15 Service Members utilizing national level assets to provide early detection of Wildland Fires. Task Force has become a program of record.

08 – 18AUG: **Glenwood Canyon Mudslide** (Interstate 70 Closure)

- TF Security, 31x PAX 114 Man-Days; 7x Vehicles

01 – 03 NOV: **Cyber Election Support**

- 6x Service Members supporting the Colorado Secretary of State's office providing network monitoring and cyber threat identification.

SEARCH & RESCUE MISSIONS (SARs)

- 19 Missions, 13 Lives Saved, 38 Flight Hours, 71 Man-Days

3x 8th Civil Support Team Call-Outs (in support of Denver Fire Department; FBI; BAFB)

5x 140th EOD Call-Outs (3x Arapahoe County Sherriff's Office; Aurora Police Department, Buckley Space Force Base)

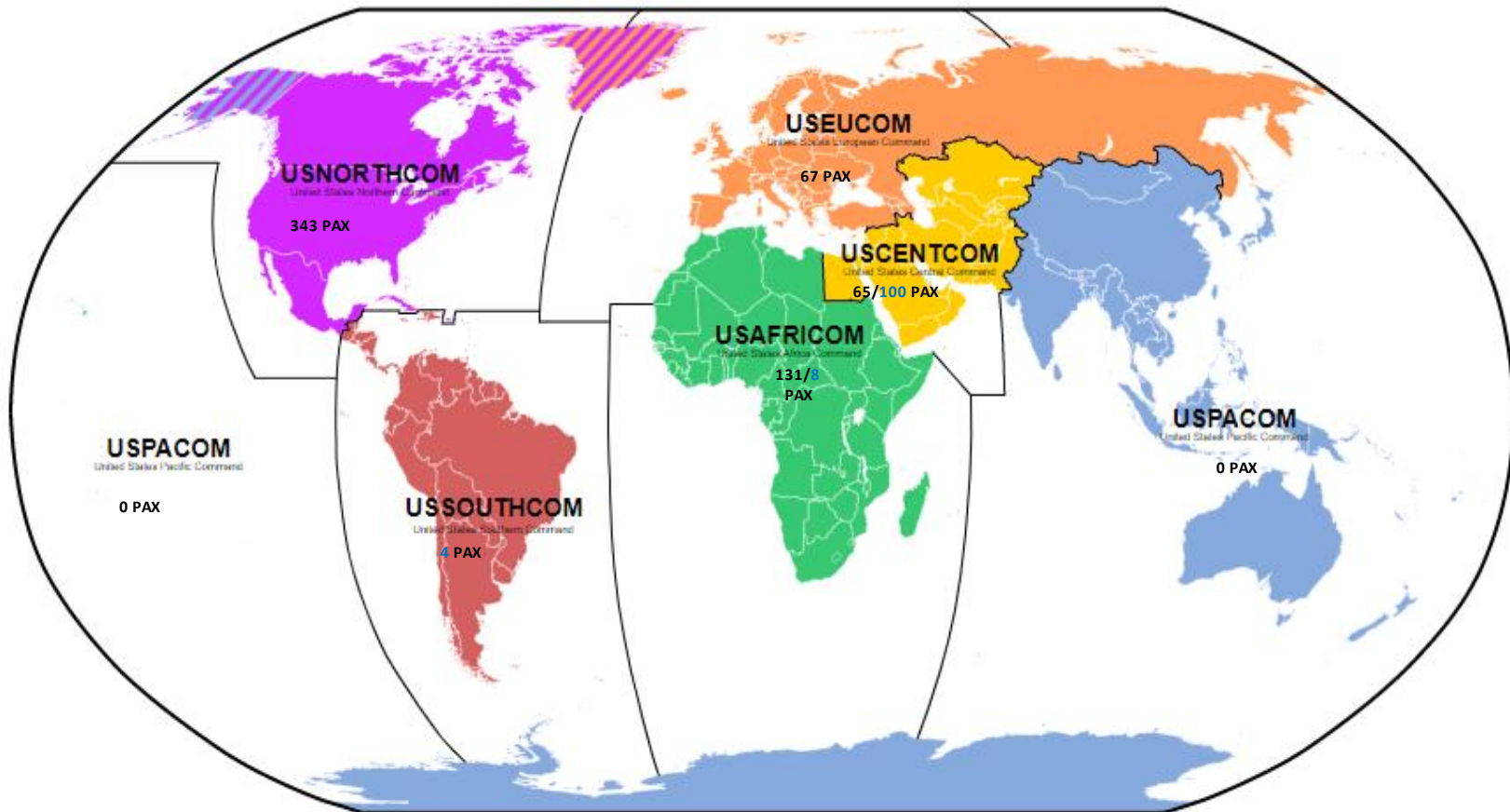


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Colorado National Guard Deployments (current)



Total deployed: 718



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FY 22-23 Budget Request



FY 2022-23 Department Requests

Request Name	FTE	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds Reappropriated	Federal
R-01 State Women Veterans Service Officer	1.0	\$103,125	\$103,125	\$0	\$0
R-02 State Veteran Service Officer Compensation Adjustment	0.0	\$107,554	\$63,805	\$0	\$43,749
R-03 Technical Funding Consolidation	0.0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-04 Department Automation and Improvement	0.0	\$210,445	\$210,445	\$0	\$0
R-05 State Partnership Program Activity Support	0.0	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0	\$0
Total of Requests	1.0	\$441,124	\$397,375	\$0	\$43,749



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Common Questions for Discussion

Remote Work Policies:

- A majority of DMVA's state employees are in the labor, trades, and crafts category and cannot work remotely, remote work has limited application within our department.
- Of the remaining employees, many are customer facing (i.e., family programs, veterans service officers, Veterans Memorial Cemetery employees).

One-time Federal Funds: N/A

Decision Item Discussion

R-01: State Women Veterans Service Officer

- This position would be advertised in the Denver Metro Area to be more accessible to the female and other underserved veterans groups that they will be assisting.
- VA medical care can be very gender-specific and the options and resources available to a veteran can be difficult to track (i.e. treatments or items that the VA will provide or pay for vs. what they will not).



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Decision Item Discussion

R-01: State Women Veterans Service Officer, cont'd.

- A majority of Colorado's County Veterans Service Officers are male. Having this position will allow a female veteran access to a qualified female veterans service officer who can assist them if they are uncomfortable speaking with a male veterans service officer.
- The Division is in need of greater resources across the board. While the overall number of veterans is decreasing, the percentage of veterans who use VA services is increasing. At least 62% of OIF/OEF veterans utilize the VA. (VA, 2015).
- The Department has no data to suggest, nor has it asserted that women veterans are more reluctant to access military benefits compared to men. Rather it is the rise in both utilization of benefits by women and the growth of women and other underserved groups within the veterans demographic that argues for a specialized veterans service officer to support them.



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Decision Item Discussion

R-01: State Women Veterans Service Officer (cont'd)

- Female veterans experience Military Sexual Trauma at a rate of 1 in 3 (men are 1 in 50). There are many potential negative health impacts from this experience, any one of which could lead to a discharge.
- The state is making great strides in accreditation for all County and State Veterans Service Officers. While any qualified Veterans Service Officer can help any Veteran, it is the prevalence of MST and the nature of female specific medical treatments that argues for a resource at the state level.

R-02: State Veteran Service Officer Compensation Adjustment

- A State Veterans Service Officer will make more working at a county in the Metro area than for the state. The Division recently reorganized to facilitate a regional approach supporting the County Veterans Service Officers. The Division's five regional offices will be located in Durango, Pueblo, Aurora (VA Medical Center), Grand Junction, and Weld County.



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Decision Item Discussion

R-03: Technical Funding Consolidation

- The associated State Veterans Service Officer position will remain in Grand Junction.
- This change is being requested to protect the position in Grand Junction and decouple it from the WROS which is up for sunset review in 2023.

Cash Fund Sweeps

- There were three cash funds the Department had cash funds transferred from: The Veterans Trust Fund \$3,000,000; the Veterans Assistance Grant Cash Fund \$1,000,000; and the Real Estate Proceeds Cash Fund \$4,908,395. These balancing actions took approximately 50% of the fund balance from each fund.
- The Real Estate Proceeds cash sweep has hurt our ability to move military construction projects forward, particularly when land and state share must be “in-hand” to release federal funds.



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Questions?

