



PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

JUL 31 2014

The Honorable Howard P. McKeon  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The enclosed report responds to section 524(c)(2) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (Public Law 112-239), which requires an annual report on “a plan to standardize, assess, and monitor the quality assurance programs of the Military Departments to evaluate the performance of duties of the Medical Evaluation Boards (MEBs), Physical Evaluation Boards (PEBs), and the Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officers (PEBLOs).” The enclosed report details the implementation status of the Department’s plan, delivered to Congress in August 2013, to standardize the Disability Evaluation System (DES) quality assurance programs (QAPs) across the Military Departments.

This report focuses on the status of the Department’s plan to implement the DES QAP. The Department’s QAP institutionalizes quality assurance activities across the Military Departments and serves as the primary mechanism for continual performance improvement of the Department’s DES. Beginning with this report, and thereafter until July 2017, the Department will annually report to the Congressional Committees on the disability evaluation QAPs implementation and results. These reports assess the Military Departments’ success in implementing the requirements established in the quality assurance plan and the extent to which the QAP meets its objectives.

Thank you for your interest in the health and well-being of our Service members, veterans, and their families. Similar letters are being sent to the Chairmen of the appropriate committees of Congress, as defined by section 524(c)(3).

Sincerely,

  
Jessica L. Wright

Enclosure:  
As stated

cc:  
The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member



UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

JUL 31 2014

The Honorable Carl Levin  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

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Sincerely,

  
Jessica L. Wright

Enclosure:  
As stated

cc:  
The Honorable James M. Inhofe  
Ranking Member



UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND  
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JUL 31 2014

The Honorable Jeff Miller  
Chairman  
Committee on Veterans Affairs  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

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Sincerely,

  
Jessica L. Wright

Enclosure:  
As stated

cc:  
The Honorable Michael H. Michaud  
Ranking Democratic Member



UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

JUL 31 2014

The Honorable Bernard Sanders  
Chairman  
Committee on Veterans Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The enclosed report responds to section 524(c)(2) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (Public Law 112-239), which requires an annual report on “a plan to standardize, assess, and monitor the quality assurance programs of the Military Departments to evaluate the performance of duties of the Medical Evaluation Boards (MEBs), Physical Evaluation Boards (PEBs), and the Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officers (PEBLOs).” The enclosed report details the implementation status of the Department’s plan, delivered to Congress in August 2013, to standardize the Disability Evaluation System (DES) quality assurance programs (QAPs) across the Military Departments.

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Sincerely,

  
Jessica L. Wright

Enclosure:  
As stated

cc:  
The Honorable Richard Burr  
Ranking Member



# **Annual Report on the Implementation of the Disability Evaluation System Quality Assurance Program (2014)**

**Required by: Section 524(c)(2) of the National Defense Authorization Act for  
FY 2013 (Public Law 112-239)**

Preparation of this report/study cost the Department  
of Defense a total of approximately \$31,000K in  
Fiscal Years 2014. Generated on 2014May23 RefID:  
9-9381640

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the status of Department of Defense (DoD) actions to standardize, assess, and monitor the Military Departments' disability evaluation system (DES) Quality Assurance Programs (QAP) as directed by section 524 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2013. When fully implemented, DoD's DES QAP will standardize disability evaluation quality assurance requirements for the Military Departments and enable DoD to assess, monitor, and improve the accuracy and consistency of the determinations and decisions of Medical Evaluation Boards (MEBs) and Physical Evaluation Boards (PEBs), and ensure MEBs, PEBs, and Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officers (PEBLOs) properly perform their duties. Section 524 of NDAA FY 2013 also directed the Secretary of Defense to submit annual reports on implementation status for the four years following the submission of a disability evaluation quality assurance plan. DoD delivered a DES QAP plan to Congress in August 2013. The current report is the first annual update to Congress on the status of implementing that plan.

As described in the Department's August 2013 DES QAP report, DoD collaborated with the Military Departments to establish a quality assurance program that supports the DES staffs in their understanding and execution of the very complex business of disability evaluation, as well as ensures that MEBs and PEBs reach accurate and consistent disability decisions. The Department created a DoD-level DES QAP that includes four functions that are consistent with industry standards and the disability quality assurance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Social Security Administration (SSA). A description of the four quality assurance program functions used in DoD's implementation actions follows.

- **Quality Planning** – Establishing guiding principles by which disability evaluation quality assurance processes will be carried out; identifying standardized mechanisms to evaluate the accuracy and consistency of decisions and proper performance of duties.
- **Quality Assurance** – The formalized processes and procedures to evaluate the accuracy and consistency of decisions; the mechanisms to measure and evaluate personnel and processes; the frequency of executing quality assurance activities; and formalized evaluation criteria to ensure the Military Departments use standardized instruments to measure the congressionally established objectives.
- **Quality Control** – The collection of data, as well as data analysis to identify performance gaps and areas for improvement.
- **Quality Improvement** – The actions taken to resolve identified performance deficiencies, gaps and areas of improvement.

Since 2007, DoD and VA partnered to create a jointly administered, integrated, seamless and transparent disability process. Through the IDES, the Departments already realized significant improvements in Service member satisfaction, disability benefits timeliness, and rating consistency. DoD is taking decisive action to implement a standardized DES QAP across the Military Departments to further improve IDES performance and has successfully implemented several key components of the program. In-process case reviews are ongoing and post-process and consistency reviews will be implemented in FY 2015. When fully operational, DES QAP will institute a standardized, comprehensive and multidimensional framework for the

Department's DES, which will further enhance procedural equity by establishing additional safeguards to influence accurate and consistent decisions, and thereby provide assurance to Service members that they will receive consistent and equitable decision throughout the DES process.

## CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	2
Contents .....	4
1. Overview .....	5
2. Status of Implementation .....	6
2.1. Quality Planning .....	6
2.2. Quality Assurance .....	7
2.2.1. DES Case Reviews .....	7
2.2.2. Performance Measurement .....	9
2.2.3. Standardized Training .....	9
2.3. Quality Control .....	9
2.4. Quality Improvement .....	10
3. Summary .....	12
Bibliography .....	13
Appendix 1: Notional Accuracy Sample Size Numbers by Region .....	15



## 1. OVERVIEW

Section 524 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2013, Congress directs the Secretary of Defense to standardize, assess, and monitor the Military Departments' quality assurance programs (QAPs) to evaluate the duty performance of Medical Evaluation Boards (MEBs), Physical Evaluation Boards (PEBs), and Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officers (PEBLOs). Congress established two objectives for the Military Departments' QAPs.

1. Ensure accuracy and consistency in the determinations and decisions of MEBs and PEBs
2. Monitor and sustain the proper duty performance of MEBs', PEBs', and PEBLOs'.

Congress further directed the Secretary of Defense to submit a quality assurance implementation plan not later than 180 days after the date of NDAA enactment and annual reports assessing implementation progress for the four years following the submission of the plan.

The Department of Defense (DoD) delivered the DES QAP plan to Congress in August 2013. Leveraging best practices from industry and the QAPs of the two largest Federal disability benefits programs – the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Social Security Administration (SSA) – DoD is implementing standard requirements for a disability QAP across the Military Departments based on four key quality assurance functions.

**Quality Planning – Establishes guiding principles for executing DES quality assurance processes.** DoD has drafted DES QAP policy that establishes objectives, roles, responsibilities and guidelines for completing and reporting assessments of decision accuracy and consistency, and guidelines for Military Departments to report on quality improvement activities. DoD anticipates publishing DES QAP policy by September 2014.

**Quality Assurance – Establishes standard methods and metrics for quality measurement activities.** Case reviews to assess accuracy, consistency, and proper duty performance are a cornerstone of the DES QAP. DoD's program requires the Military Department to execute or facilitate three types of quality assurance case reviews:

- In-process case reviews of MEB and PEB decisions – Beginning FY 2014, DoD will collect information on the results of these routine reviews, which will provide the basis for performance measurements of the DES process.
- Post-process case reviews, and if necessary, correction of a Service member's record, must be completed prior to the Service member's separation from Service – The Military Departments will implement post-process case reviews by an entity separate from their disability evaluation organization.
- Reviews of the consistency of MEB and PEB decision-making across Military Departments – An independent entity will construct cases to test the consistency of PEB decision-making across Military Departments on targeted issues of high interest. DoD will consider extending this type of consistency review to MEB decision-making as well, once the procedures and efficacy of consistency review of PEB decision-making is tested.

While DoD's gold standard for its DES QAP includes the three case reviews as key components to measure the accuracy of MEB and PEB decisions, DoD is evaluating fiscal requirements, options and timeframes to implement the three reviews in a phased approach. Currently, the Military Departments are developing policy and identifying funding requirements, manpower

levels, organizational alignment required to implement the additional disability quality assurance case reviews and reporting requirements. DoD will implement post-process case reviews after the DES QAP issuance is published and the reviews are programmed. Meanwhile, DoD is able to draw initial measurements on the accuracy and consistency of board decisions through the in-process case reviews. DoD anticipates finalizing case review sampling requirements, standardized scoring tools for case reviews, and metrics for assessing duty performance through existing data sources during FY 2014 and FY 2015.

**Quality Control – Executing data collection and analyses to measure current performance according to agreed-upon evaluation criteria.** DoD’s disability QAP is currently leveraging existing data sources to measure duty performance of MEBs, PEBs, and PEBLOS against DoD policy, including DoD’s Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) Customer Satisfaction Surveys and VA’s Veterans Tracking Application IDES module. DoD will add post-process and consistency case reviews to evaluate the accuracy and consistency of MEB and PEB decisions during FY 2015.

**Quality Improvement – Resolving identified performance deficiencies, gaps and areas of improvement.** DoD is actively engaging with the Military Department on an ongoing basis to identify and track the implementation of quality improvement activities. Since informing Congress in August 2013 of the DES QAP plan, the Department published PEBLO training standards, initiated several targeted reviews focused on specific performance issues that affect accuracy, consistency, or performance of the MEBs and PEBs, met frequently with the Military Departments and other stakeholders to document and discuss performance issues, and disseminated lessons learned and best practices as tools for relaying valuable information to resolve problems.

This report focuses on the status of the Department’s plan to implement these four functions of the DES QAP. Integration of these four program components with routine operations will institutionalize quality assurance activities and serve as the primary mechanism for continual performance improvement of the DoD DES.

## 2. STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

DoD reports significant progress with DES QAP implementation and standardization across the Military Departments since delivery of the Department’s plan to Congress in August 2013. The following section describes the activities that support institutionalizing the QAP functions across the Military Departments, as well as a number of preliminary activities completed for implementation of a robust, comprehensive DES QAP. DoD is meeting the majority of milestones outlined in the August 2013 report, and will implement post-process and consistency reviews in FY 2015.

### 2.1. QUALITY PLANNING

Quality planning includes the development of the policy and guidelines for implementing and sustaining administration of the DES QAP. Policy is being incorporated as DoD Manual 1332.18, Volume 3, Quality Assurance Program (QAP). The manual establishes:

- DES QAP goals and objectives
- Roles and responsibilities
- Disability case review and reporting guidelines
- Quality improvement activity reporting guidelines

**Status:** Working, estimated completion: 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter FY 2014. Also incorporated quality planning as a regular topic at the Department's quarterly Disability Advisory Council (DAC) meeting.<sup>1</sup>

## 2.2. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality assurance establishes a standardized approach, methodology, and metrics for quality measurement activities. DoD has developed quality assurance procedures that support DES case review of accurate and consistent MEB and PEB decisions and ensure MEBs, PEBs, and PEBLOs properly execute their duties defined in DoD policy. DoD also developed training standards to be adopted across Military Departments for all PEBLOs as a basis to improve the consistency of their performance.

### 2.2.1. DES Case Reviews

DoD's DES QAP plan requires the Military Departments to execute three types of disability case reviews to measure the accuracy and consistency of MEB and PEB decisions. These reviews occur at specified points throughout the DES process and provide additional assurances of board outcomes. To institutionalize a standardized review process across the Military Departments, draft DoD policy defines case review evaluation criteria, sampling protocols, review schedules and reporting requirements.

**In-Process Case Reviews.** When implemented, DoD DES QAP policy will require the Military Departments to report quarterly to DoD on the results of their review of a sample of on-going disability evaluation cases. The Military Departments will continue their on-going in-process case reviews in accordance with their Department-specific policies and protocols that identify milestones in the DES process when cases are reviewed. The DoD policy will require the Military Departments to review and report on, at a minimum, the accurate application of disability law and policy in MEB and PEB procedures and decisions. DoD may issue a common checklist for Military Departments to apply to their in-process case reviews at some point in the future. These in-process case reviews enable the Military Departments to identify and correct errors in active disability cases prior to Secretarial review and approval of final disability case determinations. The reviews also enable DoD and the Military Departments to identify areas for systematic improvement.

**Status:** Working, the Military Departments are on schedule and began quarterly reporting during 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter FY 2014.

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<sup>1</sup> Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), Charter: Department of Defense Advisory Council (DAC) Disability Evaluation System (DES), October 2013.

**Post-Process Case Reviews.** When implemented, DoD QAP policy will require the Military Departments to establish procedures for and report on the results of these post-process case reviews based on a sample of disability evaluation cases. The policy requires the Military Departments to review the cases after Military Departments have adjudicated the cases and all Service Member appeals, but prior to the Service Member's separation from the Service so that any corrections can be made prior to separation. The Department's DES QAP policy provides standard evaluation criteria and checklists for conducting these post-process case reviews. DoD's policy will require the Military Departments to conduct the post-process case reviews with personnel who have not previously pre-reviewed, reviewed, or been involved in the disability determinations of such sampled cases. These reviews will provide assurance that Service members' disability evaluation cases will be impartially reviewed for accuracy and consistency.

DoD is finalizing the sampling requirements and procedures for the post-process case review requirements. DoD anticipates setting sample size annually using a specified survey sample size formula applied to the Military Departments' annual caseload against a specified inference model (see Appendix 1 for a description of the sampling model). The case file selection will be representative of the target population and will be based on all cases in inventory. The Military Departments will conduct the post-process case reviews on a monthly basis to allow analysis that validates the determinations made by the MEB or PEB and identifies patterns and trends rather than anomalies.

**Status:** Working, each Military Department is developing its capabilities to fulfill this requirement, and implementation will occur in FY 2015.

**Consistency Reviews.** DoD is also instituting consistency reviews on a quarterly basis, focusing on high-level interest issues, specific conditions, and other criteria specified by the Department or Congress. The results of the reviews will support revisions to training, law, regulations, and policy that should ultimately help reduce variance in decision outcomes across the Military Departments. These topics will be based on prior performance data trends and interest items of the Department (e.g., consistent application of presumption of fitness for duty, compensability rules).

As identified by the Military Departments, selected PEBs will adjudicate "constructed" or "test" case files and an agency, commissioned by DoD, will evaluate their decisions and determinations using standardized evaluation criteria. DoD will analyze the outcomes of these reviews to determine the degree of alignment with policy across the Military Departments. The results will help the Department identify inconsistencies in the application of laws and regulations across the Military Departments and serve as a source to reduce such variation through training or clarifying and strengthening policies, regulations, and procedures. DoD may extend a similar consistency review process to selected MEBs in the future if it determines that inconsistencies in the application of laws and regulations exist and require evaluation as well.

**Status:** Working, DoD is collaborating with an external agency to establish the process for implementing consistency reviews. Implementation will occur in FY 2015.

### 2.2.2. Performance Measurement

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DoD disability evaluation policy will also direct the measurement of the duty performance of MEBs, PEBs, and PEBLOS against the standards defined in DoD policy. DoD is leveraging existing data sources to measure key aspects of performance and to analyze longitudinal trends to identify areas that require performance improvement.

**IDES Customer Satisfaction Surveys.** The Department will use data from IDES Customer Satisfaction Survey as one source to evaluate the duty performance of MEBs, PEBs, and PEBLOS as perceived by the Service member. DoD recognizes that customer service satisfaction surveys are not a definitive measure of MEB, PEB, and PEBLO duty performance because Service members' expectations or desired outcomes can influence their perception of duty performance. But, DoD believes Customer Satisfaction Survey data provides useful information about duty performance and will help identify duty performance areas that require improvement.

**Status:** Working, the Department is currently collecting IDES customer satisfaction survey data and will integrate the results in quarterly disability evaluation quality assurance reports beginning the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter FY 2014.

**Veterans Tracking Application Data.** DoD disability policy establishes timeliness goals for MEB, PEB, and PEBLO duties. DoD and VA use the IDES module of VA's Veterans Tracking Application to track timeliness metrics and process outcomes for Service members in the IDES. The Department will use data from the IDES module of VA's Veterans Tracking Application as a second source to evaluate the duty performance of MEBs, PEBs, and PEBLOS. DoD will aggregate and report Veterans Tracking Application IDES data for regional commands, the Military Departments, and all DoD against policy-defined timeliness goals.

**Status:** Working, the Department is currently collecting IDES Veterans Tracking Application data and will integrate the results in quarterly disability evaluation quality assurance reports during FY 2014.

### 2.2.3. Standardized Training

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Well-defined training standards are an essential component to the Department achieving better performance of MEBs, PEBs and PEBLOS in the execution of their duties and reducing variance of MEB and PEB disability determinations. DoD policy provides minimum requirements for training PEBLOS. The Military Departments must implement standardized training to meet these requirements. To standardize training across the Military Departments, the Department developed training standards and learning objectives for the skills PEBLOS need to perform their duties. DoD will consider revising policy to add training requirements, standards and learning objectives, including refresher training, for other types of personnel executing disability evaluation duties. Furthermore, the Military Departments will provide specific or tailored training, where needed, to address process errors, decision inconsistencies, and other notable trends identified through the metrics described in this section.

**Status:** DoD published PEBLO training standards and learning objectives in August 2013.

## 2.3. QUALITY CONTROL

Quality control activities focus on data collection and analysis to measure current performance according to agreed-upon evaluation criteria. While there are currently several data sources that support the evaluation of the proper performance of duties, the addition of case reviews will allow DoD to evaluate the accuracy and consistency of MEB and PEB decisions. Analysis of program data supports quality improvement activities by providing leaders with essential information to identify performance shortfalls and implement improvements in process and performance. Upon full implementation of DES QAP data collection approaches, the Military Departments will report the outcome of case reviews to the Department on a quarterly basis. DoD will generate and analyze inputs from VA's Veterans Tracking Application and IDES customer satisfaction surveys, to develop a QAP score. The implementation status of these quality assurance activities is provided in Section 3.2.1. DoD will collect, and analyze data from the following sources to measure disability evaluation performance against Department policy.

- **In-Process Case Review** – DoD requires the Military Departments to report on their in-process case review procedures; trends noted during in-process case reviews; and their process for sampling and percentages of cases required. This information will provide the basis of future DES QAP status reports.
- **Post-Process Case Reviews** – Each Military Department will collect post-process case review results to identify trends and develop an accuracy score or rating.
- **Consistency Reviews** – DoD will conduct consistency reviews using “constructed” cases to compare the degree of alignment among boards for legal or policy issues of special interest.
- **Customer Surveys** – DoD will use ongoing IDES customer satisfaction survey data to evaluate the perceived duty performance of MEBs, PEBs, and PEBLOs.
- **Veterans Tracking Application Data** – VA's Veterans Tracking Application is an ongoing source of data to assess whether MEBs and PEBs and PEBLOs meet the timeliness duty performance goals directed in DoD policy.

**Status:** Working, DoD currently uses Customer Surveys to measure the satisfaction of Service Members with the DES process as well as key stakeholders, MEBs, PEBs, and PEBLOs. Likewise DoD uses Veterans Tracking Application data to measure stakeholder performance. The DES QAP is synthesizing the data from these two major sources to derive a set of quality metrics, as well as incorporating the information provided from Military Departments on their ongoing in-process case reviews. Full implementation of the DES QAP is pending publication of the DES QAP issuance and programming to implement the post-process and consistency reviews.

## 2.4. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

The quality improvement function of the Department's DES QAP will focus on activities intended to resolve problems and improve performance. To be effective, quality improvement and feedback mechanisms must be timely with sufficient detail so that corrective actions can be identified and applied. Leaders and decision makers will be able to employ feedback, an essential element for continuous process improvement, to monitor key aspects of the disability evaluation process and improve performance. DoD's disability evaluation quality improvement activities are ongoing, completed in full collaboration with the Military Departments, and will

provide the basis for continuous process improvement of the Department's disability evaluation system. These activities can be grouped into categories of training, committees, working groups, and dissemination of lessons learned and best practices.

- **Defined PEBLO Performance Standards** – DoD, in collaboration with the Military Departments, developed and published the Warrior Care Training Standards and Performance Objectives Guidebook. This guidebook was created to help PEBLOs prepare and provide best-in-class support and services to our nation's recovering Service members. The guidebook provides the minimum standards PEBLO training to ensure DoD-wide consistency, and it allows Service-specific standards and objectives that PEBLOs must adhere to, as well.
- **Targeted Reviews** – DoD is periodically conducting targeted reviews of disability evaluation issues, such as adjudication of posttraumatic stress disorder cases and presumption of sound condition cases. These reviews collect data and information to assist DoD to gain insights that may be used as a basis for changes to DoD policy and procedures. As appropriate, metrics used for these reviews may be included in future routine data collection for the DES QAP to ensure resolved problems do not return after a review is concluded.
- **Benchmarking** – Benchmarking is the process of comparing the Department's program with the QAPs of successful disability evaluation leaders. DoD began the process of developing the Department's DES QAP by interviewing and meeting with representatives of similar programs at VA and SSA. DoD continues to meet, as appropriate, with VA and SSA representatives to compare activities and identify quality assurance best practices. The best practices are useful for the Department's improvement of the four functions of the DES QAP.
- **Department quality improvement committees** – DoD has traditionally used oversight committees that meet on a regular schedule as a venue for presenting disability evaluation data to the Military Departments and other stakeholders to discuss and develop improvement strategies for performance issues. The Disability Advisory Council and the Disability Evaluation System Improvement Working Group address high-interest items, actions that are taken by DoD or the Military Departments to address performance issues, and the results of such improvement activities. These ongoing activities are an essential component of quality improvement activities and provide broad outreach opportunities and a forum for discussing whether or how to institutionalize improvements as a part of continuous improvement.
- **Disseminate Lessons Learned and Best Practices** – DoD is disseminating lessons learned and best practices to relay valuable information for resolving problems and addressing issues. DoD is exploring web-based communication tools to disseminate information as well as receive queries for lessons learned, best practices, and other informational needs.

**Status:** Working. In addition to the above listing of quality improvement activities that occurred during FY 2013 and FY 2014 (to date), DoD is also collecting information from the Military Departments to identify and track their quality improvement activities. DoD and the Military Departments will continue to capture and share quality improvement activities to further improve performance across the DES process.

### **3. SUMMARY**

The Department is committed to implementing the DES QAP as outlined in the August 2013 plan reported to Congress and has made significant progress in meeting the planned milestones. Additional case reviews are a key component of the quality assurance program; in-process reviews are ongoing and post-process and consistency reviews will be implemented in phases during FY 2015. The DES QAP supports the disability evaluation staffs in their understanding and execution of the very complex business of disability evaluation, and ensures that the MEBs and PEBs reach accurate and consistent disability decisions. The Department recognizes quality assurance is an ongoing process, and is a crucial component within the disability evaluation process in achieving more accurate and consistent decisions and outcomes. DoD's DES QAP will further enhance procedural equity by establishing additional safeguards to influence accurate and consistent decisions, and should provide assurance to Service members that they will receive consistent and equitable decisions throughout the DES process. Ultimately, more accurate and consistent decisions throughout the disability evaluation processes should result in a better overall disability evaluation experience for Service members. Once fully operational, the Department's DES QAP will provide a standardized, comprehensive, and multidimensional framework for the Military Departments.



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## APPENDIX 1: NOTIONAL ACCURACY SAMPLE SIZE NUMBERS BY REGION

**Table 1-1: IOC – Illustrative Notional Caseloads Stratified by Military Department Region**

Confidence Level: 90%							
Margin of Error: +/- 10							
MEB & PEB	Total # Cases	# Regions	Region	Sample # Cases/Region/Year	Sample # Cases/Region/Month	Total Sample # Cases/Year	Total Sample # Cases/Month
Army	11110	3	WRMC	65	5	199	17
			SRMC	66	6		
			NRMC	67	6		
DoN	5624	3	W	66	6	181	15
			NCA	49	4		
			E	66	6		
AF	2825	3	Ov	53	4	181	15
			Op	65	6		
			FS	63	5		

**Key:**

- Army (Department of the Army)
  - WRMC- Western Region Medical Command
  - SRMC- Southern Region Medical Command
  - NRMC- Northern Region Medical Command
- DoN (Department of the Navy)
  - W- West
  - NCA- National Capital Area
  - E- East
- AF (Department of the Air Force)
  - Ov- Overseas Major Air Command
  - Op- Operational Major Air Command
  - FS- Force Support Major Air Command

**Table 1-2: FOC – Illustrative Notional Caseloads Stratified by Military Department Region**

Confidence Level: 95%							
Margin of Error: +- 5							
MEB & PEB	Total # Cases	# Regions	Region	Sample # Cases/Region/Year	Sample # Cases/Region/Month	Total Sample # Cases/Year	Total Sample # Cases/Month
Army	11110	3	WRMC	347	29	1042	87
			SRMC	342	29		
			NRMC	353	39		
DoN	5624	3	W	332	27	799	67
			NCA	123	11		
			E	344	29		
AF	2825	3	Ov	147	12	728	61
			Op	314	26		
			FS	267	22		

**Key:**

Army (Department of the Army)

WRMC- Western Region Medical Command

SRMC- Southern Region Medical Command

NRMC- Northern Region Medical Command

DoN (Department of the Navy)

W- West

NCA- National Capital Area

E- East

AF (Department of the Air Force)

Ov- Overseas Major Air Command

Op- Operational Major Air Command

FS- Force Support Major Air Command