



Veterans' Employment Initiative
Operational Plan

FY 2010 - 2012

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*"The Federal Government will thereby help lead by example in promoting Veterans' employment."
—President Obama, Executive Order 13518, Employment of Veterans in the Federal Government*

Introduction

On November 9, 2009, President Obama signed Executive Order 13518, *Employment of Veterans in the Federal Government*, to enhance and promote employment opportunities for Veterans within the Federal Government. As a member of the Council on Veterans' Employment, the NRC is participating in the Veterans' Employment Initiative as outlined in the following Operational Plan. The NRC Veterans' Employment Initiative Operational Plan outlines the NRC's specific goals to fully support this initiative.

The Government-wide Veterans' Recruitment and Employment Strategic Plan for FY2010-FY2012, as developed by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), is centered on four comprehensive areas of focus, outlined in the Executive Order for the *Employment of Veterans in the Federal Government*:

- ❑ Leadership Commitment – establishes a governance structure and infrastructure dedicated solely to the employment of Veterans in the Federal Government
- ❑ Skills Development and Employment – focuses on providing employment counseling and aligning the talents and aspirations of Veterans and transitioning service members with civil service career opportunities
- ❑ Marketing Veterans' Employment – creates a marketing campaign targeted to Veterans and transitioning service members on the benefits of continuing their careers with the Federal civil service as well as targeted to hiring officials on how Veterans can meet skill demands in their organizations
- ❑ Information Gateway – creates a single-source website for disseminating accurate and consistent Veterans' employment information and resources for Veterans, human resources (HR) professionals, and hiring officials

According to the Department of Labor, unemployment continues to be a pervasive problem in the Veteran community. Among young male Veterans, aged 18 to 24 years old, the unemployment rate in 2009 hit 21.1%, compared to 16.6% among their non-Veteran counterparts. Veterans entering the job market are at a disadvantage for a number of reasons, including problems translating military training into civilian skills and not knowing how to market oneself in the civilian work environment.

This Government-wide strategy will be updated every three years and will seek to address barriers to the employment of Veterans within the executive branch.

Key Definitions

A Veteran is defined by 5 U.S.C. 2108 as an individual who served on active duty in the armed forces during a war, in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized, or during any period so designated by law. However, not all Veterans are considered Veterans when applying for Federal civil employment, making this a potentially complex issue for Veteran job seekers.

Veterans' preference is the means by which eligible Veterans are given preference in appointment over other job applicants. While Veterans' preference does not guarantee a Veteran a job, it can provide either a 10-point or a 5-point advantage in a numerical rating and ranking system, depending upon the details of active duty service. Further, only Veterans discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions are eligible, and retired members of the armed forces do not qualify unless they are disabled Veterans or Veterans who retired below the rank of major. Veterans' preference consists of giving qualified, eligible Veterans an advantage over others in a competitive examination, by placing the Veteran at the top of a category. This can apply during the competitive examining process for excepted service appointments. This includes Veterans' Recruitment Appointments, Schedule A for Disabled, and Nuclear Safety Professional Development Program (NSPDP) positions. It does not apply to internal promotion procedures or transfers or reassignments. Preference eligibles include certain Veterans due to qualifying service, Veterans with a service-connected disability due to active duty, and certain spouses, widows, widowers, and mothers of deceased or disabled Veterans. A number of resources are available to assist Veterans in determining their eligibility for Veterans' preference, such as the Department of Labor's Veterans Preference Advisor, or the resources available to Veterans provided by OPM at <http://fedshirevets.gov/job/vetpref/index.aspx>.

For additional details on Special Hiring Authorities for Veterans, see Appendix A.

Finally, a disabled Veteran is defined by 38 U.S.C. 2021(3) as either a Veteran who is entitled to compensation under the laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs or a person who was discharged or released from active military duty because of a service-connected disability. Disabled Veterans receive the 10-point preference eligible rating regardless of their disability rating.

Current State

Currently, documented Veterans comprise 20% of the NRC total workforce, with the percentages for specific offices ranging from 0 to 40.6%. However, given the complexity around defining a Veteran and Veterans' preference, these figures are likely underestimates, as Veterans may not be aware of their own Veteran status or the benefits to which they are entitled. In order to better identify Veterans, the NRC is currently surveying all employees to inquire whether they have had previous experience in the armed forces, and if so, a follow-up meeting is being held to learn more about the employee's service and Veteran status, and provide information and resources regarding Veterans' benefits. This should not only provide more accurate accounting for the NRC Veteran workforce, but also help individual employees understand the benefits available to them based on previous service. Additionally, HR staff have recently received training regarding the defining characteristics of Veterans to ensure that all new employees with Veteran status are annotated properly, ensuring that the NRC's Veterans' initiatives reach these individuals.

FY 2011 Veteran Hiring Goals – As of October 1, 2010

In accordance with the Council on Veterans Employment Memorandum, dated September 20, 2010, the NRC has established the following Veteran hiring goals for FY 2011:

- 23 percent of total hires for FY 2011 will be Veterans
- 5 percent of total hires for FY 2011 will be disabled Veterans

The following plan lays out the activities the NRC will undertake to maintain and demonstrate its commitment to Veterans' employment through discrete goals and actions.

NRC Veterans' Employment Initiative Goals

Leadership Commitment

NRC Operational Goal 1

Establish NRC leadership commitment to support the Veterans' Initiative by communicating the goals and benefits.

Government-wide Strategic Goal

Ensure Federal leaders advocate the value and importance of hiring Veterans in the Federal Government.

Government-wide Strategy

Create advocates for Veterans' employment within each Federal agency.

Goal Overview. NRC Operational Goal 1 seeks to establish the NRC leadership commitment needed to create the Veterans program infrastructure and foundation, and execute the program initiatives. NRC leadership commitment is essential to accomplishing the NRC's Veterans' initiative goals.

NRC leadership will champion the Veterans program throughout the organization by communicating not only the goals and benefits of the program, but also enthusiasm for the program to create buy-in and community support for program initiatives. Leadership will emphasize and encourage an NRC community that values the skills and talents that Veterans bring to the workforce.

Actions. To build a governance structure within the NRC to provide leadership and accountability for Veterans employment, the NRC will:

- ✓ ***Develop leadership support and community buy-in.*** To implement this strategy, the NRC must first select a Veterans' Employment Initiative Champion. The NRC Chairman will also champion the program, communicating his support of Veterans' employment to all NRC staff. In support of the Veterans Initiative, the NRC Chairman, Gregory B. Jaczko, sent a detailed memo to all NRC employees outlining his support of the Executive Order and the NRC's specific activities related to Veterans' employment initiatives. This memo, included as a NRC Yellow Announcements, was signed and dated April 12, 2010.
- ✓ ***Monitor the NRC workforce, culture, and attitudes related to Veterans' employment.*** As the goal and purpose of the NRC Veterans Initiative is to demonstrate a commitment to Veterans' employment, the Champion will monitor the impact that initiative actions have on the workforce. This can be done by monitoring workforce composition, as well as obtaining feedback from hiring managers and Veteran candidates. Many of the Indicators of Progress highlighted throughout this Report will provide ongoing data around this action, but the NRC may consider adding more formal methods of collecting cultural data, such as an organizational climate survey.

Action Items	Action Steps
Develop leadership support and community buy-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Appoint a NRC Veterans' Initiative Champion with agency-wide authority to serve as an advocate for program activities ✓ The NRC Chairman sends memo supporting Veterans' employment initiative to the NRC workforce ✓ Develop and publish communications to convey leadership support for program initiatives
Monitor NRC workforce statistics, culture and attitudes with regard to Veterans' employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Analyze the NRC workforce data to determine baseline Veterans' employment data ✓ Identify program risks and barriers to success to develop the appropriate mitigation strategies ✓ Maintain accurate statistics regarding the NRC's Veteran workforce ✓ Consider implementing a periodic organizational climate survey to monitor employee attitudes and culture as it relates to Veterans employment

Indicators of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The NRC's Chairman sends memo to the NRC workforce supporting the Veterans' Initiative by April 2010 ✓ The NRC's Veterans' Employment Operational Plan is submitted to OPM by April 2010 ✓ The NRC appoints a Veterans' Employment Champion as the leadership advocate for Veterans' employment at NRC by April 2010 ✓ Baseline data of current Veterans' employment is developed by July 2010 ✓ Strategies for overcoming barriers to program success are developed by August 2010 ✓ Analysis of NRC workforce feedback about program and activities is predominately positive over time

Skills Development and Employment

NRC Operational Goal 2

Increase the Veteran candidate pool and maintain the percentage of Veteran candidates hired into NRC careers.

Government-wide Strategic Goal

Align Veterans' and transitioning service members' skills and career aspirations to Federal employment opportunities.

Government-wide Strategy

Improve Veterans' and transitioning service members' success in obtaining and maintaining a Federal Career.

Goal Overview. The best way for the NRC to meet the critical staffing needs for high-demand occupations in which Veterans are interested is to align Veterans' and transitioning service members' skills with employment opportunities. Veterans are excellent candidates for these positions based on the skills and education they received during their service. In addition, many Veterans have extra training and education received through military-funded education opportunities in exchange for time served or through the GI Bill. This goal identifies ways the NRC can match its staffing requirements and recruiting activities to the skills found in the Veteran population.

Actions. To implement this goal, the NRC has identified three main actions areas that align with the recruitment lifecycle phases: Plan, Target, and Attract and Hire:

- ✓ **Plan.** The NRC will identify mission critical occupational skills that can be found in the military and Veteran community. The NRC will leverage OPM's interactive program (as well as other resources available through the Departments of Labor and Defense) to translate military skills to Federal civilian occupations to determine how the NRC's competencies best align with the skills and experiences of military occupations.

The NRC currently partners with a number of organizations to participate in programs and activities that provide employment assistance to Veterans and disabled Veterans. One such program, the DOD Operation Warfighter, is designed to provide recuperating service members with meaningful activity outside of the hospital environment to expedite healing and provide a means of transition into the civilian workforce. The NRC participated in four Operation Warfighter career fairs during FY 2009, and as a result, four recuperating Veterans were hired into temporary appointments. Additionally, the NRC participated in the Veterans Administration's (VA) Vet Success Career Fair in Baltimore, Maryland, which focuses on recruiting participants of the Non-Paid Work Experience Program. The NRC will continue to participate in programs such as Operation Warfighter and the Vet Success Career Fair, and will seek out additional opportunities to partner with organizations and programs such as the VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program.

The NRC is also considering the design and implementation of a program similar to the Nuclear Safety Professional Development Program (NSPDP), but targeted towards Veterans. The NSPD Program attracts candidates that have an interest in working with the NRC and a relevant background, and provides a structured training and development track that provides both broad

and specialized insight into NRC operations, and typically involves rotational assignments. At the end of the program, the successful candidate is then placed into a career ladder position. Building on this model, the NRC is considering the feasibility of bringing Veterans with relevant experience into a developmental track with similar activities and structure, with the ultimate goal of preparing Veterans for hire into a career ladder position.

Finally, while the majority of ongoing and proposed recruitment activities focus on Veterans, the NRC will also explore methods of reaching the military spouses and family members of Veterans who are also eligible for special hiring authorities. The NRC will explore the resources available to this group and, as with Veterans, provide additional information and resources to highlight opportunities available at the NRC through website links. Specifically, the NRC will use the soon-to-be available OPM Resume Databank (which will contain military spouse and family member resumes) to search for potential candidates.

- ✓ **Target and attract.** The NRC will ensure that outreach activities are designed such that they can be easily tailored to the specific communities and skill sets targeted. For example, many colleges and universities have Offices of Veteran Services or Veterans' Affairs. In future on-campus recruiting efforts, the NRC will reach out to these offices in advance of the visit, to ensure that campus Veterans receive information about the upcoming event. Additionally, targeted recruitment information could be provided to those students entering into military service programs, such as the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), educating students about potential career opportunities available after their service commitments. The NRC will also consider attending the annual Service Academy Career Conference to target transitioning service academy graduates, including well-educated professionals with technical degrees. Job fairs targeted specifically to Veterans (e.g., the Corporate Immersion for Wounded Warriors job fair) may also be useful avenues for targeting and attracting qualified Veteran candidates.

Finally, the NRC is in the process of revising vacancy announcement templates to ensure that they are written in plain English and minimize NRC- or Government-specific jargon. This will allow Veterans to better assess how their skills translate into NRC job requirements.

- ✓ **Hire.** Numerous hiring authorities can be used to appoint Veterans and the NRC already utilizes several special hiring authorities for targeted outreach and diversity promotion. To help prepare Veterans for the documentation process involved in using a special hiring authority, the NRC will also explore adding links to resources, such as www.Fedshirevets.gov, which articulates the hiring authorities for Veterans. For additional information on these special hiring authorities, see Appendix A.

As previously discussed, a commonly cited cause of the high rate of unemployed Veterans is difficulty translating military skills and experience into effective resumes for civilian jobs. As a result, the NRC is identifying in-house experts who can assist in evaluating resumes received from Veterans and making connections between military skills and NRC job requirements.

Finally, for those Veterans hired into NRC positions, the NRC will explore the resources available throughout the Federal government related to assisting Veterans in their transition into civilian employment, as well as identify NRC-specific onboarding activities that could help acclimate and integrate Veterans into the NRC workforce. The NRC recently began consideration of a Disability Strategy, which would also help identify assistive technologies and accommodations that could help disabled Veterans transition into the NRC workforce.

Actions Items	Action Steps
Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify mission critical occupational skills that can be found in the military and Veteran community ✓ Identify any barriers to employment of Veterans with disabilities ✓ Consider the implementation of the NRC Disability Strategy to help identify assistive technologies and accommodations for disabled Veterans ✓ Explore additional use of special hiring authorities to appoint Veterans ✓ Explore the feasibility of developing a Veteran-specific program in the model of the NSPD Program ✓ Identify opportunities to target military spouses and family members
Target and attract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coordinate with offices serving Veterans and ROTC students at colleges and universities ✓ Revise NRC vacancy announcements to ensure use of plain English ✓ Leverage marketing and branding efforts and materials to target specific communities ✓ Explore program collaboration opportunities with the Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense
Hire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure information on hiring authorities is accessible and available on the NRC website and in recruiting information ✓ Utilize appropriate and effective hiring authorities ✓ Develop strategies for reviewing/translating resumes from Veterans ✓ Explore existing resources to help Veterans transition into the Federal workplace and provide new Veteran hires with this information ✓ Develop and provide onboarding activities specific to Veterans

Indicators of Progress	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recruiting events, activities, and materials are targeted to specific Veterans and military organizations (e.g., campus Veterans' groups) by July 2010 ✓ Hiring information specific to Veterans is available on the NRC website by July 2010 ✓ Additional resources are identified to aid the transition of disabled Veterans by November 2010 (i.e., the implementation of the NRC Disability Strategy) ✓ The use of appropriate special hiring authorities to appoint Veterans to Federal positions increases over time 	

NRC Operational Goal 3

Develop and implement programs to maximize the retention of Veterans within the NRC.

Government-wide Strategic Goal

Align Veterans' and transitioning service members' skills and career aspirations to Federal employment opportunities.

Government-wide Strategy

Improve Veterans' and transitioning service members' success in obtaining and maintaining a Federal Career.

Goal Overview. Beyond ensuring that Veterans have access to career opportunities at the NRC through the targeted recruiting and hiring efforts previously described, an additional facet of Skills Development and Employment is the retention of successful Veteran employees.

The NRC does an outstanding job of retaining employees across the board, with an annual, organization-wide attrition rate of less than 5%. Of the known losses, approximately half of these employees were retirement-eligible for 5-10 years before ultimately separating from the organization. However, as the NRC is committed to maintaining this record of excellent retention, particularly with regard to the Veteran community, the NRC will continue to monitor retention statistics and take additional steps as necessary. In addition, the NRC will continue to publicize the various resources available to Veterans, in order to ensure that these employees have the support they need to maintain a successful career at the NRC.

Actions. To achieve this goal, the NRC has identified the following key actions:

- ✓ ***Increase awareness of employee assistance and mental health resources for Veterans at the NRC.*** The NRC will communicate with Employee Assistance Program (EAP) professionals to make them aware of the Veterans Initiatives described in this plan and ensure that, when providing services to Veterans, they make special efforts to identify applicable services for which they are eligible.

The NRC will advertise the NRC Health Center as a convenient and free alternative to the VA clinic for routine medical care (e.g., allergy shots). In addition, new onboarding information specific to Veterans will be created, which will ensure that information regarding the various resources available to Veterans is provided.

- ✓ ***Improve awareness of the full range of VA services and benefits to which Veterans are entitled.*** In addition to ensuring that EAP professionals refer Veterans to the free services offered to them by the VA and other sources, the NRC will identify other opportunities to educate NRC employees, such as HR employees and hiring managers, on additional resources available to assist Veterans.

Actions Items	Action Steps
Increase awareness of employee assistance and mental health resources for Veterans at the NRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make employees aware of the NRC and the Federal government’s resources available to support mental health ✓ Continue to publicize the NRC’s Employee Assistance Program as a free and confidential service available to all employees and their families ✓ Educate EAP professionals on how to identify Veterans and the services to which they are entitled ✓ Promote the NRC Health Center as a convenient alternative to the VA clinic for Veterans’ health needs
Improve employee awareness of the full range of VA services and benefits to which Veterans are entitled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure that NRC employees, especially recently discharged veterans, know how to locate information on Veterans benefits (e.g., through www.FedsHireVets.gov website) ✓ Ensure that EAP professionals refer Veterans to free services offered by VA

Indicators of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Veterans’ awareness and utilization of the NRC’s employee assistance and mental health resources is increased ✓ Veterans indicate high levels of satisfaction with support and resources available to them ✓ On-boarding for newly hired Veterans includes information on relevant benefits ✓ EAP professionals are aware of VA services available to Veterans

Marketing Veterans' Employment

NRC Operational Goal 4

Market the NRC's support for employment of Veterans and military family members.

Government-wide Strategic Goal

Ensure Federal agencies view Veterans' skills and dedication as essential in meeting mission objectives.

Government-wide Strategy

Promote the Federal government to Veterans, transitioning service members, and their spouses as the "Employer of Choice."

Goal Overview. The President's Veterans' Employment Initiative promotes the Federal government as the "Employer of Choice" for Veterans and their family members, and endorses the value that Veterans bring to the Federal workforce. To deliver a successful Veterans program, the NRC must enhance both internal and external awareness of its organizational commitment to the employment of Veterans and associated program initiatives. NRC Operational Goal 3 builds on the leadership commitment activities articulated in Operational Goal 1, as well as other NRC initiatives related to outreach and broadening participation efforts, and the current NRC *Best Places to Work* branding and marketing initiatives.

This goal focuses on creating external awareness and promoting the NRC as both a Federal government "Employer of Choice" and "military-friendly" employer via targeted and tailored print and electronic marketing materials. Promotion can also be accomplished by enhancing the NRC's presence in the military community through linkages with organizations that provide services to Veterans, Veterans with disabilities, and their families. Internal awareness can be generated through marketing materials and activities, as well as through employee championship throughout the organization.

Actions. To further build external and internal awareness of the NRC Veterans program, the NRC will execute the following actions and tasks:

- ✓ **Build external awareness.** Veteran-specific employment and enhancement information will be added to the NRC website (e.g., the NRC Employment Opportunities page, www.NRC.gov/about-NRC/employment.html) to communicate the NRC's commitment to Veterans' employment to the general public and further differentiate the NRC from other employers. This includes specific information for Veterans who may not be aware of their own Veteran status or of the specific hiring authorities for which they qualify. The NRC will ensure that a link to OPM's Veterans' Employment website is included on all job opportunity announcements.

The NRC print marketing materials will be tailored for Veteran marketing and outreach events, to focus on attracting the Veterans community to the NRC, emphasizing the NRC's commitment to employing Veterans, and promoting the value and benefits that Veterans bring to the NRC workforce. The NRC will also look to link its website with other websites for transitioning military members and Veterans, thus establishing an online presence and virtual partnerships with Veteran-related organizations. One such example is Corporate Gray, which links employers with transitioning and former military members through job fairs, workshops, and other virtual mechanisms.

The NRC will also focus on growing its presence as an “Employer of Choice” in the Veteran and military transitioning communities. Such a presence can be accomplished by leveraging and expanding current recruiting and outreach activities, as well as putting links to the NRC careers webpage on the websites of Veterans’ organizations.

The NRC will investigate the feasibility of establishing presence within the military community through no cost volunteer programs and activities (e.g., working with disabled or homeless Veterans). Examples include volunteer partnerships with organizations such as the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program Organization and the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC. Similarly, the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) represents an opportunity to increase the visibility of the NRC in the Veterans community. Specifically, the NRC will ensure that that Veterans’ charities, particularly those that work with homeless and unemployed Veterans, are included in the CFC communications.

- ✓ **Promote internal awareness.** Concurrent to developing external awareness, the NRC must also create internal awareness of its Veterans’ program goals and initiatives. Internal awareness activities will center on leveraging key organizational champions to promote the value that Veterans can and do bring to the NRC workforce and how NRC organizations can best utilize Veterans’ employment activities and opportunities.

The NRC is particularly interested in developing Veterans’ Day initiatives, designed to raise awareness of Veterans in the workplace. In addition, the NRC will investigate the feasibility of creating special recognitions of Veteran status that employees could include in their email signatures or on their office name plates. Finally, as previously described, including Veterans’ organizations in the CFC communications will enable NRC employees to provide support and recognition for the importance of these organizations.

Additionally, the NRC can use existing internal groups, such as the Advisory Committee for Employees with Disabilities, to continually highlight opportunities for disabled Veterans, and ensure that the NRC creates an environment that will improve the hiring, advancement, and retention of disabled Veterans.

Action Items	Action Steps
Build external awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Update NRC websites (e.g., the NRC Employment Opportunities page, www.NRC.gov/about-NRC/employment.html) to reflect the organization’s commitment to Veterans’ employment opportunities ✓ Include a link to OPM’s Veterans’ Employment website on all job opportunity announcements ✓ Tailor NRC electronic and print marketing materials to attract Veterans and military family members ✓ Explore the feasibility of posting NRC information and links on websites for Veterans and transitioning military personnel ✓ Build on current outreach activities to include a variety of military transition organizations and related activities ✓ Consider the feasibility of establishing presence within the military community through no cost volunteer programs and activities (e.g., working with homeless Veterans) ✓ Add or ensure that Veterans’ organizations are included in the Combined

	Federal Campaign for employee support
Promote internal awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage Veterans program champions to share messages throughout the NRC ✓ Spotlight successful outreach efforts and activities ✓ Facilitate access to information, counseling, and transition support for NRC Veterans as required ✓ Add or ensure that Veterans' organizations are included in the Combined Federal Campaign for employee support

Indicators of Progress

- ✓ The NRC experiences an increase in the number of Veterans applying for and inquiring about jobs
- ✓ All job opportunity announcements include a link to OPM's Veterans' Employment website
- ✓ New partnership opportunities are identified to extend the NRC's access to Veterans

Information Gateway

NRC Operational Goal 5

Engage and educate HR professionals, hiring managers, and Veterans.

Government-wide Strategic Goal

Ensure Veterans, transitioning service members and their families, HR professionals, and hiring managers receive accurate and consistent information regarding Veterans' employment.

Government-wide Strategy

Provide accurate and consistent information to Veterans, transitioning service members, military spouses, HR professionals, and hiring managers.

Goal Overview. To implement this strategy, the NRC will ensure that HR professionals, hiring managers, and Veterans are provided with accurate and consistent information about Veterans' employment. A critical outcome of this strategy is that all NRC HR professionals and hiring managers are well informed in the use and application of Veterans' preference, hiring authorities, and reasonable accommodation.

Actions. In order to ensure that all stakeholders are receiving accurate and consistent information regarding Veterans' Employment, the NRC will undertake the following actions:

- ✓ **Inform and educate.** Linking to OPM's website to provide a consistent source for Veterans' employment information is the first step in implementing this strategy. The NRC will also ensure that accurate information and resources on Veterans' employment are easily accessible across the organization. To ensure HR professionals and hiring managers are well informed in all areas of Veterans' employment, training will be provided on the use of Veterans' preference and special hiring authorities, employment of Veterans and military spouses, and reasonable accommodation for disabled Veterans. The NRC will utilize the resources to be provided by OPM in this area, ensuring that all new supervisors receive this training. As a complement to this training, HR will consider offering informal brown-bag sessions to address hiring managers' questions in this area, on a continuous basis. Further education and training may take a variety of forms, including sharing information electronically, participating in webinars, and attending conferences and outreach events.

In performing these educational activities, the NRC will ensure that both Office Directors and hiring managers (i.e., Branch Chiefs) understand and support this initiative. Office Directors will be responsible for setting the tone and communicating the value to their specific organizational components, while hiring managers will help ensure that the activities highlighted as part of this initiative are implemented on a routine basis during the recruiting and hiring process. Having multiple layers of management involved, communicating, and supporting the Veterans initiative will be critical to the success of the program.

- ✓ **Engage.** The NRC will also identify innovative ways to inform and engage new employees (especially Veterans and transitioning service members), leaders, and managers in this important initiative. The NRC will explore methods of integrating relevant information into existing onboarding materials for all new hires.

Action Items	Action Steps
Inform and educate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Link the NRC's employment website to OPM's Veterans' Employment Website ✓ Leverage technology to facilitate information sharing ✓ Provide annual training to HR professionals and hiring managers on Veterans' employment ✓ Identify opportunities to inform and train new employees, leaders, and managers about Veterans' employment at the NRC
Engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consider ways to engage new employees about Veterans' employment at the NRC ✓ Identify methods of integrating information into existing onboarding materials

Indicators of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ NRC employment website is linked to OPM's Veterans' website by July 2010 ✓ The NRC's Annual Human Capital Management Report is submitted to OPM by December 15, 2010, to provide an overview of program accomplishments ✓ NRC training and information for HR professionals and hiring managers is developed and delivered by the end of FY2010 and annually thereafter

Appendix A: Additional Information on Special Hiring Authorities for Veterans

The following section provides an overview of the three special hiring authorities available to Veterans.

Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA)

Veterans' Recruitment Appointment is an excepted authority that allows agencies to appoint eligible Veterans without competition at any grade level, up to and including a GG-11 or equivalent under the following conditions:

- The Veteran is in receipt of a campaign badge for service during a war or in a campaign or expedition **OR**
- The Veteran is disabled, **OR**
- The Veteran is in receipt of an Armed Forces Service Medal for participation in a military operation, **OR**
- The Veteran is a recently separated Veteran (within the last 3 years), **AND**
- The Veteran separated under honorable conditions (this means an honorable or general discharge)

Veterans Employment Opportunity Act of 1998, as amended (VEOA)

VEOA allows Veterans to apply for positions open to 'status' candidates, or current competitive service employees. To be eligible for VEOA, the Veteran must meet the following conditions:

- The latest discharge must be issued under honorable conditions (this means an honorable or general discharge), **AND** the Veteran must be either:
- A preference eligible (defined in title 5 U.S.C. 2108(3)), **OR**
- A Veteran who substantially completed 3 or more years of active service.

For internal promotions under merit promotion procedures, announcements must state VEOA is applicable. As VEOA eligible Veterans, candidates are not subject to geographic area of consideration limitations, but must rate and rank among the best qualified when compared to current employee applicants in order to be considered for appointment. Veterans' preference does not apply to internal agency actions such as promotions, transfers, reassignments, and reinstatements and current or former Federal employees meeting VEOA eligibility can apply. Further, active service under VEOA means active duty in a uniformed service and includes full-time training duty, annual training duty, full-time National Guard duty, and attendance, while in the active service, at a school designated as a service school by law or by the Secretary concerned. Finally, preference eligible under VEOA includes those family members entitled to derived preference, and Veterans are responsible for providing acceptable documentation of preference or eligibility.

30% or More Disabled Veteran

This special hiring authority allows any Veteran with a 30% or more service-connected disability to be non-competitively appointed if they meet the following conditions:

- Retired from active military service with a service-connected disability rating of 30% or more **OR**
- Have a rating by the Department of Veterans Affairs showing a compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more.

This hiring authority can be used for permanent, temporary, and term positions, and there are no grade restrictions. When used for a permanent position, the Veteran will be placed on a first time limited appointment for at least 60 days and then converted to a permanent appointment at the manager's

discretion. As with all other special hiring authorities, the Veteran is responsible for providing acceptable documentation.