



National Cemetery Administration

FY 2011 – FY 2015 NCA Strategic Plan

Mission

NCA honors Veterans and their families with final resting places in national shrines and with lasting tributes that commemorate their service and sacrifice to our Nation.

Vision

NCA will be the model of excellence for burial and memorials for our Nation's Veterans and their families.

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Executive Summary

The FY 2011 – FY 2015 NCA Strategic Plan sets forth the National Cemetery Administration’s 5-year strategic vision for improving the ways in which we honor Veterans with final resting places in national shrines and by commemorating their service to our Nation. This plan also supports the FY 2011-2015 VA Strategic Plan Refresh and VA’s mission to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan – by serving and honoring the men and women who are America’s Veterans.

The NCA Strategic Plan was developed from input provided by senior leadership from every office and service within NCA. Goals, objectives, and strategies from the FY 2008 – FY 2012 NCA Strategic Plan were revalidated. New strategies and performance measures were developed to reflect both the current status and future direction of NCA. The resulting document provides a strategic roadmap for guiding NCA as an organization and for improving the manner in which NCA serves Veterans and their families. This NCA strategic plan also provides critical guidance to NCA’s 5 Memorial Service Network Offices and 131 national cemeteries in the development of their strategic and operational business plans.

The NCA Strategic Plan is a comprehensive effort that sets strategic initiatives for improving the performance of NCA’s main missions in the areas of burials, memorials, and maintaining national shrines. The plan also identifies other important initiatives in areas such as human resources, training, workforce development, financial management, and contracting that are necessary to supporting the direct delivery of benefits to Veterans and to ensuring that NCA maintains its position as one of the most highly regarded organizations, in both the public and private sectors, in terms of customer satisfaction.

Ways We Serve Veterans

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) buries eligible Veterans and their dependent family members in national cemeteries and maintains the graves and their environs as national shrines in perpetuity; assists States in providing burial benefits to Veterans through the State Cemetery Grants Program; furnishes headstones and markers for graves of Veterans in national, State, and private cemeteries; furnishes medallions for privately purchased headstones and markers that signify the Veterans' service; and, provides Presidential Memorial Certificates to the next of kin and other loved ones in recognition of deceased Veterans' military service.

When a Veteran dies, it is important that this information is properly captured within the VA system. To ensure this, NCA has developed a First Notice of Death Division (FNOD) dedicated to properly capturing Veteran death notices within VA's computer systems. By processing these FNODs in a timely manner, VA is able to notify the next of kin of important benefits as well as reduce the improper payment of benefits. In the future, this process will expand to eliminate prescription orders and patient appointments for those Veterans who are no longer living.

Core Values

- Compassion - We provide compassionate and caring service to our Nation's Veterans, their families, and loved ones.
 - Service - We work together as a highly motivated well-trained, professional team to provide world-class service.
 - Respect - We treat every person in every circumstance with honesty, patience, respect, and understanding.
 - Stewardship - We ensure responsible stewardship of those resources entrusted to us.
 - Excellence - We seek continuous improvement in our programs and services.
 - Integrity - We value employees and ensure that they have a safe working environment in which to serve our Nation's Veterans and their families.
 - Engagement - We listen to those we serve and to those who serve with us.
 - Collaboration - We cultivate partnerships that enhance benefits provided to our Nation's Veterans by a grateful Nation.
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Strategic Planning in NCA

Although strategic planning is required by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) OF 1993, NCA has recognized its value since 1990, when the first NCA strategic plan was published. The purpose of strategic planning in NCA is to improve management and efficiency by focusing on the primary goals and objectives necessary to accomplish our mission. Strategic planning strengthens NCA's credibility within the Department, and with Congressional decision-makers, by identifying not only the processes by which NCA goals and objectives will be attained, but by including objective measures of performance. NCA has developed an evolving strategic management process that includes leadership from top management and participation by employees at all levels of the organization. This Strategic Plan was developed with input from all levels of NCA, including representatives from Central Office, the Memorial Service Networks, and the national cemeteries. It takes into account information acquired from customer and stakeholder input; the Departmental Environmental Scan, a periodic review of the environmental factors, including events, trends, directions and outside issues that impact on strategic issues; and initiatives inspired by GPRA.

The National Cemetery Administration Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2011 through 2015, presented herein, provides a clear focus on NCA's mission, the primary goals and objectives associated with the accomplishment of this mission, the strategies that will be used, and measures of performance to demonstrate progress toward the achievement of the goals and objectives. The National Cemetery Administration supports the goals of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and is committed to honor and serve Veterans in life and memorialize them in death for their sacrifices on behalf of the Nation; contribute to the public health, socioeconomic well-being and history of the Nation; and, create an environment that fosters the delivery of One VA world-class service to Veterans and their families through effective communication and management of people, technology, business processes, and financial resources.

Stakeholders

The stakeholders of VA's burial programs are varied and diverse. The list begins with those who are the direct beneficiaries of VA burial benefits: Veterans and their families. Veterans service organizations and professionals in the funeral and mortuary industry are also noteworthy stakeholders. Various components of the Department of Defense (DOD) and members of active duty and reserve forces comprise yet another significant stakeholder group. In addition, members of a number of environmental groups, historical and genealogical organizations, as well as the general public must be included.

The inclusion of Veterans and their families as primary stakeholders is obvious. The inclusion of families takes into account the significance of next of kin, since not only eligible Veterans but also their eligible family members may receive burial benefits. It is

important that these Veterans, widows, widowers, and other family members are treated with compassion and dignity at the time of their bereavement and when they return to visit the gravesite, and that the cemetery's entire appearance is maintained in a manner befitting a national shrine.

Veterans service organizations must be recognized in their role of stakeholders and partners in the VA mission. These organizations act as a voice for Veterans and their families and as advocates for their needs and expectations. At many national cemeteries, they are important partners in providing support for military funeral honors.

State governments, usually operating through their Veterans affairs departments, play an increasingly important role in providing service to Veterans and their families. By establishing and operating state Veterans cemeteries as a complement to VA national cemeteries, they provide burial options for Veterans and their families.

Funeral directors are another significant stakeholder group. These professionals are often the spokespersons for the Veteran or next of kin and are also directly involved in the delivery of VA services through the coordination of committal services and interments. Funeral directors may also assist families in applying for headstones and markers.

Private cemeteries must also be included as stakeholders. Each year, VA furnishes more than 200,000 headstones and markers for Veterans' gravesites in private cemeteries.

Veterans' families expect that appropriate military funeral honors will be provided at national cemeteries in recognition of the Veteran's service to our Nation. The provision of military funeral honors is part of the mission of DOD, but it requires a close and collaborative partnership between NCA and DOD. DOD and the uniformed forces of each branch of service must be incorporated into any list of NCA stakeholders in recognition of the important role they play in honoring those who have served.

NCA must also consider other groups of interested and concerned citizens, as well as members of the general public as stakeholders. Many of our national cemeteries date from the Nation's Civil War and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. As such, they are of interest to historical societies and individuals interested in history and genealogical research. As national shrines, national cemeteries are also visited by individuals, families, and touring groups who may not have family members interred in a national cemetery. NCA is responsible to all Americans for the prudent management of tax dollars and the sound environmental management of the land and our facilities.

Finally, it is also appropriate to recognize stakeholders within the Department: the Veterans Health Administration (VHA); the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA); and headquarters staff offices. All VA organizational elements are important partners with NCA in providing seamless service to Veterans and their families.

Assumptions, Opportunities, and Constraints

Annual Veteran deaths peaked at 665,000 in 2006 and are now slowly declining. However, with the opening of new national cemeteries, annual interments will increase from 114,400 in 2011 to approximately 120,500 in 2015, an increase of 5 percent from 2011. During this time, the total number of graves maintained is also expected to increase from 3.2 million in 2011 to nearly 3.5 million in 2015.

In 2011, NCA encompasses 131 national cemeteries and 33 other cemeterial installations. As annual interments and total gravesites used increase, cemeteries deplete their inventory of space and are no longer able to accept casketed or cremated remains of first family members for interment. This reduces the burial options available to Veterans. At the end of 2011, 71 will contain available, unassigned gravesites for the burial of both casketed and cremated remains; 16 will accept only cremated remains and remains of family members for interment in the same gravesite as a previously deceased family member; and 44 will perform only interments of family members in the same gravesite as a previously deceased family member.

By 2015, five new national cemeteries will open to serve Veterans in the areas of Central East Florida, Tallahassee, Florida; Omaha, Nebraska; Southern Colorado; and, Western New York. In addition, NCA will open 5 new columbaria-only cemeterial installations under an Urban Initiative designed to provide enhanced service to Veterans in densely populated urban areas of the country in which an existing is underutilized due to time and distance travel factors. These facilities will serve Veterans in the areas of Los Angeles, California; San Francisco Bay Area, California; New York, New York; Chicago, Illinois; and Indianapolis, Indiana. By the year 2015, five national cemeteries, Baltimore; Fort Leavenworth; Finn's Point; Nashville; and, Danville, Virginia will exhaust their supply of available, unassigned gravesites. However, overlapping service areas will reduce the potential number of Veterans losing reasonable access to a burial option because of national cemetery closings in many of these areas, particularly at Fort Leavenworth, Baltimore, and Finn's Point. Closed cemeteries will continue to accept the remains of family members for interment in the same gravesite as a previously deceased family member.

As cemetery service capabilities decrease, Veterans served by those cemeteries may lose access to burial options located within a reasonable distance of their homes. In order to ensure that burial options are provided for eligible Veterans and their family members, NCA needs to continue to develop additional national cemeteries; expand existing national cemeteries where appropriate; develop more effective use of available burial space; and encourage individual states to develop state Veterans cemeteries through the State Cemetery Grants Program.

All VA national cemeteries are valuable historic assets of our Nation and important sites for patriotic and commemorative events. NCA needs to continue to emphasize the use of VA's national cemeteries and 19th- century soldiers' lots to teach American history to students and communities, with a special emphasis on Veterans and their role in the history of our Nation. NCA also needs to continue to focus on hosting ceremonies and

memorial services at national cemeteries to honor those who made the supreme sacrifice.

NCA's Memorial Programs Service (MPS) is responsible for administering the Headstone and Marker and the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) programs. In 2010, NCA processed nearly 356,000 applications for headstones and markers for placement in national, state, other public, or private cemeteries. The number of headstone and marker applications processed is expected to be about 330,000 in 2015. NCA issued nearly 804,000 Presidential Memorial Certificates in 2010, and expects to issue more than 1 million in the year 2015.

External Factors

The following external factors could impact NCA's ability to achieve its goals.

- VA has established partnerships with states to provide Veterans and their eligible family members with burial options. It is difficult to project future activity for this program because requests for grants are generated from individual states. A state must enact legislation to commit funding to a project that will serve a clearly defined population and require state funds for maintenance in perpetuity.
- Veterans and their families may feel that their expectations concerning the committal service, including military funeral honors, were not met. Dissatisfaction with services such as military funeral honors (which are not provided by NCA) or those provided by the funeral home can adversely affect the public's perceptions regarding the quality of NCA service.
- Maintaining national cemeteries as national shrines is influenced by many different factors. As time passes, the grounds, graves, and grave markers of cemeteries experience a variety of environmental changes that may require extensive maintenance. Extremes in weather, such as excessive rain or drought, can result in or exacerbate sunken graves, sunken markers, soiled markers, inferior turf cover, weathering of columbaria; age and disease may cause the loss of mature vegetation and trees, and the construction of incompatible development adjacent to a cemetery may necessitate the installation of mitigative natural screening.

As the number of interments in national cemeteries increases, resources must be available to honor our Nation's obligation to its Veterans. These resources must include adequate funds to ensure perpetual maintenance and avoid the deterioration of the infrastructure of these national shrines. A sufficient and highly trained workforce, well-designed and fully functional information technology capabilities, and a commitment to consistently improving business processes while encouraging innovation, will be required to maintain and support high quality customer service.

Integrated Objective 1: Make it easier for Veterans and their families to receive the right benefits, meeting their expectations for quality, timeliness, and responsiveness

Goal 1. Ensure that the burial needs of Veterans and eligible family members are met.

Objective 1.A. Increase the percentage of Veterans served by a burial option within a reasonable distance of their residence.

Strategy 1. Build new national cemeteries and expand the Veterans Cemetery Grants Program.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41F/</u> <u>OCF</u> <u>M</u>	1. Establish burial operations at five new national cemeteries in currently identified areas of need (Southern Colorado; Central East Florida; Tallahassee, Florida; Omaha, Nebraska; and, Western New York).	FY 2015
<u>41E</u>	2. Establish 29 new State and Tribal Government Veterans cemeteries.	FY 2015
<u>41B</u>	3. Increase the percentage of Veterans served by a burial option in a national, State, or Tribal Government Veterans cemetery to 94 percent.	FY 2015

Objective 1.B. Ensure that there are no service delivery interruptions and improve access in areas served by existing national, State, or Tribal Government Veterans cemeteries.

Strategy 1. Ensure that a viable burial option continues at existing national cemeteries.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41F</u>	1. There will be no interruption of service because of failure to acquire land appropriate for use as a national shrine or complete a construction project at existing national cemeteries.	Ongoing

Strategy 2. Ensure that a viable burial option continues at existing State and Tribal Government Veterans cemeteries.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41E</u>	1. There will be no interruption of service at existing State or Tribal Government Veterans cemeteries because of failure of NCA to proactively manage the grants application process for cemeteries' depleting gravesites.	Ongoing

Strategy 3: Improve access in urban areas currently served by existing national cemeteries.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41F</u>	1. Establish 5 new urban satellite facilities in Los Angeles, CA, San Francisco Bay Area, CA, New York, NY, Chicago, IL, and Indianapolis, IN	FY 2015

Objective 1.C. Expand access to burial benefits to Veterans currently unserved by a burial option.

Strategy 1: Develop a rural Veteran burial benefit policy.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41B</u>	1. Develop options, draft policy, and brief SecVA on NCA recommendations.	FY 2011
<u>41B</u>	2. Incorporate a new rural Veterans policy into NCA budget requests.	FY 2014

Objective 1.D. Continually strive to meet or exceed the expectations of Veterans and their families by delivering accurate, timely, and courteous service.

Strategy 1. Ensure high levels of satisfaction with the quality of NCA customer service at national cemeteries.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. The quality of service at national cemeteries will be rated as excellent by 100 percent of respondents.	FY 2015
<u>41A</u>	2. Increase the percent of respondents who strongly agree that the quality of service is excellent to 75%.	FY 2015

Strategy 2. Confirm eligibility and schedule the committal service within a reasonable amount of time.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. Determine eligibility within 48 hours when documentation of eligible service is not provided 75 percent of the time.	FY 2015
<u>41A</u>	2. Establish a centralized staff/location to review and recommend actions on all sensitive cases and appeals (burial and headstones & markers) and administer NCA's appeals program.	FY 2012
<u>41G</u>	3. Establish a system for tracking and reporting the timeliness of scheduling committal services for State and Tribal Veterans cemeteries.	FY 2015

Strategy 3. Assess the adequacy of existing policies for providing burial and memorial benefits.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41B</u>	1. Analyze the findings from the Emerging Burial Needs Study.	FY 2012
<u>41B</u>	2. Use findings from the Emerging Burial Needs Study to develop recommendations for program and policy changes.	FY 2015
<u>41B</u>	3. Work with the VA Office of Policy and Planning to evaluate the need for and conduct a program evaluation of NCA burial programs (OPP notes there is no official schedule for program evaluations).	FY 2015

Strategy 4. Support grieving families whose loved ones are buried in a national cemetery with bereavement and counseling programs.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. Partner with VHA to increase access to bereavement/grief counseling programs to provide assistance and support for families.	FY 2012

Integrated Objective 1: Make it easier for Veterans and their families to receive the right benefits, meeting their expectations for quality, timeliness, and responsiveness

Goal 2. Provide Veterans and their families with symbolic expressions of remembrance.

Objective 2.A. Furnish quality memorialization products efficiently, accurately, and in a timely manner.

Strategy 1. Ensure that graves at national cemeteries are marked in a reasonable amount of time.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. Mark 95 percent of graves at national cemeteries within 60 days of interment.	FY 2015
<u>41A</u>	2. Mark graves at national cemeteries within an average of 27 days.	FY 2015

Strategy 2. Monitor and report levels of customer satisfaction with headstones and markers by conducting an annual survey of applicants using VA Form 1330 for headstones, markers, and medallions to be placed in other than national cemeteries.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. The quality of headstones, markers, and medallions provided by VA, will be rated as excellent by 100 percent of respondents.	FY 2015

Strategy 3: Monitor and report levels of customer satisfaction with PMCs by conducting an annual survey of applicants.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. The quality of PMCs provided by VA will be rated as excellent by 100 percent of respondents.	FY 2015

Strategy 4. Improve customer service and operations by expanding the use of information technology

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41G</u>	1. Develop and implement a process so that headstone, marker, and medallion applications can be submitted over the internet.	FY 2013
<u>41A</u>	2. Increase the number of electronic applications for headstones, markers, and medallions from private cemeteries/funeral homes to 75 percent of the total received.	FY 2015

Strategy 5. Improve the process to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of PMCs.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. Increase percentage of applications for PMCs processed within 20 days of receipt to 90 percent.	FY 2012

Strategy 6. Enhance timeliness and quality assurance for the Memorial Programs Service.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. Increase the percentage of headstones, markers, and medallions that are delivered undamaged and correctly inscribed to 98 percent.	FY 2012
<u>41A</u>	2. Increase the percentage of applications for headstones, markers, and medallions processed within 20 days to 90 percent for the graves of Veterans who are not buried in national cemeteries.	FY 2011
<u>41A</u>	3. Increase percentage of applicant assistance telephone calls answered in 60 seconds or less to 85 percent.	FY 2012
<u>41A</u>	4. Increase client satisfaction with the quality of service received from the 1-800 applicant assistance staff to 100 percent.	FY 2015

Integrated Objective 1: Make it easier for Veterans and their families to receive the right benefits, meeting their expectations for quality, timeliness, and responsiveness

Goal 3. Ensure that VA's national cemeteries and State and Tribal Government Veterans cemeteries are maintained as national shrines dedicated to preserving our Nation's history, nurturing patriotism, and honoring the service and sacrifice Veterans have made.

Objective 3.A. National, State and Tribal Government Veterans cemeteries will be maintained as national shrines consistently across the system in a manner that exceeds customer expectations.

Strategy 1. Ensure high levels of customer satisfaction with national cemetery maintenance and appearance.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. The appearance of national cemeteries will be rated as excellent by 100 percent of respondents.	FY 2015
<u>41A</u>	2. Increase the percent of respondents who strongly agree that appearance at national cemeteries is excellent to 80%.	FY 2015

Strategy 2. Ensure that grounds at national cemeteries are maintained in a manner befitting national shrines.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. Increase the percent of headstones and/or markers in national cemeteries that are at the proper height and alignment to 90 percent.	FY 2015
<u>41A</u>	2. Increase the percent of headstones, markers, and niche covers that are clean and free of debris or objectionable accumulations to 95 percent.	FY 2015
<u>41A</u>	3. Increase the percent of gravesites that have grades that are level and blend with adjacent grade levels to 95 percent.	FY 2015

Strategy 3. Educate State and Tribal Government Veterans cemeteries to meet NCA's National Shrine Commitment Operational Standards and Measures for appearance.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41E</u>	1. Establish a baseline of State and Tribal Government cemeteries assessed as compliant with NCA national shrine appearance standards through NCA Triennial Reviews.	FY 2012
<u>41E</u>	2. Increase by 3 percent above the baseline the percentage of State and Tribal Government cemeteries assessed as compliant with NCA national shrine appearance standards through NCA Triennial Reviews.	FY 2015

Strategy 4. Develop and implement ways to raise participation levels of volunteer and alternative workforces to maintain our national cemeteries as national shrines and improve administrative operations.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. Develop and distribute standardized guidance to the national cemeteries to facilitate and increase the implementation of work release and community service programs.	FY 2013
<u>41A</u>	2. Partner with VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) to enable local cemeteries to act as an agent for VAVS to recruit, register and orient volunteers for national cemeteries.	FY 2012
<u>41A</u>	3. Develop and distribute standardized guidance that enables cemeteries to promote the quality and consistency of military funeral honors.	FY 2011
<u>41A</u>	4. Increase the number of volunteers at national cemeteries. (FY 2010 baseline).	TBD
<u>41A</u>	5. Establish dedicated rifle squads at the 20 busiest cemeteries (as defined by FY 2011 interments).	FY 2015

Objective 3.B. Ensure that a comprehensive and professional historical record of NCA exists for future generations.

Strategy 1. Manage a comprehensive NCA history program.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41C</u>	1. Write a comprehensive historical analysis of NCA or its predecessor agencies, from its inception. (Vol1)	FY 2014
<u>41C</u>	2. Locate, design, fund, and establish a long-term archival storage facility with standard environmental controls.	FY 2015

Integrated Objective 2: Educate and empower Veterans and their families through proactive outreach and advocacy.

Goal 4. Educate and empower Veterans and their families through proactive outreach and advocacy.

Objective 4.A. Increase awareness of and access to information about NCA benefits and services for Veterans and their families.

Strategy 1. Enhance NCA's partnerships with funeral director associations and individual funeral homes.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. Increase the percentage of funeral directors who respond that they are well informed on policies and procedures by national cemeteries to 85%.	FY 2015
<u>41C</u>	2. Develop and distribute a tool kit and DVD designed to inform funeral directors, clergy and families about NCA's committal service protocol.	FY 2011
<u>41A</u>	3. Increase the percentage of funeral director respondents who rate the information provided about MPS products on the VA.gov website as excellent to 100 percent.	FY 2015

Strategy 2. Expand the use of innovative methods for outreach to Veterans, their families, and the public.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41C</u> <u>MVPC</u>	1. Acquire additional information from the Veteran population in order to evaluate the effectiveness of outreach programs.	FY 2013
<u>41C</u>	2. Increase by 100 percent the "friends and followers" of NCA-sponsored social media sources over the FY 2010 baseline. (1737 as of 9/30/2010)	FY 2013
<u>41B</u>	3. Research and develop an action plan for NCA's role in addressing homelessness in the Veteran population.	FY 2011
<u>41B</u>	4. Implement the action plan for NCA's role in addressing homelessness in the Veteran population.	FY 2012
<u>41D/</u> <u>HRC</u>	5. Research and develop an action plan for increasing the percentage of Veterans including OEF/OIF employed by NCA.	FY 2011
<u>41D/</u> <u>HRC</u>	6. Implement the action plan for increasing the percentage of Veterans including OEF/OIF employed by NCA.	FY 2012

Strategy 3: Improve Veterans' awareness of burial and memorial benefits.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41C</u>	1. Increase the percentage of Veterans who have heard about burial in a national or State and Tribal Government Veterans cemetery to 75 percent (from 41.5 percent baseline of last SOV).	FY 2015
<u>41C</u>	2. Increase the percentage of Veterans who have heard about VA's headstones and burial markers in private cemeteries to 60 percent (from 27.7 percent baseline of last SOV).	FY 2015
<u>41C</u>	3. Increase the percentage of Veterans who have heard about PMCs for next-of-kin of deceased Veterans to 30 percent (from 9.3 percent baseline of last SOV).	FY 2015
<u>41B</u>	4. Increase percentage of Veterans buried in national cemeteries to 13 percent.	FY 2015
<u>41B</u>	5. Increase percentage of Veterans buried in State and Tribal Government cemeteries to 4 percent.	FY 2015

Strategy 4. Develop and implement an automated, pre-need eligibility certification system.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41G</u>	1. Work with Ebenefits initiative to implement an automated, pre-need eligibility certification system.	FY 2012
<u>41G</u>	2. Develop and distribute a pre-need planning package to be used by funeral homes and national cemetery staff.	FY 2012

Integrated Objective 3: Build our internal capacity to serve Veterans, their families, our employees, and other stakeholders efficiently and effectively.

Goal 5. Build our internal capacity to serve Veterans, their families, our employees, and other stakeholders efficiently and effectively.

Objective 5.A. Recruit, hire, develop, and retain a competent, committed, and diverse workforce that is recognized for providing high quality care and service to Veterans, their families, and the community.

Strategy 1. Implement an overarching human capital investment architecture

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41D/HRC</u>	1. Develop and implement a comprehensive human capital investment plan for NCA.	FY 2012
<u>EEO</u>	3. Increase the proactive measures to prevent EEO complaints	FY 2013
<u>EEO</u>	4. Develop a special emphasis program for NCA to address diversity issues	FY 2012
<u>EEO/MVPC</u>	5. Redesign the NCA Minority Veterans Program to ensure at least 90% of the reporting cemetery sites comply with critical elements as defined in VA Handbook 0801	FY 2013
<u>41D</u>	6. Develop and implement an NCA-specific new employee orientation program that meets regulatory requirements.	FY 2012
<u>41D</u>	7. Develop and implement a workforce analysis program to position NCA to respond to evolving work requirements.	FY 2013
<u>41D</u>	8. Develop and implement an NCA-specific new employee on-boarding program that provides for cultural immersion into the agency.	FY 2014

Strategy 2: Implement a competency-based approach to workforce development and succession planning

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41D</u>	1. Establish teams (made up of SMEs and education professionals) to review, develop and validate competencies for identified positions.	FY 2012
<u>41D</u>	2. Populate VA LMS talent management suite with competency model data to support workforce development/succession planning activities (including trend analysis and reporting, competency gap analysis and individual development planning) across the entire NCA workforce.	FY 2014

<u>41D</u>	3. Establish pilot program for Individual Learning Accounts to assess implementation potential within NCA.	FY 2013
<u>41D</u>	4. Partner with other VA/Federal entities to leverage existing programs (ADVANCE initiative, OPM Programs, etc.) and share best practices.	FY2012
<u>41D</u>	5. Establish a formal NCA coach/mentor program.	FY2013
<u>41D</u>	6. Establish a succession planning approach for NCA based on previous cemetery director trainee class projects.	TBD

Strategy 3. Improve workplace climate across NCA

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>EEO</u>	1. Establish a workforce diversity committee.	FY 2011
<u>EEO</u>	2. Develop a cultural competency program for NCA.	FY 2012
<u>EEO</u>	3. Conduct OCAP (Organizational Climate Assessment Program) across all staffed NCA facilities.	FY 2015
<u>41B</u>	4. Increase the NCA Civility Index measured by the annual all employee survey to 4.0.	FY 2015
<u>41D</u>	5. Increase access and availability of employee assistance programs to all NCA employees.	FY 2015

Objective 5.B. Improve NCA's operational and management processes to enhance the efficiency, cost effectiveness, and quality of services and benefits delivered in order to meet the requirements of Veterans and stakeholders.

Strategy 1. Improve the efficiency, cost effectiveness, and quality of service delivered by NCA.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41A</u>	1. Identify and implement five field-driven innovations to improve operational efficiency and/or effectiveness.	FY 2015
<u>41A</u>	2. Develop and implement a process to share First Notice of Death information with other VA entities to effectively and efficiently deliver and/or terminate service and benefits where appropriate.	FY 2012
<u>41A</u>	3. Develop and implement a process to share First Notice of Death information with other Federal agencies where appropriate to assist them in properly administering their programs.	FY 2015
<u>41B</u>	4. Lead a cross-cutting NCA team to develop business and functional requirements for designing new and replacement systems for NCA's mission critical systems such as automated gravesite tracking, automated tracking of remains, electronic interface for scheduling, scheduling via internet, and handheld devices to improve operational functions.	FY 2012

<u>41G</u>	5. Implement a process to notify families when headstones and markers are set at national cemeteries.	FY 2011
<u>41B</u>	6. Develop and implement a cost accounting system.	FY 2012
<u>41B</u>	7. Utilize information from the cost accounting system to promote cost efficiencies.	FY 2015
<u>41A</u>	8. Increase the number of Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) hours worked at national cemeteries by 10% percent from the FY 2010 baseline.	FY 2015
<u>41F</u>	9. Reduce potable water usage by 18% at all national cemeteries.	FY 2015
<u>41F</u>	10. Reduce non-potable water usage by 10% at all national cemeteries.	FY 2015
<u>41F</u>	11. Implement strategy for water-wise landscaping at five new national cemeteries and five existing national cemeteries.	FY 2015
<u>41F</u>	12. Implement renewable energy alternatives at five new national cemeteries and five existing national cemeteries.	FY 2014

Strategy 2. Ensure an optimal operational support structure for NCA.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41B</u>	1. Implement the business office concept for finance, contracting, and logistics.	FY 2011
<u>41D</u>	2. Establish and implement a robust telework program across NCA for eligible positions.	FY 2012
<u>41B</u>	3. Enhance emergency preparedness and security by mitigating findings from vulnerability, security, ITOC, records management, or other assessments conducted at NCA facilities. (need baseline)	FY 2014

Strategy 3. Improve accountability for NCA operational and management processes.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41B</u>	1. Establish operational standards and measures for all NCA organizational elements.	FY 2013
<u>41B</u>	2. Complete OAI site visits to all national cemeteries	FY 2014
<u>41A</u>	3. Systematically track progress to address recommendations in OAI site assessment reports.	FY 2012
<u>41B</u>	4. Develop and implement a management internal controls audit program to ensure compliance with OMB's Circular A-123.	FY 2012

Strategy 4: Ensure national cemeteries, MSN offices, and central office components are safe work places.

<u>41A</u>	1. Take corrective action on X percent of the highest priority items as recommended in the Safety Deficiencies Report.	FY 2012
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<u>41A</u>	2. Implement standard safety training (OSHA) across NCA to include prevention of workplace violence training.	FY 2011
<u>41A</u>	3. Reduce the number of injuries by enhancing awareness of and compliance with safety guidelines (OWCP measure).	TBD
<u>41A</u>	4. Reduce the average number of lost production days by three percent per year (based on 2010 baseline).	TBD

Strategy 5. Explore opportunities to enhance revenue streams.

	Measure	Completion Date
<u>41B</u>	1. Develop and implement recommendations to enhance NCA revenue streams such as the franchise fund, reimbursement agreements, fee-for-service enterprises, and NCA exporting expertise to external partners and stakeholders.	FY 2015