

**In the Matter of:**

**Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business  
Development**

*March 10, 2016  
Public Hearing*

**Condensed Transcript with Word Index**



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5	<p>1 I will admit, and I think the energy in the 2 room before we got started revealed that a bit, I have 3 to admit, this now being my third quarterly meeting 4 since I was confirmed as deputy administrator, I think 5 I've got a little bit more spring in my step about what 6 we're doing, not that we deserve any sort of blue 7 ribbon yet. We've still got a long way to go. But I 8 think for the reasons we will talk about today, I think 9 we have been productive in getting ourselves on a good 10 path. I will talk a little bit more about that in a 11 second.</p> <p>12 Before we do that, just for the sake of the 13 record, let me at least take a roll call of the 14 agencies that are participating in today's meeting. 15 Obviously, Barb Carson, who runs our Office of Veterans 16 Business Development here at SBA, and I are here on 17 behalf of the Agency.</p> <p>18 Department of Labor, Tim, do you want to just 19 identify yourself?</p> <p>20 MR. GREEN: Yes, I'm Tim Green from Department 21 of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service. 22 Bill Metheny should be joining us on the line, on the 23 call.</p> <p>24 MR. METHENY: And this is Bill Metheny on the 25 phone, and I am with you. Thank you.</p>	7	<p>1 Federal Procurement Policy.</p> <p>2 MR. KRAMER: Thanks, Matthew.</p> <p>3 And then the VSO members, the American Legion?</p> <p>4 MR. LEGHORN: Davy Leghorn with the American 5 Legion.</p> <p>6 MR. KRAMER: VVA?</p> <p>7 MR. KLINGENHOFER: Victor Klingenhofer, VVA.</p> <p>8 MR. KRAMER: MOAA?</p> <p>9 MS. BAINTON: Amanda Bainton, MOAA.</p> <p>10 MR. KRAMER: Okay, and the Naval Post-Graduate 11 School?</p> <p>12 MR. KIDALOV: Max Kidalov.</p> <p>13 MR. KRAMER: Okay, very good.</p> <p>14 Well, before we get started, or as we get 15 started, let me just give a quick overview. I think 16 all of you have seen the agenda, but just have a sense 17 of what we're doing. I think at the top here, I'm 18 going to provide, hopefully, some very few framing 19 remarks about where I think we are and where I'd like 20 to see us go.</p> <p>21 And then, Barb is going to provide a bit of a 22 more substantive review of exactly what we're doing 23 with the operation of the task force and the 24 accomplishments we hope to reach over the next not only 25 three months, but the next, at least, nine months.</p>
6	<p>1 MR. KRAMER: Thanks, Bill. 2 Department of Treasury? 3 (No verbal response.)</p> <p>4 MR. KRAMER: I don't think we have anyone here 5 yet, but will note if that representative shows up at 6 some point --</p> <p>7 Department of Defense? 8 (No verbal response.)</p> <p>9 MR. KRAMER: Same. 10 VA?</p> <p>11 MR. LENEY: Hi, Tom Lenev from Department of 12 Veterans Affairs.</p> <p>13 MR. KRAMER: GSA?</p> <p>14 MS. COLLINS: Hi, there. Christi Collins is 15 on the phone as well from Department of Veterans 16 Affairs.</p> <p>17 MR. KRAMER: Thanks, Christi. 18 All right, GSA?</p> <p>19 MR. FERRARO: There we go. Too many buttons 20 on this thing. This is Eric Ferraro. I'm the GSA 21 veteran's advocate.</p> <p>22 MR. KRAMER: Very good. 23 SBA? I'm sorry, not SBA. We already did SBA. 24 OMB? 25 MR. BLUM: I'm Matthew Blum with the Office of</p>	8	<p>1 And then, at that point, we're going to open 2 it up on a limited basis for some public comments and 3 discussion. This is some of my own prerogative. I'm 4 never appreciative at these sort of meetings if we wait 5 to the end to get the comments from those who have, on 6 their own initiative, come to the meeting today, 7 because a lot of times those can be some of the most 8 interesting ideas. If we've sort of had our 9 conversation and baked it before anybody got to 10 contribute, that's never helpful.</p> <p>11 So, we have a limited amount of time in the 12 middle of the meeting or early in the meeting to do 13 that. We'll also leave time at the end if we're not 14 able to get to everybody, because I do want to keep us 15 on time.</p> <p>16 We have a couple presentations today, then, 17 from the Census Bureau and the Naval Post-Graduate 18 School, which I think are very strong and will provide 19 some very good fruit for our conversations and our work 20 going forward. And then, we will just do discussions 21 or readouts from the individual members about progress 22 that they've made over the past three months and a 23 report of what they're doing. We're going to limit 24 those to about five minutes apiece so that we can stay 25 on time. And then, like I said, if we have some time</p>

9	<p>1 at the end or additional people who want to make 2 comments, we'll make sure to talk about that.</p> <p>3 So, let me just give my overview of, I think, 4 where we are. Unlike most of you, I obviously have a 5 pretty clear and well-defined finish line, one that is 6 clearly apparent to me every time I wake up and turn on 7 the TV in the morning. But I am encouraged that at 8 this, my third quarterly meeting, I do think that we 9 have achieved some sort of momentum in the operation of 10 this task force and what we need to do.</p> <p>11 I think when I came in, because of a long 12 absence, probably more than anything else a long 13 absence, as the deputy administrator at SBA, there were 14 a few delinquencies that we were trying to catch up. 15 We were far in arrears with our annual reporting 16 requirements, and we had not kept up our obligation to 17 make sure that we had specifically identified and 18 appointed VSOs as a part of this group. I think we've 19 gone a long way to remediating both of those problems.</p> <p>20 The fiscal year '13 report is now out, and the 21 joint fiscal years '14 and '15 report has now gone into 22 interagency clearance, thanks, in large part, to all of 23 you providing your contributions for that two-year 24 period. Our folks have put it together, cleared it 25 through SBA. I think it's sitting in OMB now. You</p>	11	<p>1 make one up at some point before the meeting is done. 2 The 18 recommendations that we have used as a guide for 3 this group. I think going forward what we're going to 4 do is create meetings -- and Barb will talk about this 5 in greater depth -- around those recommendations and do 6 an evaluation of which of those, frankly, are ones that 7 we don't need to focus on as much anymore, either 8 circumstances or the achievements we already have, I 9 mean, if they're not as much of a priority anymore, 10 what are the ones that are very, very important, and 11 how do we re-goal even some of the ones where we might 12 have gotten to a certain level of accomplishment but 13 need to get further.</p> <p>14 That's really the challenge to all of you 15 between this meeting and the next meeting, is to 16 actively participate in the different groups that we 17 will pull together as relevant to each of those 18 18 recommendations to identify the accomplishments that we 19 can reach. Some of those may be long-term goals.</p> <p>20 Because my own sort of selfish interest, I 21 think we'd like to come back in June with a very clear 22 direction of what can be done in the six months 23 following June before the end of the administration, 24 because I think we know that we can get two more solid 25 quarters out of that, and it would be nice to be on the</p>
10	<p>1 have a copy of that draft in front of you now, and 2 instructions will be coming to you, hopefully, in the 3 near future to get that cleared.</p> <p>4 I have, as Barb can tell you, expended a 5 decent amount of capital inside this building beating 6 the bushes to get that through clearance here, and I 7 expect to keep that momentum going with all of you and 8 your agencies. So, please try to keep to those 9 deadlines, and we'll get that out as well.</p> <p>10 Also, encouraged, as I said before, that we 11 have now filled and have the active participation, as 12 we'll see in very clear ways today, of our VSO 13 representatives. So, I think that's a good result. 14 So, that's the first part, is having sort of made up 15 for some of the problems we had going backwards.</p> <p>16 And now the question is where do we go 17 forward. I had determined, and I didn't get any 18 resistance at all on this, that our previous sort of 19 subcommittee format was not the most productive way to 20 identify and achieve the goals that we had for this 21 group. So, what we're going to talk about today is 22 getting back to the -- I think it's 19 recommendations, 23 right?</p> <p>24 MS. CARSON: Eighteen. 25 MR. KRAMER: Eighteen recommendations. I'll</p>	12	<p>1 rails and headed in the right direction with regard to 2 those recommendations.</p> <p>3 I also know that these issues have interest. 4 They are things that I am dealing with quite often. 5 They are things that I'm getting inquiries from the 6 White House even through the Chief of Staff's office, 7 who are very interested in what we're talking about 8 today and want to talk about what we're doing and 9 checking in on that.</p> <p>10 So, I do think we have the attention and the 11 resources available to us to take what we identified, 12 based on all of our work from across the Agency on the 13 ground with these things, and really turn that into 14 substantive accomplishments.</p> <p>15 So, that's my perspective and my view on that. 16 With that, I will turn it over to Barb.</p> <p>17 Actually, I'll also identify just for the 18 record that the representative from the Department of 19 Defense, if she wanted to identify herself, is now in 20 the meeting.</p> <p>21 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, good morning. My name is 22 Alice Williams. I'm presenting Mr. Kenyata Wesley, 23 who, unfortunately, had another engagement and could 24 not make it. I'm on his staff. I'm responsible for 25 the socioeconomic program as a whole at large, along</p>

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1 with workforce initiatives and rapid innovations  
 2 program. Glad to be here and have to apologize up  
 3 front for being late. I just got the notice a few  
 4 seconds ago. Thank you.  
 5 MR. KRAMER: I'll note for the record that you  
 6 weren't very late. You walked in shortly after I  
 7 started blathering on. So, thank you.  
 8 MS. CARSON: Good morning, everyone. Thank  
 9 you so much for joining us. It's going to be an  
 10 incredible meeting today, and I look forward to hearing  
 11 your feedback.  
 12 I would like to launch with great news. We  
 13 have an incredible team at the Office of Veterans  
 14 Business Development, and we have just expanded by one  
 15 who had a role on the team before but has now been  
 16 appointed the deputy associate administrator. I'd like  
 17 to give Craig Heilman a moment to introduce himself.  
 18 MR. HEILMAN: Hi, good morning, everybody. My  
 19 name is Craig Heilman and, as Barb mentioned, recently  
 20 appointed deputy here. Although not new to the Agency,  
 21 been with SBA for three years now, almost three years,  
 22 and have had the privilege to brief this body before.  
 23 I've been responsible for our programs and working on  
 24 our Boots to Business program, working with folks like  
 25 Tim Green at Labor and others on a lot of good things

14

1 happening in transition assistance. So, I'm delighted  
 2 to be here.  
 3 You know, a little bit of background. I'm a  
 4 Navy veteran, aviation and then some intelligence work  
 5 in the Reserves. So, a long time in the private sector  
 6 both in small business and in big business. It's a  
 7 privilege to serve under Deputy Administrator Kramer  
 8 and Associate Administrator Carson, and look forward to  
 9 working with all of you in this capacity.  
 10 MR. KRAMER: As an editorial comment, as we  
 11 enter this year of transition and think about things  
 12 like succession planning, I'm not kidding when I say I  
 13 don't have an office that's better staffed right now  
 14 than our Office of Veterans Business Development. I  
 15 put a lot of trust, and I've seen a lot of good results  
 16 out of these two. So, as they help us move forward,  
 17 please give them your time and attention, because it  
 18 will come with results.  
 19 So, I also want to congratulate Craig on his  
 20 new position. It is well earned, and we are lucky to  
 21 have him in that role.  
 22 MS. CARSON: Thank you, sir, very much. I'm  
 23 going to go to the next slide.  
 24 I wanted to give you an idea of -- we have  
 25 been coming to this room faithfully, many of you, for a

15

1 period of time. I wanted you to be able to come -- I'm  
 2 Air Force, so from the 30,000 foot view, let's take a  
 3 look at all the things that you've achieved. I'm going  
 4 to hit a few of the highlights. I'm very grateful.  
 5 Amy Garcia, thank you for putting this up here  
 6 so we can visualize some success.  
 7 This body was formed in 2008, and we got to  
 8 work right away. The first meaningful what we've been  
 9 holding ourselves accountable to came out in 2011, the  
 10 original 18 recommendations with 46 subrecommended  
 11 actions to the president. By our count, and with your  
 12 collaboration and your support and action, 24 of those  
 13 have been achieved; 23 of them are in progress.  
 14 Anything that's left was required action beyond our  
 15 abilities through this body.  
 16 As Deputy Administrator Kramer said, we're  
 17 going to take a look at these. See if you agree with  
 18 our assessment on where we are, what we've achieved,  
 19 what's left to be done, but not stop there. What more  
 20 needs to be done?  
 21 A few of the other highlights up there, we  
 22 have really focused on transitioning service members,  
 23 as have Labor, VA, and DoD. Thank you for your  
 24 partnership in that, and OMB guiding us and keeping us  
 25 accountable as well.

16

1 For SBA's contribution, over 35,000 service  
 2 members and military spouses have taken the Boots to  
 3 Business course. We've just completed our first  
 4 outcome survey to see what did they think of it, has  
 5 anyone started a business. We'll be briefing that out  
 6 in June. I'm really pleased with what we're seeing so  
 7 far.  
 8 Our Veterans Business Outreach Centers  
 9 reinvigorated, strengthened, and expanding. I'll get  
 10 into that in a moment. They served over 62,000 service  
 11 members and veterans last year. We've increased our  
 12 lending to veterans. We've had Department of Treasury  
 13 and SBA programs doing that. Employment is looking  
 14 better. Our colleagues at DoL are helping us amplify  
 15 that you are HR for small business and others. So,  
 16 it's just a circle of employment and entrepreneurship  
 17 that is well reinforced throughout the inner agency.  
 18 For procurement, each of us can be proud that  
 19 our agencies have met the three percent goal for  
 20 service-disabled veteran procurement for three  
 21 consecutive years, and looking really strong.  
 22 The number of women veteran entrepreneurs,  
 23 it's exploding. Almost 300 percent growth from 2007 to  
 24 '12. You'll hear more about what's going on in veteran  
 25 demographics and business from our Census briefer later

17

1 today.  
 2 Our interagency collaboration engagement on  
 3 veteran entrepreneurship has expanded immensely.  
 4 Whether we got out an annual report or not, and we're  
 5 accountable for that, we didn't do it, we were working  
 6 very well together. We did accomplish so much. So,  
 7 thank you for that.  
 8 One other policy item -- we'll go to the next  
 9 slide, please -- just a visual here on how it looks and  
 10 what we've accomplished on the 18 recommendations. We  
 11 will talk and we'll hear more today -- I think there  
 12 will be a lot of feedback, so I'm going to accelerate  
 13 my comments so that we can get to the briefing on  
 14 service-disabled veteran-owned small business program.  
 15 Next slide.  
 16 And then, as Deputy Administrator Kramer said,  
 17 here's what's coming next. I'll be engaging with you  
 18 in as efficient a manner as possible. Each of you  
 19 members have received a Stop Light chart that shows  
 20 what the recommendations are, who is accountable for  
 21 them, and where we're at. I'd really appreciate it if  
 22 you'd take a look at that in the next week or so to see  
 23 if you concur. It will make our meetings go faster  
 24 when we get together and decide what we can commit to  
 25 doing.

18

1 In June, we will report out in a public forum  
 2 here to VSOs and individual business owners on where we  
 3 are and what we committed to do. In September, we're  
 4 going to finalize and hopefully have a completely --  
 5 you'll be ready to give your input on what you've done  
 6 this fiscal year and what we're going to do in the  
 7 coming year. We'll get that report published before  
 8 New Year's Eve. That's a goal. I think it's an  
 9 achievable goal.  
 10 Later this week, you will likely see a note  
 11 from me that has nothing to do with this body. It's  
 12 good news on something that we can do. It's women  
 13 veterans outreach and access to capital, women veteran  
 14 entrepreneurs. That report is being released to  
 15 congress this week. We could always be doing more.  
 16 So, I will be looking for your best ideas. I'm proud  
 17 of what we've done so far, but there's more.  
 18 I'm going to go into some of our programs at  
 19 SBA and what is happening there. Within Boots to  
 20 Business, it's a high growth opportunity for us to get  
 21 our first appropriation in 2014 and already be  
 22 reporting outcomes here in '16. We feel that's pretty  
 23 amazing, and to reach the number that we have.  
 24 Now, let's make sure that we're doing it  
 25 right. Is it worthwhile? Are we teaching the right

19

1 things? What are the outcomes we're looking for? The  
 2 Transition Assistance Program at DoD would say a  
 3 successful transition is the goal. For us, agreed, we  
 4 also have much longer term look at what does this mean  
 5 to our economy as someone becomes a veteran from a  
 6 service member. Is it a viable choice for them? Have  
 7 we guided them in the right way? So, that's what we  
 8 will be looking at.  
 9 We've met with each of the military services  
 10 over the last few months and spent special attention  
 11 with each of those services wounded warrior elements to  
 12 understand is there something different that we should  
 13 be doing at transition for those members, because we do  
 14 serve service-disabled veterans in different programs  
 15 across VA, DoD, and SBA.  
 16 You will see us in the community, too. For  
 17 those of you who are service members who missed  
 18 transition, didn't get their chance for whatever  
 19 reason, it was long ago or they were a deployed member  
 20 of the Reserve and Guard and though they should have  
 21 had it and they didn't, we will be there in your  
 22 community with Boots to Business reboot, same  
 23 curriculum, out in the community. We hope to have over  
 24 3,000 trained that way this year.  
 25 We're also going to be in your communities

20

1 more as we expand the Veterans Business Outreach  
 2 Centers. This one I do want you to hear. As part of  
 3 this Boots to Business growth, we have so much more  
 4 data. DoD has been generous with letting us know how  
 5 many people are going to be transitioning and from  
 6 where. We put that together with our resources. We  
 7 served the best we could and recognized we had gaps.  
 8 Thanks to an increase in appropriation from  
 9 congress and more flexibility and trust in how we can  
 10 execute it, we're going to expand that program right  
 11 away. The grant opportunities on the street right now  
 12 closes March 29th at grants dot gov.  
 13 VBOC, Victor Bravo Oscar Charlie, will allow  
 14 people to have a chance to see that. I want you to  
 15 know where we're going so that our agencies can  
 16 understand we see a gap there in service for the  
 17 transitioning service member, and perhaps it's  
 18 something we should all be looking at, especially VSOs,  
 19 please. Those would be New England, Southern  
 20 California, Arizona, Hawaii, Alaska, North Central  
 21 Texas, Colorado, and Georgia, again based on military  
 22 installation needs and transitioning population.  
 23 Just to give you an idea of how much the VBOCs  
 24 are doing, I told you they trained over and counseled  
 25 62,000 last year. There were new clients of almost

21

1 7,000. So, we're seeing some good turnover from those  
2 that they reach on military installations coming in for  
3 the first time. One-on-one counseling was almost  
4 16,000 folks. So, training events, you're obviously  
5 going to get bigger numbers, but we're touching one on  
6 one as well, and proud of that.

7 In contracting, Jerry Godwin, newer to our  
8 team but lots of experience, you may have already met  
9 him because some of the agencies here have been  
10 welcoming, and we're learning best practices and gaps  
11 for OSDBU's offices across the U.S. government as we  
12 try and strengthen service-disabled veteran procurement  
13 opportunities.

14 And for lending, I'm going to dive into this  
15 in June, not today, but I wanted you to know that last  
16 year, or remind you last year, over 100 percent growth  
17 in the 7(a) lending to veterans. This year, we're  
18 already 22 percent over that banner year as of February  
19 20th. So, we'll dive in and take a look at where we're  
20 successful in that as well.

21 So, I am going to turn it over to you, sir,  
22 for any public comments.

23 MR. KRAMER: Okay. Well, before we do that,  
24 to follow up on one thing that Barb talked about, and  
25 we'll include the follow up between now and the next

22

1 quarterly meeting. As Barb suggested, you have the  
2 Stop Light reports on this for most of you. As you  
3 look at recommendation one -- I mean, this is one I  
4 think specifically assigned to us. I don't know that  
5 we'll be pulling other people in, but you'll get the  
6 point.

7 Between now and June, we either need to decide  
8 that this is done and we don't need to do anything more  
9 on this, or we need to come up with new goals that sort  
10 of push this recommendation further. We're not going  
11 to sort of rest on the laurels of feeling like we've  
12 accomplished this one, we're tracking, all of that.  
13 There will be some things that we want to make sure we  
14 don't backslide that we think are particularly  
15 vulnerable to backsliding, and we need to do that.

16 But it's not going to be acceptable to come in  
17 here in June with this recommendation and say, yes,  
18 copy it, let's keep going in that direction. Either we  
19 need to be comfortable saying we think this is done, we  
20 don't think this needs to be a focus of attention and  
21 we're going to stand behind that and move on to other  
22 challenges, which is a very good answer, or we're going  
23 to come up with some re-goaling on these to push them  
24 to a yellow or a red that we can transition into green  
25 through the work of this group.

23

1 So, with that said, why don't we try to take  
2 -- I'd like to keep us ahead of schedule so that we  
3 can, like I said, get some comments now for people who  
4 might have walked in the door this morning knowing that  
5 they had something they wanted the agencies to hear,  
6 but also leave some time at the end for other ideas  
7 that might come up during the duration.

8 So, if we do have folks that are participating  
9 in the meeting today that did want to make a public  
10 comment, and we're aware of that, I think we do have  
11 microphones somewhere. Yes, we've got a microphone  
12 over there that we can get around to you.

13 So, does anybody have at the top of the  
14 meeting here a statement they'd like to include or  
15 something they'd just sort of like to put on the  
16 agenda?

17 (No verbal response.)

18 MR. KRAMER: Okay. It's not a forever hold  
19 your peace. We'll try to circle back later on as well.  
20 So, anyway, we'll hold on that for now and then come  
21 back.

22 With that, then, I will turn it over to Naomi  
23 Blackman from the U.S. Census Bureau who has a  
24 presentation about information on veteran-owned small  
25 businesses from the Census.

24

1 MS. CARSON: She's not here yet.

2 MR. KRAMER: Oh, she's not here yet? Okay.  
3 So, then, we're jumping on the agenda to an update on  
4 VIP that Barb is going to talk about.

5 MS. CARSON: I'm the wrong Barbara. You may  
6 have it on your agenda as Barbara Ashe, and she is  
7 going to come and join us, but I wanted her to have an  
8 opportunity to tell you herself. She may get that when  
9 she arrives.

10 I may have briefed it before, and if you've  
11 heard it, then you're going to be happy with this good  
12 news I'll start from the beginning, though. We, at  
13 OVBD, have granted an opportunity to train over 150  
14 veteran business owners each year in federal  
15 procurement. These are companies that have past  
16 performance, some revenue, and have employees. That  
17 work was fantastic.

18 In year two, though, we said we could be doing  
19 more. We identified some gaps and opportunities. One  
20 is we still hear how hard it is to get started, that  
21 getting a new opportunity, being ready for that  
22 opportunity when business development isn't part of the  
23 veteran program at this time.

24 So, I asked Barbara and the Montgomery County  
25 Chamber of Commerce Foundation, which runs the

25

1 Veteran's Institute for Procurement, to develop  
2 curriculum for what would come before you're at the  
3 success, the three to five. What's before that? So,  
4 we're testing for the first time in April, April 5 to  
5 7, folks who have been a sub before, but they haven't  
6 had a prime, and still got some work to do on the very  
7 beginning, you know, how should I form my company, what  
8 are the things I need to know, but, working on  
9 something I've heard Tom Leney say, being procurement  
10 ready. It's our job, SBA, to build capacity, make  
11 people competitive. So, that's what we're going to  
12 work on. That's what Barbara has partnered with me to  
13 do.

14 The other curriculum that she is developing is  
15 for international trade. As many of you know, overseas  
16 contracting, for example, is part of what we're  
17 accountable for in the coming years. We want veteran  
18 business owners to be competitive in that space. Many  
19 have been deployed, understand there's some nuances  
20 that may be different. Maybe they haven't contracted  
21 there but they're comfortable with the environment.

22 So, not doing just that, though. Gaining some  
23 traction with my colleagues in the Office of  
24 International Trade and also with Department of  
25 Commerce, we have a representative from Commerce here

26

1 with us today who will spend just a few minutes as we  
2 get down to the Agency reports. They should be a  
3 member, but they're not at the moment. We'll work on  
4 that. They'll tell you a little bit about what they're  
5 doing for veterans who want to do overseas business.

6 So, when Barbara comes in, I'll let her speak  
7 to it, but I do want you to know that right now, even  
8 without a program for international trade, she's seen  
9 between 30 and 45 percent of the folks who take her  
10 course are already doing international business. We  
11 could help them do it better. They don't know the  
12 resources that are out there.

13 So, thanks so much for the time, sir.

14 MR. KRAMER: Thanks. With those sorts of  
15 outputs, I mean, it's certainly something we can learn  
16 from, because I think from this and so many endeavors,  
17 we sort of sit around and conceptualize what might  
18 work. So, when we find someone that has that sort of  
19 level of success, especially in exporting, we need to  
20 grab ahold of that.

21 So, I'm going to, I think at this point, turn  
22 it over to Max and Jennifer if they're ready to go. I  
23 will note for the record that our Census presentation,  
24 according to our agenda, is supposed to be at 10:00, so  
25 I don't think there's anything -- Ms. Blackman, I

27

1 expect, will probably be here at that time. We'll flip  
2 and let you all go now and, like I said, sort of stay  
3 ahead of the curve here.

4 MR. KIDALOV: Thank you, sir.

5 MS. CARSON: Max, may I make one comment?  
6 This is Barb. I do need to tell you, please look at  
7 the screen for these slides. Max made some meaningful,  
8 good updates since we gave this presentation yesterday  
9 at the Advisory Committee on Veteran Business Affairs.  
10 You will have access to those slides, and they will be  
11 posted publicly after this meeting. But the slides  
12 that are in front of you members, there are more of  
13 them. What's up on the screen is what I'd like you to  
14 focus on. Thank you so much.

15 MR. KIDALOV: Thank you, Barb. Yes, there's  
16 an acronym, bottom line up front, BLUF, so we've tried  
17 to summarize our slides and kind of bring out the  
18 punch. So, we'll start with that.

19 I want to introduce myself and my colleague.  
20 I'm Max Kidalov, Assistant Professor of Procurement Law  
21 and Policy at the Naval Post-Graduate School. With me  
22 is Jennifer Lee.

23 MS. LEE: My name is Jennifer Lee, and I am a  
24 DoD contracting officer for Department of Navy.

25 MR. KIDALOV: We are pleased to present the

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1 study, An Open Door and a Leg Up: Increasing Service-  
2 Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Participation in  
3 Defense Contracting for Simplified Acquisition.

4 For background information, as we are giving  
5 this presentation at the SBA, I will note that Rear  
6 Admiral Crean, who is now with SBA, was the original  
7 requester. He originally asked me to do this study,  
8 the study in the report that is a very, very heavy  
9 report, over 100 pages that you have. It has a number  
10 of Navy issues as well.

11 Here we're talking whole of government, so  
12 we're going to be focusing on Department of Defense  
13 overall. But if you'd like to look at the Navy  
14 examples, those examples are provided. In fact, we're  
15 recognizing other services as well. Barb will  
16 recognize the Air Force right there.

17 So, our study, we, of course, have the text  
18 and the usual disclaimer. This is not the official  
19 position of the Department of Defense or the Department  
20 of the Navy, nor is this a comment on any pending  
21 litigation, although we will, of course, talk about the  
22 law a lot as it applies.

23 So, our study methodology is here. We'll look  
24 to the academic assessments. We'll look to the  
25 theoretical foundation, understanding the taxonomy of



29	<p>1 the program and its designs, data analysis, and 2 conclusion. We will get into details of that a little 3 bit more. 4 Next slide, please. 5 So, we started looking at this question of 6 disabled veteran participation, and simplified 7 acquisition especially. We started looking at it by 8 finding out this paradox. There was, in 2000 FY '14, 9 the Department of Defense has had real success with 10 achieving and exceeding the three percent small 11 business goal. So, very substantial spending, 12 substantial goal achievement. 13 But, as we look at the academic assessments, 14 and of those there have been five, four of them came 15 from legal academics, three law review articles, one a 16 testimony from a law professor, and one was a study 17 commissioned by the DoD Office of Small Business 18 Programs through the Rand Corporation. That's the Cox 19 and Moore Study. 20 As we look at these studies, we found that all 21 these studies have something in common. They all 22 predict malfunction and failure of the program. So, we 23 have this paradox. We have success on the one hand, 24 and we have all these predictions of malfunction and 25 failure.</p>	31	<p>1 management. We use it at the Naval Post-Graduate 2 School. It's used in different programs. In that 3 book, they come up with this model, contract management 4 performance model, to evaluate the success of 5 contracting programs. So, we thought could we perhaps 6 try to understand how this program works in terms of 7 this generally-accepted model. 8 Our second research question was, is unguided 9 individual-level contracting officer discretion the 10 right mechanism to support veteran participation. We 11 emphasize the word unguided, because that is something 12 that was coming up very clearly in the academic 13 assessments, at least. That the discretion, while it 14 exists and while there are general policies, and there 15 are certainly a lot of guidance about both the moral, 16 and the economic, and the force, volunteer force 17 significance, discretion was unguided. 18 At the individual contracting officer's 19 decision, there was no guidance as to how can a 20 contracting officer decide how much is business 21 development for this one firm or two or more firms? 22 How much is that worth in terms of mission 23 requirements, costs, and things like that? That's not 24 defined. 25 Then, can simplified acquisitions positively</p>
30	<p>1 On the malfunction and failure factors, there 2 are three factors that were identified. The first 3 factor is veteran disillusionment. So, the studies all 4 talk about veteran disillusionment in the program. 5 They also then say, well, why is that, and they talk 6 about veteran confusion and government buyer confusion, 7 confusion about what the program is, confusion about 8 how to use the tools in the program, and even what the 9 tools are. 10 Then, one related factor that they bring up is 11 entrenchment. So, the entrenchment factor, as they 12 say, is that the program helps firms that are already 13 successful. One of them actually said, well, it helps 14 firms that perhaps need the least help. That's how the 15 program operates. 16 So, we wanted to try to resolve this paradox. 17 So, upon our review, we came up with three research 18 questions. So, the first question that we had was, can 19 the program be understood in terms of the contract 20 management performance model. So, as you're all 21 probably familiar, quality management has been a field 22 of study. 23 Cohen and Eimicke, professors up at Columbia, 24 they wrote a book in 2008. It became an instant 25 classic. It's used in all the curricula for contract</p>	32	<p>1 influence disabled veteran program outcomes? We looked 2 at that question because, of course, there was a lot of 3 emphasis on simplified acquisitions as a tool for new 4 and emerging firms, also because that is a tool that is 5 a regulatory tool. It was added into the FAR and was 6 not specifically a statutory tool. We wanted to see 7 what happens with that. 8 Next slide, please. 9 So, this is the Cohen and Eimicke model. The 10 Cohen and Eimicke model takes and defines program 11 pillars as inputs, process outputs, and outcome. Now, 12 in the small business contracting world generally, we 13 usually measure things by spending. So, we look at the 14 spending and see there are statutory goals, a 15 percentage of spending. 16 But in the Cohen and Eimicke model world, in 17 that world, that is a program input, because what it 18 measures is it measures the level of effort. It's a 19 resource. So, resource measures are measures of 20 effort. They are inputs. They are not outputs or 21 outcomes. 22 Process, on the other hand, process is 23 something that you do, steps that you take with the 24 inputs to achieve the program outcomes. So, in this 25 world, process will be the discretion, the authority,</p>

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1 the award decision, the contracting officer discretion,  
 2 the set-aside authority. That would be the process.  
 3 Outputs, in terms of outputs, we're looking at  
 4 the number of firms. So, the output is something that  
 5 when you take the inputs and you take the process, you  
 6 know, you make something with that. When you're taking  
 7 the award decision or the award discretion and you take  
 8 the dollars, you are making an award and you're giving  
 9 it to somebody. You're giving it to a firm. So, in  
 10 our case, the number of firms receiving awards, that's  
 11 something that we're looking at as a program output.  
 12 Then outcomes. Outcomes are difficult to  
 13 define, but in our case, we're looking at -- for  
 14 example, DoD contracting is a viable, self-employment  
 15 path for veterans. That's one possible outcome.  
 16 Another possible outcome is generally self employment  
 17 for veterans overall, capacity of veteran businesses.  
 18 So, those are all outcomes that we could think about.  
 19 So, that's at least the performance management  
 20 framework that we're looking at.  
 21 Next slide, please.  
 22 So, one of the things that we ended up as we  
 23 started looking at all these different issues, we  
 24 decided that it would be a wise thing for us to do is  
 25 to make a time line and to recognize in this time line

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1 that the program, though we speak of one federal  
 2 service-disabled veteran-owned small business program,  
 3 in reality, we're talking about several programs.  
 4 Different decision makers over the years have attempted  
 5 different designs. So, we're not really dealing with  
 6 one program as much with different iterations and  
 7 different designs.  
 8 On this chart, you will see some colors. Now,  
 9 colors do not mean -- red, for example, doesn't mean  
 10 necessarily a failure in the program, but it does mean,  
 11 for example, that there is some kind of a red flag,  
 12 some kind of a perhaps misalignment between the  
 13 elements, between the process and the inputs, the  
 14 process and the outcomes.  
 15 Blue flags are the need is identified. We  
 16 have some references to the goal when it's established  
 17 and when it's highlighted. And then, purple is  
 18 directions to the contracting officer from the various  
 19 decision makers on how to exercise it.  
 20 We want you to just look at the slide, and as  
 21 we talk about data, you will find it useful as we are  
 22 talking about data to just perhaps flip in your own  
 23 slides to that one and just say, okay, so, this is  
 24 where the behavior is, let's see what the rules were or  
 25 the direction was at the time.

35

1 Next slide, please.  
 2 So, there have been designs from, as we could  
 3 see, from four types of decision makers, the  
 4 legislature, congress, the Executive Branch, both the  
 5 presidential and SBA levels, also DoD level, and then  
 6 the adjudicators, GAO and the courts. We'll cover them  
 7 in turn.  
 8 The legislative designs, so, the original  
 9 legislative designs from the Cohen and Eimicke  
 10 perspective, they favored outputs. They favored  
 11 development, the business development of individual  
 12 firms.  
 13 You see that it started very early on in 1974,  
 14 but the one that I would like for you to specifically  
 15 focus on is the 1997 SBA Reauthorization Act. Very,  
 16 very broad. Sweeping authority. Such actions as may  
 17 be necessary to ensure disabled veteran and all small  
 18 businesses have access to business development  
 19 assistance and other programs. Very sweeping  
 20 authority. Fostering increasing opportunities, fair  
 21 consideration purposes, again, very, very broad and  
 22 very focused on the business development. That's where  
 23 we see it.  
 24 Reinforced again with the Congressional  
 25 Commission, the Principi Commission on Service Members

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1 and Veterans Transition, now that commission recommends  
 2 adding veteran firms to the 8(a) program plus a  
 3 statutory goal. Later on that year, there is a  
 4 statute, the Veterans Entrepreneurship and Business  
 5 Development Act of '99, that creates a goal, creates  
 6 business development entities within and outside of the  
 7 SBA. And legislative history there talks about  
 8 business development assistance.  
 9 Next slide, please.  
 10 Now, four years later, we have additional  
 11 legislation, but now the design is slightly different.  
 12 In the 2003 law, which created the authority for both  
 13 competitive and sole-source set-aside awards, we have  
 14 this authority. It gives discretion to the contracting  
 15 officer. That's codified law.  
 16 But what's very interesting is the uncodified  
 17 law. The uncodified law, we have sections 101 and 102.  
 18 They again talk about business development, and we also  
 19 have legislative history. There's legislative history.  
 20 It says the Commission recommended assistance through  
 21 the 8(a) program.  
 22 We are not adding veterans as part of the 8(a)  
 23 program, but we are setting aside this undefined  
 24 discretionary assistance. We're not actually saying  
 25 what it is. All we are saying is that disabled

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1 veterans require it, and they have some unique  
2 assistance, unique factors that perhaps are not  
3 recognized in the 8(a) program. So, not suitable for  
4 placement in the 8(a) program, some kind of assistance,  
5 but we're not saying what it is. Leaving it up to the  
6 contracting officer, to each contracting officer, to  
7 decide.

8 Next slide.

9 So, Executive Branch, the Executive Branch  
10 design tried to design the program as well. Now, the  
11 Executive Branch design originally started with outputs  
12 and business development favoring the firms, individual  
13 firms, and then went to inputs, non-business  
14 development spending.

15 It started with the SBA proposal in 1998,  
16 recommends high priority to classify disabled veterans  
17 as small disadvantaged businesses, as 8(a) type of  
18 assistance, but then we just have executive order  
19 13360. That one talks about opportunities, as well as  
20 goals, as well as participation. Tries to align the  
21 inputs with the opportunities and with the output,  
22 tries to align all of that. The inputs process,  
23 outputs.

24 But then we get to rule making in 2004 and  
25 2005 by the SBA and the FAR Council. What we get there

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1 is we get there some statements. The statements are  
2 this is not a business development program. It exists  
3 to meet the goals but not for business development. We  
4 will wait and see if we are going to give mentor-  
5 protégé assistance, things like that. So, statements  
6 like that that say, well, it's some assistance, but  
7 we're not really defining what it is.

8 Now, one interesting thing is you see SAP was  
9 added in 2005 into the regulations without comment.  
10 Then, between 2004, 2005, and 2011, no mandatory  
11 consideration requirement. In 2011-2012, there is  
12 parity in the programs, and then mandatory  
13 consideration of set-asides above the simplified  
14 acquisition. So, again, varies from unguided  
15 discretion to perhaps some guided discretion towards  
16 helping the one or two firms that are being found.

17 DoD gets into action and pursuant to the  
18 executive order, they issue strategic plans 2005, 2007,  
19 2009. The focus on the plans is to direct DoD  
20 components, such as Department of the Navy, and others  
21 to come up with set-aside opportunities. The last year  
22 it was issued was in 2009. It was a five-year plan.

23 Then we get to the executive order 13540 and  
24 the interagency task force and the two reports. Now,  
25 in the two reports, very interestingly, 2011 and 2012,

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1 there was a very defined focus on finding current  
2 contractors and funding them to meet the goal. We will  
3 see in the data that that direction was taken up by  
4 contracting officers. We will see that.

5 Next slide, please.

6 Now, GAO, GAO gets into action as well. Of  
7 course, as adjudicators, GAO has its own pronounced  
8 ideas about what they want to do. So, there they go  
9 from mandatory consideration to no consideration. To  
10 them, they say, even if you don't meet the goals, this  
11 is the Kingdomware Marine Corps case, it's okay. Now,  
12 that case is very interesting.

13 What the GAO cases and what the judicial cases  
14 illustrate is this. There are standards in the program  
15 in the regulation, and also as the courts and the GAO  
16 are trying to write them, that deal with consideration  
17 of firms for set-asides.

18 The disabled veteran businesses see that, and  
19 they try to obtain business development assistance.  
20 They try to get that assistance by forcing the  
21 contracting officers to redefine the terms of the  
22 solicitation, either to provide for additional costs,  
23 to provide for bonding, to provide for mandatory set-  
24 asides, to consider firms, perhaps, that haven't  
25 registered. All these factors are there. That's the

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1 tension. That is the tension through this protest.  
2 So, you see this in the GAO cases.

3 Next slide, please.

4 Then, you also see this in the court cases.  
5 What's interesting in the court cases, of course, the  
6 court started in 2007 by making the order, 13360,  
7 judicially enforceable. What the court said is, yes,  
8 there is a goal, but the way you have to meet it is by  
9 bringing in new and niche firms.

10 That only lasted from April until December  
11 when the court said, well, actually, there are some  
12 other competing considerations. For example, if you  
13 don't want to bundle, and small business set-aside is a  
14 defense for bundling, you can do it through more  
15 experienced firms, bigger firms. You don't need to  
16 bring in new and niche firms. It goes back and forth.  
17 Totolo/King, this is about bonding against similar  
18 situation.

19 Next slide, please.

20 Okay, Blue Star, the court recognizes that a  
21 Knowledge Connection 1 style claim might exist, but  
22 they dismissed the case. There the disabled veteran  
23 business says, well, we are so new and so niche that  
24 nonmanufacture is an impediment to us. So, they're  
25 bringing this protest under the 13360. The case ends

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1 up getting moved because the loss of certification.  
 2 Then, finally, we get to the Kingdomware. I  
 3 know that is the big question, is the Kingdomware  
 4 Supreme Court discussion. Of course, that case  
 5 concerns the VA Veterans First program, so it does not  
 6 directly apply to the government wide. We would simply  
 7 like to know that from perhaps some reasoning by  
 8 analogy, the case discussed in detail some unguided  
 9 discretion. That, we just want to point out, is on a  
 10 different track than the GAO's guided discretion in  
 11 Split Rock.  
 12 Next slide, please.  
 13 So, now I'd like to show a couple of different  
 14 spending slides, and then I'll give it over to  
 15 Jennifer. So, on the spending slide, as you can see,  
 16 the green line is the goal and report spending. So,  
 17 this is the spending that is reported and counted  
 18 towards the goals.  
 19 You will see the red line is the new award  
 20 spending. The new award spending is spending through  
 21 the actual awards. So, the delta between that is  
 22 spending that is done through accretive modification,  
 23 so additional that is given to contractors already  
 24 working. I've mentioned that already. You see that  
 25 that is how a goal is being met.

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1 You also see this light blue line. Light blue  
 2 line is what I would call program revenue. Program  
 3 revenue means that these are new awards done through  
 4 the small business set-asides. You can see the impact  
 5 of that.  
 6 Next slide, please.  
 7 Contracting mechanisms, we also thought it  
 8 would be useful to see the contracting mechanisms. As  
 9 you can see, the contracting mechanisms are favoring  
 10 more established firms. The growth is in the IDV  
 11 market. The growth is not in the open market.  
 12 Now I'd like to turn it to Jennifer, and she  
 13 will talk about contracting officer discretion.  
 14 MS. LEE: Hi. Can I get the next slide,  
 15 please?  
 16 So, about contracting officers, the way the  
 17 program is now is it leaves the power with individual  
 18 contracting officer. The contracting officer, we don't  
 19 ever want to shut out small business of any kind or any  
 20 socioeconomical category.  
 21 With this being said, this slide right here  
 22 just shows the discretion in the FAR that we have. A  
 23 side note from the cases and structure that Max went  
 24 through, it really upholds the contracting officer  
 25 discretion. So, if anything comes out of this task

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1 force, don't take our discretion away. We do use it  
 2 extremely wisely, as well as our acquisition work force  
 3 is trained.  
 4 We're young. We have our own problems. It  
 5 takes a long time to get your fee as a contracting  
 6 officer. So, the discretionary guidance is never  
 7 without a justification when you use it. It's very  
 8 powerful. You document every second of everything in a  
 9 procurement file at any dollar amount. So, the  
 10 discretion is a justified discretion. Having the  
 11 direct award and the set-asides, it does have a huge  
 12 impact and it allows us to make those awards easier.  
 13 No award is easy.  
 14 For this, you guys can read that for  
 15 yourselves. There's just two parts to it, simplified  
 16 acquisition threshold, everything is reserved. The  
 17 other part above, you have to consider. When you go  
 18 above, there's mandatory sources sought, mandatory RFI.  
 19 There's no order of precedence to us, which really  
 20 gives us the flexibility to make the right business  
 21 decision for the government.  
 22 Next slide, please.  
 23 This 15 U.S.C., this talks about sole source  
 24 contracting and restricting competition. The key word  
 25 in here to focus on would be responsible. So, there's

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1 the term procurement ready. Procurement ready  
 2 contractors, procurement ready, coming out of the force  
 3 procurement ready. Well, when you're in the force, you  
 4 really can't get procurement ready because it's  
 5 conflict of interest. There's that aspect.  
 6 Responsible, though, for us as contracting  
 7 officers comes at the end. Responsibility  
 8 determination is right before you're ready to slap on a  
 9 signature, and you cross your fingers, and you're just,  
 10 like, I do my search, no whammies, no whammies. Before  
 11 responsibility actually comes interest, responsiveness,  
 12 technical capability.  
 13 As a contracting officer, you stretch your  
 14 discretion when you're trying to make those  
 15 determinations way up front. When you're trying to  
 16 determine a responsible contractor to do the  
 17 acquisition strategy up front, because responsibility,  
 18 that's on the back. That's after you get through all  
 19 the hard stuff.  
 20 Next slide, please.  
 21 I put together this slide just to show why the  
 22 individual contracting officer for the gateway for this  
 23 program, it is the power with the wrong person and the  
 24 wrong group of people as the job function. Right here  
 25 in the FAR, it does tell us about our discretion and

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1 that we really are to do effective contracting to  
 2 ensure the best for the Agency, and for the government,  
 3 and for the relationship of the contract.  
 4 If you have an undeveloped SDV contractor come  
 5 in, that's not a good relationship for them off the bat  
 6 because we're complicated. The courts can't decide in  
 7 a methodology. GAO, thank you, GAO, for upholding my  
 8 discretion, but they're deciding all over the map. So,  
 9 for somebody that's undeveloped that doesn't know the  
 10 rules of the game, it's a disservice for their  
 11 contracting relationship with the government.  
 12 The reality of the KO is everything is  
 13 yesterday. Everything is yesterday. It's not defined.  
 14 What suffers for that is the market research.  
 15 Acquisition strategies are based on market research.  
 16 When you conduct market research, you're looking for  
 17 that 99 percent responsible socioeconomic category.  
 18 When you're posting with a week for somebody to respond  
 19 to you, that's not a good relationship right off the  
 20 start.  
 21 Regulatory burdens and expiring funds. I  
 22 don't think that coming out of the fleet you're used to  
 23 having to do your business in a second. With expiring  
 24 funds, that's the reality that happens. Like I said,  
 25 market research guides the acquisition strategy.

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1 The three percent goal achievement is a good  
 2 goal, and it was met. Could it have been met faster if  
 3 the KO wasn't the individual factor? Possibly. That  
 4 would be made with procurement-ready vendors. The  
 5 three percent goal achievement by using direct awards,  
 6 it does conflict with guidance we get for constant  
 7 competition, saving money, better buying power.  
 8 Also, I want to talk about at the Agency  
 9 level, they have their own contracts. They have their  
 10 own indefinite delivery vehicles. Their own thing is  
 11 already set up that had the market research done. If  
 12 an emerging SD didn't get a part of one of those, for  
 13 the next five years, they won't be receiving those  
 14 dollars because agency guidance says you must use your  
 15 awarded vehicles.  
 16 The integrity of the procurement, that's the  
 17 most uncomfortable part of my job, because a lot of  
 18 times you have to be extremely stone cold in a closed  
 19 door. You can't jeopardize and hand hold through the  
 20 process someone that doesn't know how to submit a bid.  
 21 You can't give them the tips. You can't let them in  
 22 the inside or what fair and reasonable pricing is going  
 23 to be.  
 24 Okay, next slide.  
 25 The effects of this, you can see the trends

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1 that are happening. I just want to point out that the  
 2 set-aside number is extremely low here, and you can see  
 3 that visually.  
 4 Next slide.  
 5 MR. KRAMER: Let me step in for one second  
 6 just to do a process check. We're about 30 minutes  
 7 into what we had reserved for 30 minutes on the agenda.  
 8 Now, what you all are presenting here is very helpful  
 9 information, so I'm going to use some of my executive  
 10 discretion to extend that. I also just want to make  
 11 sure at some point that, because you've still got a lot  
 12 of good information here, that you're a bit cognizant  
 13 of that and see if we can do it in another 10 or 15  
 14 minutes.  
 15 MR. KIDALOV: Yes, sir.  
 16 MR. KRAMER: Thanks.  
 17 MR. KIDALOV: One slide back, please.  
 18 MS. LEE: So, I think that what Max had  
 19 mentioned earlier were the accretive mods. You can  
 20 really see the delta here. I wanted to point that out  
 21 to you. So, you're having dollars already go onto  
 22 existing vehicles or existing awards. The  
 23 discretionary set-aside is not being utilized.  
 24 However, if you look at -- the sole source set-asides  
 25 are not being utilized, but the competitiveness are.

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1 Next slide.  
 2 So, what does this impact mean on the three  
 3 percent? FY '08 was a pretty strong year. We're  
 4 looking like we're getting up there. This actually is  
 5 the set-aside number, and it's a portion of the three  
 6 percent goal. So, in FY '08, you're looking at about  
 7 two percent of the portion of the three percent as  
 8 being achieved. The year that it was achieved, the  
 9 first year, that dropped to 61 percent by using the  
 10 set-asides via individual contracting officers.  
 11 Next slide.  
 12 Now, with this one, this is the competitive  
 13 set-asides. You'll notice that FY '10 was a good year  
 14 for that. The share of the spending of that goal was  
 15 20 percent. The year it was achieved it did drop to 15  
 16 percent. That again is the competitive set-asides  
 17 between SDVs.  
 18 Next slide.  
 19 Here's the overall. This is the program using  
 20 the direct award sole source and the competitive set-  
 21 asides. The take away number from this is that in the  
 22 year it was met, 15.84 percent was from using the  
 23 program. The other percent, roughly 84 percent, was  
 24 made through other means to make those dollar goals.  
 25 Next slide.

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1 Then, we just wanted to highlight SAP really  
2 quick. Regarding simplified acquisitions, it is a  
3 mechanism for emerging SDVs to try government  
4 procurement. It doesn't take as much to get one of  
5 those awards. It's not as grueling. It's a very good  
6 ramp on for past performance to get on IDVs or the  
7 federal supply schedule. It gives them a taste without  
8 disillusionment and devastation.

9 Next slide.

10 I'm going to turn it back over to Max so he  
11 can talk about the participants.

12 MR. KIDALOV: So, as you have seen in the  
13 prior three slides, the program authorities are not  
14 major contributors through their participation or  
15 spending. The disillusionment question, very briefly,  
16 you see the population of service-disabled veterans,  
17 almost four million. You see the population of  
18 businesses between 197 and 80,000, depending on the  
19 source of data.

20 You see 15 of approximately 16,000 of them are  
21 active in CCR, but over 35,000 are inactive. Now, that  
22 could possible mean that they were all successful and  
23 sold out, or another explanation would be that they  
24 have been very disillusioned and quit participating.

25 Next slide, please.

50

1 So, I'd like to just show the participation  
2 trends. What you see is that the number of firms that  
3 are getting new awards has been declining since FY '10,  
4 FY '11. The number of set-aside awardee participants  
5 has been stagnated as well. So, the authorities and  
6 the program process and the program outputs are not  
7 aligned.

8 Next slide.

9 We also see this by type of set-asides. You  
10 see increase in SAP over a few years. But you see on  
11 the other set-asides from FY '10 -- so, DoD's last plan  
12 was in FY '09. From FY '10 down, we're seeing downward  
13 decrease.

14 Next slide.

15 Program participation, you also see a decline  
16 in the open market. You see a spike in IDVs. So, for  
17 more established firms, decline in participants from  
18 the open market.

19 Next slide, please.

20 As our outcomes, we'll look to a couple of  
21 measures. One is the graduates. So, the firms that  
22 have outgrown the small business size standard service-  
23 disabled veteran-owned. We have a population of about  
24 300, and it's a decreasing population. It has been  
25 decreasing from FY '11 for the last several years. So,

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1 that tells us something about what is happening with  
2 the population and whether the program is building and  
3 launching successful businesses.

4 Next slide, please.

5 This slide goes to an outcome, goes to  
6 discretion as well. But it goes to outcome because it  
7 shows the capacity of firms that are in the open  
8 market, how much work they're handling on average and  
9 how much work on average is handled by firms more  
10 established through IDVs.

11 Next slide, please.

12 So, our answers to research questions, can the  
13 program generally be understood in terms of this  
14 contract measurement performance model? Yes, it can  
15 be. That explains the paradox between the assessments,  
16 the negative assessments, and the success. The model  
17 explains that.

18 The second question is, is individual  
19 contracting officer's discretion, the unguided  
20 discretion, is that the right mechanism? The answer to  
21 that is?

22 MS. LEE: No. For the record, that's N O.  
23 So, the reason why it's not is because we don't have  
24 procurement-ready SDVs or even veterans. A small note  
25 that actually did happen to me as a contracting

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1 officer, I had a friend that left the Marine Corps, a  
2 long career, and called me up. They called me up and  
3 said, I saw your name on FBO, where's my contract. For  
4 those reasons, it's not the right mechanism for  
5 process.

6 I'd like to say that it's confusing. It's  
7 confusing at the KO level. The door really is shut to  
8 the business at the KO level, because the KO is the  
9 awarding factor.

10 MR. KIDALOV: The last question, can SAP be  
11 helpful? Yes. SAP can be helpful.

12 Next slide, please.

13 So, our recommendation, we have some  
14 recommendations that were agency specific, DoD  
15 specific. This is a whole of government kind of  
16 presentation. We try to make this recommendation whole  
17 of government.

18 So, the first one is that strategic integrated  
19 view of resources for business development. We need to  
20 take that view. So, that's contracts, that's technical  
21 assistance, mentoring, incentives, all of that. We  
22 need to look at that as program inputs and align them  
23 towards business development.

24 Our recommendation is to create a business  
25 development program specific for service-disabled

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1 veteran-owned small businesses. Lift that burden from  
2 the contracting officer, the burden of balancing  
3 business development and meeting the requirements, and  
4 use SAP as pathways to build it up.

5 The result, we hope, will be the outputs.  
6 There will be responsible, capable firms. The outcome  
7 disillusionment will diminish. The all-volunteer force  
8 will view self-employment as a viable path. Veterans  
9 will continue to support our government's public  
10 service missions now as business owners.

11 For the recommendation for how to create this  
12 program, we think it's something the agencies can do.  
13 Congress, certainly always good to have legislation,  
14 but their (inaudible) from executive orders on how to  
15 get this done. Executive order 12432, for example,  
16 there's 12073, 11625, any number of those that could  
17 provide some good examples of that.

18 The SBA can do a lot on its own. But because  
19 of the past regulatory statements disagreeing with the  
20 business development intent, there may or may not be  
21 questions. Also, as a whole government approach,  
22 bringing that authority from the president would be  
23 very useful.

24 MS. LEE: I just want to say one thing. I've  
25 been here for the last two days and I've been hearing

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1 the meetings. As an awarding KO to both 8(a)s, SDVs,  
2 from zero dollars to millions of dollars, I can say  
3 that the SDV program and the veteran's program is  
4 extremely different than the 8(a) program for the fact,  
5 at the KO level, the 8(a) program, they are hand held  
6 by the SBA. There's a letter that tells the  
7 contracting officer that. This is what you have.

8 Now, the disabled veterans and the veteran's  
9 program, sure, could it be like that? Yes, it could.  
10 But with veterans, you have a different life as a  
11 veteran than another citizen. You have more people in  
12 your life. If you're a disabled veteran, you have the  
13 VA in your life. You have your past DoD in your life.  
14 You have a lot of agencies just in your life that  
15 you're dealing with to support yourself.

16 And then, throw on sustaining a business on  
17 top of that with no directed development for the  
18 particular veteran, that is really hard on them. At  
19 that the time of the KO, it would be great to have a  
20 letter that says, yes, they can do it, we told them  
21 how. It would be even greater to have that  
22 justification in some kind of letter or cited authority  
23 to say this particular veteran's needs were met, and  
24 they were met accordingly for them to succeed.

25 MR. KRAMER: And better still, if we can

55

1 describe that there's some sort of ongoing mentor  
2 protégé relationship, that will be there to be an  
3 organic and natural sort of thing.

4 MR. KIDALOV: Absolutely.

5 MR. KRAMER: So, I know I have one what I hope  
6 to be very quick question, because you have given us an  
7 immense amount of information here today, not only to  
8 digest but also to operate off of. I think Chen is  
9 going to be sending us a bill for double time work on  
10 putting the transcript of all of that.

11 So, the one thing I find very powerful is  
12 slide 18 and what follows, talking about how we seem to  
13 have hit a peak with the percentage to which the  
14 contracting instruments, the portion of the goaling  
15 that they amounted to.

16 As I sort of digest all of that, there was  
17 also discussion early on about academic assessments,  
18 identifying that there had really been entrenchment,  
19 that the goaling programs were really just going back  
20 to established businesses and not providing  
21 opportunities for the new ones.

22 Do any of these address that issue  
23 specifically or is it just sort of the shadow, the  
24 obvious shadow of this, that if you're not bringing in  
25 new ones, it's going to the old ones? But is there any

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1 data that we could point to directly on that  
2 entrenchment point?

3 MR. KIDALOV: Well, sir, the entrenchment data  
4 comes in the IDV, so the discussion of participants by  
5 IDVs.

6 MR. KRAMER: Okay.

7 MR. KIDALOV: So, where the participants that  
8 are IDVs are favored through increased awards, and the  
9 trends are more spending to IDVs.

10 MR. KRAMER: Okay.

11 MR. KIDALOV: The other element of that is the  
12 non set-asides. So, by definition, if this program is  
13 assistance, as the FAR says it's assistance, to  
14 service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses, and we  
15 know that, for instance, with sole sources, we have 94  
16 businesses out of, what, 2700 or something that we have  
17 active. There are only 94 of them using that tool.  
18 So, it tells me that the rest of them are not using  
19 that tool. Do they need it? Maybe they need it, but  
20 they're getting the work otherwise.

21 MR. KRAMER: So, it's not a safe assumption on  
22 the data from 18 to think that because it's a smaller  
23 part of the pie going from almost two percent to about  
24 half a percent that the rest of that are all  
25 entrenched. They could be new awards but just not

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1 coming in through these sole source sort of things.  
2 There's something else there, right?

3 MR. KIDALOV: The entrenchment argument was  
4 that it's assistance to firms that perhaps may not need  
5 it. What you see from the data, very clearly, is that  
6 the vast majority of firms get work through other ways.  
7 So, they don't need that assistance.

8 MR. KRAMER: And I'm not saying any of that to  
9 be critical. I'm just wondering how much I have very  
10 firm foundation to sort of scream from the mountain  
11 tops that, you know, starting in '08-'09 when we see a  
12 real influx of folks coming back home, that we see that  
13 sort of trend. So, we need to look at this. But  
14 that's incredibly helpful.

15 MR. KIDALOV: The IDV data, let me point to  
16 the IDV slide, which is --

17 MS. LEE: While Max pulls up the IDV slide,  
18 I'd just --

19 MR. KIDALOV: -- slide 25.

20 MS. LEE: I just wanted to say, if a business  
21 is on an IDV, they know the game. They got the award.  
22 They made it through the labyrinth. And when you're  
23 awarding as contracting officer, you're looking at IDVs  
24 first because you're guided to.

25 MR. KIDALOV: So, slide 25, you see firms that

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1 are getting awards through the open market going down,  
2 firms that are getting the awards through IDVs, it's  
3 increasing. So, the trend is towards more established  
4 firms that can qualify for IDVs.

5 MR. KRAMER: Okay. Well, with that, I think  
6 I've got to wrap this up a bit, because we -- this was  
7 incredibly helpful. Even though I'm sort of stopping  
8 the presentation now, by no means do I think it stops.  
9 This is a trajectory this is sending us to.

10 I think the points that you've raised with  
11 regard to the business development approach and how we  
12 organize that, similar to but alongside 8(a), is  
13 something that I think we'll very much continue to  
14 consider, not only among this group but here  
15 specifically to SBA.

16 Is there anybody else who briefly, though, had  
17 any questions while we have the presenters here that  
18 they wanted to ask about?

19 MS. WILLIAMS: Alice Williams again  
20 representing Mr. Kenyata Wesley, DoD. I don't have any  
21 questions, but what I'd like to say is I echo the  
22 comments of the administrators. There's a lot of  
23 information to digest.

24 I do like to get the report in front of Mr.  
25 Wesley and sit down with him. There are some things in

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1 the report I think we can leverage as supporting this  
2 veteran-owned program.

3 I'm also very concerned about your comment on  
4 the better buying power initiative, how it's hindering  
5 as a result of the competition requirements, by law  
6 what we have to do. So, maybe that's something else  
7 that we need to look at as we move forward in  
8 developing initiative and developing strategic plans  
9 for the veterans program.

10 Again, I just want to say great report. We do  
11 like to get it in front of the leadership to make sure  
12 that we are following the process in terms of ensuring  
13 that we're supporting the veterans community. DoD  
14 continues to lead the way. We're very favorable in  
15 supporting the service-disabled program. We were out  
16 of the gate very early years ago. That momentum hasn't  
17 changed.

18 We continue to do things in terms of market  
19 research, along with training the staff appropriately,  
20 contracting officers as well, throughout the  
21 acquisition community. We will continue to do that,  
22 but I think there's a lot of information in this report  
23 that we can use, at least do a deep dive analysis. We  
24 may need to get you also in front of Mr. Wesley to talk  
25 about how this process actually works in terms of a

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1 more deeper diving where you've got your statistics and  
2 so forth from.

3 But again, I wanted to just say personally  
4 thank you, and we will take it back to the leadership.

5 MR. KIDALOV: Thank you.

6 MR. KRAMER: Okay, thank you. Well, to stay  
7 on course with regard to the agenda, I think we'll hold  
8 there for now. In our discussions later among the  
9 members of the task force and comments later, if there  
10 are additional comments, we certainly welcome that.

11 So, at this point, I think Ms. Blackman from  
12 the Census Bureau is here and has joined us. So, I  
13 think at this point we'll then move to her presentation  
14 about the Census data that is potentially relevant to  
15 our conversations.

16 MS. BLACKMAN: Good morning. I will take off  
17 my bracelet so it's not jingling on the microphone.

18 So, I was fortunate enough to give this  
19 presentation yesterday, and I'm very excited to be back  
20 here today to give it again. So, thank you very much  
21 for allowing me to be here as a representative for the  
22 Bureau. Our survey that I'm going to be talking about  
23 mainly today is the Survey of Business Owners,  
24 specifically for veteran-owned firms.

25 So, again, my name is Naomi Blackman. I'm a



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1 supervisory survey statistician at the U.S. Census  
2 Bureau. I'm a section chief in the Island Areas and  
3 Business Owners Branch. So, our surveys cover the  
4 survey business owners and Annual Survey of  
5 Entrepreneurs.

6 Today I'm going to be discussing the Survey of  
7 Business Owners, and we're going to do a program  
8 overview, the data availability, the 2012 release  
9 schedule, and some results from the 2012 survey,  
10 specifically as they pertain to veteran-owned firms.

11 So, the Survey of Business Owners is a  
12 quinquennial program, so that means it occurs every  
13 five years and years ending in two and seven. The  
14 program is a part of the economic census and is  
15 therefore mandatory under the same U.S. code statutes,  
16 Title 13. The SBO is unique in that ask demographic  
17 information about businesses and business owners. We  
18 also collect some other information about businesses  
19 and their owner. We call them characteristics.

20 So, we publish estimates on the number of  
21 firms, receipts, what usually is referred to as sales  
22 we call it receipts, payroll and employment, and all of  
23 those things by gender, ethnicity, race, and veteran  
24 status. The data are disseminated in tables, which  
25 contain all of the aforementioned instruments, on

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1 American Fact Finder, which is our primary data  
2 dissemination tool.

3 The SBO provides the only comprehensive,  
4 regularly collected source of information on these  
5 selected economic and demographic characteristics. So,  
6 the SBO is really unique again, in that it is an  
7 economic survey, but we ask some demographic  
8 information. That's sort of the bread and butter of  
9 the SBO. It's demographic information about the  
10 ownership, but it's on the economic side as opposed to  
11 the demographic side of the Census Bureau.

12 So, the SBO is surveyed and disseminated on a  
13 firm basis. So, this is company basis not -- if you're  
14 familiar with the economic census, that's an  
15 establishment basis. So, we're talking about firms.  
16 The reason we do that is we're interested in ownership  
17 information. We presume the ownership information is  
18 going to be the same, regardless of where the  
19 establishments are, the activity that goes on at the  
20 establishments.

21 It includes non-farm businesses that file  
22 applicable tax forms. It covers 20 NAICS codes, and  
23 there are 8 industry exceptions. The SBO estimates  
24 come from administrative data, economic census data,  
25 and actual survey responses. SBO is used by government

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1 program officials, industry organization leaders,  
2 economic and social analysts and researchers, business  
3 owners, entrepreneurs, and many other uses.

4 So, the SBO sample is approximately 1.75  
5 million employer and nonemployer businesses.  
6 Statistically, this is a huge sample. This is a really,  
7 really big sample and, by far, the largest sample that  
8 the Census Bureau does on the economic side, outside of  
9 the economic census. This is a sampled survey.

10 It uses administrative data to estimate the  
11 probability of a firm, whether it's a minority or  
12 women-owned, for example, and each firm is placed in  
13 one of nine frames for sampling. We'll see the nine  
14 frames on the next slide. It stratified by MSA,  
15 Metropolitan Statistical Area, the industry related to  
16 NAICS, the frame and employment status.

17 So, these are the nine sampling frames that  
18 you see here. There's just one small caveat, and that  
19 is the publicly-owned firms, the probably better term  
20 for that is we call it unclassified. Also, these are  
21 firms that don't have any ownership that owns 10  
22 percent or more. It says publicly owned because  
23 generally we see the really big companies have a lot of  
24 owners. We can't really characterize ownership  
25 information if they have 4,000 stockholders. We can't

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1 get into that. So, generally, we just kind of call  
2 them publicly owned.

3 So, the data are available for firms,  
4 estimates by firms, receipts, or sales, payroll and  
5 employment by gender, ethnicity, race, and veteran  
6 status again. They are available at the U.S. State,  
7 MSA county, and place level -- place is sort of  
8 synonymous with city -- and the two- to six-digit NAICS  
9 level, and also for receipts and employment size  
10 categories.

11 So, those are just categories that we kind of  
12 lumped together. I have some slides about that later  
13 to kind of explain that a little bit more. When we put  
14 things in categories and we lump them together, we can  
15 publish a little bit more detail by doing that. So,  
16 that's why we do that for certain tables.

17 So, those are for the company summary  
18 estimates. Those are our first 20 tables. There are a  
19 total of 93 tables. The next 73 tables are the  
20 characteristics of businesses and business owners.  
21 That information is also available.

22 I've kind of called them the core four.  
23 That's the gender, ethnicity, race, and veteran status.  
24 So, if you hear me say core four, that's what I mean.  
25 But those are only available, because it's based on

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1 responses, nothing is impudent for those. So, that is  
2 only at the U.S. level and at the two-digit NAICS. So,  
3 we call that the sector level. We also have a season  
4 employment size category for that level of data, too,  
5 those data tables.

6 So, we were originally scheduled to release  
7 the estimates in November of last year, but we actually  
8 released them in December, the final estimates. August  
9 we released preliminary estimates, but the actual final  
10 estimates were released in December. The CBCBO,  
11 Characteristics of Businesses and Business Owners, data  
12 was released in February.

13 So, now I'm going to talk a little bit about  
14 the actual firm estimates and the data, some of the  
15 data that came out of the survey from 2012. So, there  
16 were 2.5 million veteran-owned firms in 2012. That's  
17 up three percent from 2007. Representing about a  
18 trillion dollars in receipts or sales, that's down 6.4  
19 percent from 2007. Veteran-owned firms represent 9.1  
20 percent of all U.S. firms.

21 So, this table displays select states as well  
22 as the U.S. and some of their corresponding data  
23 results. These states are not statistically  
24 significantly ranked, so I'm not implying or inferring  
25 a ranking. I have to say that in this slide. Some

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1 interesting information as compared to the U.S.

2 So, for those of you who don't have the  
3 printout, I'm sorry, because you can't really see the  
4 slide up there. But the largest categories, according  
5 to this bar chart here, are construction,  
6 manufacturing, wholesale trade, and retail trade.  
7 These are veteran-owned firms by industry.

8 MR. FERRARO: Do you slice this by the source  
9 of the sales, government versus nongovernment?

10 MS. BLACKMAN: So, we have a question.  
11 Actually, someone asked that yesterday, interestingly  
12 enough. We have a question on the form that asks what  
13 -- I'll tell you exactly what it says. Give me just a  
14 second. It says, in 2012, which of the following types  
15 of customers accounted for 10 percent or more of this  
16 business' total sales of goods and/or services.

17 The first option is federal government. The  
18 second one is state and local government, including  
19 school districts, transportation authorities, et  
20 cetera. Other businesses and other organizations,  
21 including distributors of your products is a third  
22 option. Individuals is the fourth. This is  
23 distributed in a characteristics of business owner  
24 table. So, that table does have sector information in  
25 it. But it counts --

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1 MR. FERRARO: Sector, though, is different  
2 from -- I guess my point is, it seems like, of course,  
3 we focus a lot on the government's piece of it. But  
4 how does that compare to the total spend that's open  
5 for small businesses?

6 MS. BLACKMAN: I mean, first of all, I  
7 wouldn't say that these are totally exclusive  
8 categories, right. So, there's a denominator issue  
9 there. These are probably maybe four of the most  
10 common. I wouldn't know. I wasn't around when this  
11 question was developed. So, I'd have to do a little  
12 bit of digging, really, to answer your question,  
13 because the denominator is the issue.

14 What total? What total do you mean? We can  
15 certainly sum up the total we ask for on this question.  
16 But if you want an overarching total, that's something  
17 we would have to definitely look into.

18 Let me write that down. Sorry, excuse me, I  
19 have to write everything down. I want to answer  
20 everybody's questions, and I clearly don't always have  
21 all the answers. So, it's something to think about.

22 So, this is the same information basically as  
23 in the graphic before, except this has firm count in  
24 it. Again, this is in no particular order. It's  
25 actually in the sector chronological order, which isn't

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1 even shown here.

2 So, this graph shows the portion of veteran-  
3 owned firms by firm count and total receipts for  
4 employer versus nonemployers. The nonemployer firms  
5 are represented by the lighter shade. It's an  
6 interesting dynamic. We see this sort of show up in  
7 all the demo groups and the total. There are a lot of  
8 firms, a lot of nonemployer firms. The nonemployer  
9 firms represent a small amount of the receipts. You  
10 can see the converse effect of that with the employer  
11 firms.

12 MR. LENEY: In your firms by industry, you've  
13 got a firm count of 2.5 million firms where the sales  
14 and receipts totaled 1.1 billion. Just a quick  
15 arithmetic says that these firms are -- they don't have  
16 very many receipts for the firm.

17 MS. BLACKMAN: So, are you looking at the  
18 graph?

19 MR. LENEY: It's less than half a million  
20 dollars.

21 MS. BLACKMAN: The tabular format, I'm sorry,  
22 not the graph.

23 MR. LENEY: Yes, the tabular format.

24 MS. BLACKMAN: Okay.

25 MR. LENEY: Two and a half million firms and

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1 1.4 billion total sales?  
 2 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Is that by thousands?  
 3 They're in thousands.  
 4 MR. LENEY: Is that in thousands?  
 5 MS. BLACKMAN: Yes.  
 6 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: 1.1 trillion.  
 7 MR. LENEY: Okay, got it. Thank you.  
 8 MS. BLACKMAN: Right, I'm sorry. For those of  
 9 you who aren't familiar, yes, most of the data are in  
 10 thousands. Sorry, I should have mentioned that.  
 11 MR. LENEY: Thank you.  
 12 MS. BLACKMAN: So, in 2012, there were about  
 13 442,000 employer firms, and they generated again about  
 14 a trillion dollars in sales and receipts. They paid  
 15 \$1.95 million in payroll and employed about 115 million  
 16 individuals.  
 17 Also, in 2012, there are about two million  
 18 nonemployer firms that generated \$92 million in sales  
 19 and receipts. Nonemployers represent about 82 percent  
 20 of all veteran-owned firms and contribute about 8  
 21 percent to sales and receipts. So, this is sort of the  
 22 phenomenon that I just mentioned in the previous graph  
 23 about the really large firm count with smaller  
 24 receipts.  
 25 So, this is one of the employment size tables,

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1 and you can see the majority is there in the one to  
 2 four employees for employer firms, for veteran employer  
 3 firms in 2012. Also, this is a receipt size table that  
 4 I was mentioning earlier. We kind of group these  
 5 together. You can see in red the higher categories are  
 6 the firms with sales and receipts less than \$5,000 and  
 7 firms and sales with receipts of about just under  
 8 25,000. This data is not in thousands. This is one of  
 9 the tables that's in dollars.  
 10 MS. CARSON: Really quick. There is someone  
 11 who is on the line who has not muted their phone.  
 12 Could you please do so at this time?  
 13 MS. BLACKMAN: All right. I've done that  
 14 before in a meeting.  
 15 So, in this graph or this table, we can see  
 16 that male-owned firms accounted for about 84 percent of  
 17 veteran-owned firms. Female-owned firms accounted for  
 18 about 15 percent of veteran-owned firms. Here we see  
 19 ethnicity breakdown at the Census Bureau of Hispanic,  
 20 and the details around Hispanic ethnicity is the only  
 21 ethnicity we publish. So, this is Hispanic versus non-  
 22 Hispanic.  
 23 MR. KRAMER: Now, in your data, the overall  
 24 profile of veterans that responded and how they break  
 25 down. So, whether or not with these numbers Hispanics

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1 or ethnic Americans, or whatever, are overperforming,  
 2 the way they are in the general population?  
 3 MS. BLACKMAN: Right. So, we have race  
 4 detail. So, that is Asian, Pacific Islander, all of  
 5 those.  
 6 MR. KRAMER: So, did any of these in  
 7 particular jump out at you? I mean, here we're saying  
 8 that Hispanic looks like maybe about seven percent, if  
 9 I'm doing the math right. Do we know what the overall  
 10 number is on that?  
 11 MS. BLACKMAN: Sure, for the total for all  
 12 veteran firms? Oh, yes, we have that total.  
 13 MR. KRAMER: Okay. It might be interesting as  
 14 well to see if there are any particular subgroups that  
 15 we're not reaching, because when we then talk about  
 16 doing outreach and things like that, if we can identify  
 17 that, 15 percent of all veterans are African-American,  
 18 but they only represent 4 percent of entrepreneurs.  
 19 You know, that would be very --  
 20 MS. BLACKMAN: That's really very interesting.  
 21 So, that actually came up yesterday, too, about having  
 22 the demographic information from the decennial census  
 23 or the American Community Survey, whatever that is, and  
 24 the proportion of the population.  
 25 Also, for ethnicity, we have ethnicity

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1 breakdowns, too, where we have -- I don't know all the  
 2 categories off the top of my head -- Mexican, and I  
 3 think Chicano is the other word, Puerto Rican. So, we  
 4 get really detailed with that.  
 5 MR. KRAMER: Okay. We can follow up on that.  
 6 MS. BLACKMAN: Sure, absolutely.  
 7 Sorry, I'm a note taker. I take my pencil  
 8 everywhere, hang it around my lanyard and keep it with  
 9 me all the time.  
 10 MR. KRAMER: We're on transcript not video, so  
 11 it looks the same.  
 12 MS. BLACKMAN: So, this shows minority- versus  
 13 nonminority-owned veteran firms. They made up  
 14 approximately 79 percent of veteran-owned firms.  
 15 Minority-owned firms made up roughly 20.6 percent of  
 16 veteran-owned firms. Excuse me, I meant nonminority-  
 17 owned firms, sorry.  
 18 So, you can see here the number of veteran-  
 19 owned firms by minority race, and this is what I was  
 20 getting at with the race breakdown that we have. We  
 21 have some detail for these as well, some detail race  
 22 for like Asian. We have Vietnamese and Chinese,  
 23 depending on the table and depending on the level of  
 24 detail. It depends on what gets suppressed and the  
 25 data support.

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1 So, now I'm going to talk a little bit about  
2 veteran business owner characteristics. This was the  
3 one that didn't show up. We actually expanded our  
4 veteran question. I had the pleasure of meeting the  
5 gentleman who was at least a major player in getting  
6 that done from 2007 to 2012. So, we definitely  
7 expanded the question and added a lot more detail about  
8 active duty military service, disabled, whether they  
9 served before or after September 11th, those types of  
10 things. So, we expanded that question.

11 So, this just shows the veteran owner  
12 characteristics. So, it's basically that question that  
13 you just saw, and this is the data that corresponds  
14 with that. So, these are the sort of answers. You  
15 kind of think of our tables like that. The first 20  
16 tables are basically the demographic questions, but the  
17 other questions, the other 73 questions, correspond  
18 with a question on the form.

19 So, I always encourage people, if you're  
20 trying to get to know our data, either cursory or  
21 intimate, you should probably look at the form. Look  
22 at the form to see what we ask, and you will know,  
23 based on what we ask, what we can provide, what we  
24 disseminate, I should say.

25 So, you can see here the age and education

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1 level of veteran owners, and the owner's age. One  
2 interesting thing about the level of education, I'll  
3 read it to you, it says what is the highest degree or  
4 level of school that the owner completed prior to  
5 establishing, purchasing, or acquiring the business.  
6 So, it's interesting because it doesn't ask for the  
7 survey year; it asks when the business was purchased or  
8 acquired.

9 So, we see here on this fun little graphic  
10 that you can see most veteran-owned business owners  
11 started or founded their business, as opposed to 10.3  
12 percent which purchased. So, you can see there's an  
13 overwhelming majority there.

14 This next slide shows the average number of  
15 hours per week spent managing or working in the  
16 business. This again came up yesterday because it was  
17 surprising that less than 20 hours a week. But then we  
18 got into the full time versus part time. Is that a  
19 lot? Are they doing something else? Those are the  
20 kind of things that we -- it's a data gap. Those are  
21 things that we don't necessarily know. So, it's  
22 interesting to look at.

23 So, this is really interesting, too,  
24 especially when you look at the previous graphic. It  
25 says that most owners spend 20 hours or less. So,

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1 according to this, it says that 59.3 percent of  
2 business owners, that their business was not their  
3 primary source of income, which is interesting.

4 So, this question actually changed also from  
5 2007. The 2007 question asked were you born in the  
6 United States. For 2012, the question asks were you  
7 born a U.S. citizen. This was purposely to capture  
8 people, for example, who are born, you know, on a base  
9 in Germany. Were you born a U.S. citizen?

10 So, we're going to talk a little bit about  
11 veteran business characteristics. So, family-owned  
12 businesses represented 11.4 percent of veteran-owned  
13 firms and also 35.3 percent of receipts for veteran-  
14 owned firms.

15 So, this is about source of capital and what  
16 source of capital they used to start the business. So,  
17 you can see here the majority used personal or family  
18 savings of the actual owner to start the business. So,  
19 that's interesting, too.

20 MR. KRAMER: I don't have a question. That's  
21 fascinating to me. What are we, 85 percent, roughly?  
22 No, no, no, I'm doing the math wrong. Or is it 85  
23 percent that is either self-funded or didn't need any  
24 funding? So, that's something to take into  
25 consideration.

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1 MS. BLACKMAN: Yes, it's really interesting,  
2 particularly for this group yesterday.

3 So, we can see here that home-based businesses  
4 for veteran-owned firms represented 57 percent of firms  
5 and 7.7 percent of receipts for veteran-owned firms in  
6 2012. So, we can see here that 85.1 percent of  
7 veteran-owned firms had one owner. Almost 12 percent  
8 had 2 to 4 owners. A little less than 5 percent have 5  
9 to 10. And less than a half percent had more than 10  
10 owners. So, another interesting graphic, in my  
11 opinion.

12 So, the data are accessible on our web site.  
13 Again, I encourage people to -- American Fact Finder is  
14 where we disseminate. I suggest if you want to delve  
15 into the tables, to access it through our web site,  
16 which is the econcensus dot gov econSBO, because we  
17 kind of give a little bit more, in my opinion,  
18 intuitive gateway into the tables. Again, there are 93  
19 tables. There's a lot of information. There are  
20 millions of data cells.

21 Also, any developers, you don't have to go  
22 back, but if there are any developers who are  
23 interested in open source data, we do have API, which  
24 you can access and sort of manipulate and create your  
25 own tables. It's kind of fun for geeks like me.

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1 Okay, so, now I'm going to talk a little bit  
2 about the Annual Survey of Entrepreneurs. This is a  
3 really, really exciting initiative that we were able to  
4 field for the first time. It's inaugural year was  
5 2014, reference year. We sent out our first letters.

6 This is an all electronic collection, so we  
7 don't actually have a form. We sent out a letter that  
8 says, hey, go to this web site, fill out our survey.  
9 Everyone submits it electronically. A form doesn't  
10 even exist as it does for like SBO. It looks like  
11 this. We don't have anything like this for ASE.

12 So, the ASE is a brand new mandatory survey,  
13 and it sort of supplements the five-year SBO. It's a  
14 joint effort between the Ewing Marion Kauffman  
15 Foundation, MBDA, the Minority Business Development  
16 Agency, and the Bureau. Right now, four years in 14,  
17 15, 16. In 2017, the SBO will be back because that's  
18 its next quinquennial term.

19 For 2018, we would really like to see the ASE  
20 continue. It's very important. It's very exciting.  
21 It gives the same information that the SBO does, a  
22 little bit less detail because the sample size is  
23 smaller and it's more frequent. So, we don't have as  
24 much time to process it. But it gives the same type of  
25 high level information. It's much more frequent, much

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1 more timely. So, we're really excited about that.

2 So, the ASE introduces a new module every year  
3 to measure relevant business components. That's  
4 another very unique thing about this survey. We have a  
5 set of questions that are interchangeable, so we take a  
6 few, take them out, and plug some more back in. Every  
7 year that will happen.

8 So, for 2014, the module questions were in  
9 R&D, research and development. For 2015, they'll be  
10 around business practices. So, we ask about KPIs and  
11 we ask about what tasks employees are doing. For 2016,  
12 who knows. We talked to someone upstairs yesterday  
13 that has an idea for 2016, so we'll see what happens  
14 for that.

15 Again, like same as SBO, produces estimates on  
16 firms, receipts, payroll, and employment by gender,  
17 ethnicity, race, and veteran status. But they're  
18 annual instead of quinquennial, so it's more frequent.  
19 And same for businesses and business owner  
20 characteristics.

21 The ASE is conducted on a firm basis, same as  
22 SBO. The sample size is smaller, 290,000 employer  
23 businesses, so the SBO is 1.75 employer and  
24 nonemployer. ASE is employer only. We will publish  
25 nonemployers, but we didn't mail those out. We will

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1 model those. So, 290,000 is significantly smaller than  
2 the 1.75 million, but that's still really big. It's a  
3 really large sample still for ASE.

4 These are stratified by MSA frame and age of  
5 business. That's another really interesting thing that  
6 ASE is going to offer, is an age of business category.  
7 So, in addition to all the other categories we have,  
8 the age of business categories right now stand at 0 to  
9 4, 5 to 9, and 10-plus years. So, as far as  
10 entrepreneurship goes and things like that, that's a  
11 very important measure. So, this is something that  
12 we're adding in, and also stratified by frame, same  
13 nine frames that we saw before.

14 It includes all nonfarm businesses filing IRS  
15 employer tax forms and covers the 20 NAICS industries  
16 with the 8 exceptions. The estimates are sourced again  
17 from IRS tax forms, economic census reports, and actual  
18 responses to the survey.

19 So, again, it was fielded in September 2015,  
20 and we just closed out on February 26th. We expect the  
21 estimates later this year. That says August. I'm  
22 going to say later this year. And a subset of the SBO  
23 tables. Again, it's U.S. state top 50 MSAs, no county,  
24 no place. It's too detailed. The sample won't support  
25 it. We'll end up suppressing it anyway, so we're not

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1 going to do that. And it's the two-digit NAICS, not  
2 four, not six. Again, same reason, sample is a little  
3 smaller and won't support it.

4 So, this is more information if you want it on  
5 ASE, particularly when the data come out. This is a  
6 great web site to job down if you don't have a  
7 printout. There's an ASE research paper. SSRN stands  
8 for Social Sciences Research Network that my boss and  
9 another researcher at Census completed. It gives  
10 background on ASE. It contains actual 14 ASE  
11 worksheet.

12 We call it a worksheet instead of a form.  
13 It's so respondents can go in and print it out. If it  
14 happens to not be the owner filling the form out and  
15 they need to print it and take it to the owner to ask  
16 them questions, they can do that. They cannot submit  
17 it to us, and we tried to tell them that, although we  
18 still get them in the mail. It also contains the 2015  
19 ASE module concept.

20 So, this is my contact information. So,  
21 please feel free to e-mail me if you have any questions  
22 at all about our data now or anytime in the future.  
23 Thank you. Any questions?

24 MR. KRAMER: Well, thank you very much, Naomi.  
25 Does anyone have any questions or comments?

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1 MR. LEGHORN: Naomi, is there a reason why  
2 farmer veterans are excluded from both the SBO and ASE?

3 MS. BLACKMAN: Yes, because the Department of  
4 Agriculture does a census of agriculture. So, it's  
5 OMB. Actually, I see OMB. It would be duplicate  
6 information, and it would be a respondent burden issue  
7 if we tried to ask the same information from two  
8 different agencies.

9 MR. KRAMER: Anything else?

10 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you. Is the 2012 data  
11 comparable to that of the 2002 data?

12 MS. BLACKMAN: 2012 to 2002?

13 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, if I wanted to do like --

14 MS. BLACKMAN: It depends on the data item.  
15 That's a heavy question. It depends on the data item.  
16 We know that from 2002 to 2007, or at least 2007 and  
17 2012, the veteran question changed. So, for the  
18 veteran, the actual characteristics for veteran are  
19 probably comparable.

20 The actual table, the CB table, the  
21 characteristics of business table, no, because the  
22 question changed. Same thing for the equally-owned  
23 male/female, that question changed. So, there are  
24 methodological issues that impact that. So, some of  
25 them are statistically comparable; some of them have

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1 methodological complications.

2 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay.

3 MS. BLACKMAN: So, we can have a much more  
4 detailed conversation about that offline.

5 MS. WILLIAMS: Sure.

6 MR. KRAMER: Thanks. Anything else at this  
7 point?

8 (No verbal response.)

9 MR. KRAMER: Okay, with that, we're going to  
10 move on to the next section of our agenda.

11 Thank you very much for that, Naomi. That was  
12 wonderful. Some very helpful data in there. I know  
13 that we here, for a number of reasons, but especially  
14 for the military and veteran angle, are looking forward  
15 to the ASE report coming out later this year.

16 So, we're going to move on to the Agency  
17 reports. We've allowed about five minutes per  
18 different agency. I'm going to use some executive  
19 privilege here to scramble the agenda because A, I want  
20 to keep you all on your toes and B, I want to make sure  
21 that we intersperse a little bit of the government  
22 agencies in with the VSO reports. I think that will  
23 provide a little better flavor to the conversation.

24 My sense is, I mean, you're happy to provide  
25 any sort of report update you have. You know what you

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1 have to report better than I do. But I would just,  
2 again, remind us of the context of over the next three  
3 months, between now and June, we'll be doing a pretty  
4 robust look at the different recommendations we're  
5 working on. You will be part of discussions about some  
6 of those recommendations that directly impact your  
7 organization, some that you may not, but people in this  
8 room will be.

9 So, I think that these reports can give us a  
10 sense of what really is on the front of the mind of the  
11 opportunities and the challenges of the different  
12 agencies that we can then bring into those  
13 conversations about the specific recommendations that  
14 we'll be pursuing. So, I'll leave it at that.

15 I will scramble, but I'll scramble after  
16 number one, because that would be unfair. So, Tim, I'm  
17 going to leave it with you and the Department of Labor  
18 to kick off your report.

19 MR. GREEN: So, Bill, are you still on the  
20 line? Would you like to give the update?

21 MR. METHENY: Sure, I am. Can you hear me  
22 okay?

23 MR. GREEN: I can hear you loud and clear.

24 MR. METHENY: Okay, great, thank you. So,  
25 this is Bill Metheny. I'm the director of field

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1 operations for the U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans  
2 Employment and Training Service. So, I'd like to  
3 highlight just three things that we at DoL are doing,  
4 some of them to elaborate on what we've already talked  
5 about just a little bit.

6 First, as we continue to partner with others  
7 in the veterans space, one of the things we'd like to  
8 highlight that was on an earlier slide is that the work  
9 being done on the Transition Assistance Program is  
10 coming to fruition in one way in that we have just  
11 completed a curriculum review of the Department of  
12 Labor employment workshop that is about to be released  
13 for distributing the new manuals for that training, the  
14 new trainers on this new curriculum.

15 What it does is incorporates feedback that  
16 we've received from veterans who have gone through the  
17 program, instructors, other experts in the field,  
18 veteran service organizations. We've tried to really  
19 focus on what is most important in the three days that  
20 those transition service members are with us.

21 So, we focused on investing a good bit of time  
22 in labor market research, particularly understanding  
23 what the world is like out there and what those  
24 transition service members want to do, whether pursue  
25 the education track, the business track and become

85	<p>1 their own bosses, or the more traditional track of 2 moving into the work force directly.</p> <p>3 The other elements that we've incorporated are 4 emphasis on the resume writing and the interview 5 skills. Then, the final piece that we've really tried 6 to invest in, based on feedback from employers, is a 7 cultivation in workplace to help veterans prepare to 8 fit in to the workplace where they're going. We think 9 that will be beneficial both for the veterans 10 themselves to fit in, but also, at a big picture, on 11 retention. We think we will see more success in 12 veterans being a good fit for their new workplace.</p> <p>13 Second, I'd like to highlight the partnerships 14 in networking that is going on around the country at 15 all levels. Just as we are talking today, cross 16 agencies in and out of government at the national 17 level, it's happening at the regional, state, and local 18 levels as well.</p> <p>19 One example that I would just highlight that 20 is truly exemplary of what is happening around the 21 country, yesterday, in Nashville, I had the opportunity 22 to sit in on a veteran's roundtable that included both 23 the Tennessee commissioners of labor and veterans 24 administration, which was interesting.</p> <p>25 But what was really powerful were the other</p>	87	<p>1 ready to release a report on the 22nd of March at 10:00 2 a.m. It's called, "The Employment Situation of 3 Veterans 2015." So, that encapsulates all of the annual 4 data from last year for the veterans.</p> <p>5 This report coming out in March is going to 6 focus not only on the overall numbers, but it's also 7 going to highlight disability, disabled veterans and 8 how they're doing, as well as Guard and Reserve. So, 9 that report is coming out on the 22nd of March at 10 10:00.</p> <p>11 At 1:00 at Department of Labor, we're going to 12 provide a briefing, and we're going to invite all our 13 veteran service organizations and stakeholders to 14 attend that. So, if anybody is interested that might 15 not get an invite, it's going to probably go out 16 tomorrow, let us know at Labor, and we can get you 17 there. A report will be posted online at 10 a.m. so 18 you can pull it down from the BLS dot gov website.</p> <p>19 Also, just for the work you're all doing, 20 unemployment again last month was down to 4.1 percent 21 for veterans. So, whatever the community is doing, 22 let's keep doing that because the numbers keep 23 dropping.</p> <p>24 Just for a point of record, I started working 25 at DoL in September 2012. Ever since then,</p>
86	<p>1 members around the table, which included members of the 2 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Small Business 3 Administration. We had the director for the Small 4 Business Administration there with us for the district. 5 We had partners from grantees. We had DoD represented 6 and ESGR. So, it was a powerful discussion.</p> <p>7 Folks got to meet new members of the team, and 8 the conversation went places that the agenda didn't 9 necessarily plan to take us. So, we plan to do more of 10 that to build relationships and encourage those 11 conversations.</p> <p>12 Finally, we continue to encourage small 13 business owners around the country to use the work 14 force system to help them grow their staff and train 15 their staff as they continue to grow their businesses, 16 and to take advantage of the work force system to meet 17 their OFCCP requirements as they become federal 18 contractors.</p> <p>19 So, that's just a sample of the way we're 20 working with our partners around the country in this 21 work space. So, thank you very much.</p> <p>22 MR. KRAMER: Thanks.</p> <p>23 MR. GREEN: This is Tim Green. I just wanted 24 to add a little bit to that. We just heard from the 25 Census on the study they've done. BLS is going to get</p>	88	<p>1 unemployment rate has been continuing to go down. So, 2 I don't know if there's a correlation there. But the 3 work the VSOs are doing, Small Business, all federal 4 agencies I think is having an impact on the veteran 5 employment situation as it continues to be below the 6 civilian counterpart.</p> <p>7 So, that's all we have from Labor, thanks.</p> <p>8 MS. CARSON: Tim, it's Barb Carson. Could you 9 tell us, do you know if the BLS report will cover 10 different kinds of employment or where we may find out 11 what kind of information would be in that report that's 12 going to be released?</p> <p>13 MR. GREEN: Yes. I think the best thing I 14 could do is I can give you last year's report so you 15 can see kind of generally what's going on there. But 16 it is really monthly data, especially for -- like, 17 women veterans for special populations is really hard 18 to follow because the sample size is so small on some 19 categories. So, it's not always statistically 20 significant. This one is really the best gauge that 21 BLS has on how the veterans are doing overall, just 22 because it is a larger sample size and it has more 23 validity.</p> <p>24 So, all the categories themselves, I know they 25 focus on some of the disabled veterans, survey</p>

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1 participants that have claimed disability status. So,  
2 I can share last year's report so you can kind of see  
3 what it gauges. It doesn't focus, I don't think, a lot  
4 necessarily on entrepreneurship, but it will give you a  
5 really good indicator of overall veteran --

6 MR. KRAMER: Okay, thanks. At this point, why  
7 don't we move to GSA and have their report.

8 MR. FERRARO: Good morning. This is Eric  
9 Ferraro. As I mentioned up front, I'm the GSA  
10 veteran's advocate. I work closely with our Office of  
11 Small Business, and I took over this role in November  
12 of 2015. I'm new to GSA as well.

13 From a GSA agency perspective, first of all,  
14 we've above our goal for this year with the service-  
15 disabled veterans, a little over four percent. But,  
16 more importantly, I'm really focusing on revitalizing  
17 the program that we have for veterans.

18 We had a gap, if you will, in the senior  
19 executive level as an advocate due to retirement. So,  
20 when I took over, I dusted off the charter that we had  
21 for internal and the veteran's forum that we  
22 established, and we're revitalizing those efforts to  
23 get it started.

24 We also have what we call our 21-gun salute  
25 program, which was put in place by my predecessor, 21

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1 different things that we're focusing on in this area  
2 for veterans. We're dusting that off as well, and  
3 refreshing it, and bringing it up to date. So, we can  
4 continue that.

5 On a government schedule perspective, we do  
6 have a GWAC in place called VETS, which is a set-aside  
7 for IT services for veterans. That's in the process of  
8 being I wouldn't say revitalized -- I don't know what  
9 the right term is. I'm not a contracting officer. But  
10 we're going to have a new one in place called VETS 2.  
11 I'm very actively engaged with our group in Kansas City  
12 on supporting that effort. I do know that the pool has  
13 just expanded the number of veteran-owned businesses  
14 that are going to be on that, which is a good thing.

15 In the four months that I've been here, it's  
16 more been reactive, quite frankly. If I get an e-mail  
17 or a request, I certainly respond to that right away.  
18 But now I'm kind of transitioning into the proactive  
19 stage where I want to be able to do more and reach out.  
20 So, actually, this afternoon GSA is having a forum for  
21 making it easier to do business with GSA, a small  
22 business forum. So, I'll be speaking at that, and any  
23 opportunity.

24 My role at GSA, everybody is familiar with  
25 SAM, I think, and FDDS and all that. I'm actually the

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1 executive in charge of those programs. So, when I talk  
2 about those programs, and what we're doing to modernize  
3 SAM and making it easier to do business with the  
4 government, it's a very nice overlap with my veteran's  
5 hat.

6 So, every time I'm speaking on those programs,  
7 I'm also throwing in, hey, I'm your veteran point of  
8 contact. If you have any issues with veterans or need  
9 any help, if you're a veteran-owned small business,  
10 please let me know. I'm kind of offering that  
11 invitation as well to the group.

12 The gentleman from Labor just mentioned an  
13 event in Tennessee. GSA is, of course, throughout the  
14 country, and we have regions throughout. The forum  
15 that I mentioned, previously it didn't have  
16 representation from every region within GSA, so I'm  
17 going to be doing that and trying again to be  
18 proactive.

19 So, as folks from GSA hear about things or  
20 from the other agencies, if you would like a GSA  
21 presence, it doesn't hurt to ask. I may not be able to  
22 support them all, or GSA may not be able to support  
23 them all, but we certainly want to help if we can, if  
24 it will add value to your agenda.

25 The only other thing that we're working on

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1 closely, again, it falls into my role with SAM where  
2 we're talking to the Association of PTACs, helping the  
3 folks do business with the government. I was scheduled  
4 to speak, but I had to cancel out. But we'll have a  
5 GSA presence there. We're again talking up the  
6 veteran's efforts everywhere we can.

7 I think that's about all I have.

8 MR. KRAMER: Thank you, sir. I will just  
9 point out -- I mean, with what you said right there,  
10 there's just a lot of opportunity between now and when  
11 we come back and talk about the recommendations. You  
12 talked about sort of dusting off some previous ideas  
13 there. If they still have value, we appreciate you  
14 bringing those to the table.

15 I'll also just observe that GSA is thinking so  
16 hard about the way that they're going to change the way  
17 the federal government does business in these areas.  
18 The more that we can be proactive and set some  
19 recommendations out to make sure that we are carving  
20 out opportunities for veteran-owned small businesses, I  
21 think this is a real opportune moment with GSA. So, we  
22 appreciate your involvement as we set these  
23 recommendations going forward.

24 At this point, why don't I move over to the  
25 Vietnam Veterans of America and let them report from



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1 their point of view. So, Victor, if you want to take  
2 it over.

3 MR. KLINGENHOFER: Yes. Essentially, there  
4 are two primary areas that VVA is interested in seeing  
5 some action on. The first of these is what can be done  
6 government wide to increase the number of sole source  
7 awards to SDVOSBs. Essentially, the easier you can  
8 make it for a contracting officer to award to a  
9 company, the easier it is to get that award.

10 I certainly appreciate and understand Jennifer  
11 Lee's concerns concerning pre-qualifications almost for  
12 companies to show that they are capable of receiving a  
13 sole source award. We're interested in exploring ways  
14 that that could be done.

15 I know, for example, that Tom Leney has  
16 included things in his review of SDVOSBs from the VA  
17 viewpoint to show qualifications to be successful.  
18 Something along those lines may be government wide, or  
19 we're not quite sure what can be done. But this  
20 definitely shows that there is a tie between veteran  
21 business development programs and government  
22 contracting. We think that that ought to be one of the  
23 focuses of the task force.

24 Then, the second area involves the non-program  
25 contract exemptions. These are the various types of

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1 contracts that are not considered when the three  
2 percent goal is calculated. I have never seen a  
3 government-wide survey or study of how the various  
4 agencies determine which contracts are or are not to be  
5 included when computing the three percent goal. I'd  
6 like to see a survey, an agency-by-agency survey, not  
7 only showing the types of contracts but also giving  
8 justification for exempting them from the three percent  
9 goal.

10 MR. KRAMER: Victor, I'm going to interrupt  
11 just to make sure I make this introduction.

12 MR. KLINGENHOFER: Yes.

13 MR. KRAMER: To your right is Ken Dodds, who  
14 is the --

15 MR. KLINGENHOFER: I know.

16 MR. KRAMER: -- walking human manifestation of  
17 the questions you have. So, I want to make sure you  
18 make that connection --

19 MR. DODDS: Oh, I'm listening.

20 MR. KRAMER: I was waiting for him to arrive.

21 MR. KRAMER: -- about how people make those  
22 exclusions. So, make sure you follow up with Ken.

23 MR. KLINGENHOFER: I kept his seat warm.

24 MR. KRAMER: Very good.

25 MR. KLINGENHOFER: And directly related to

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1 this, we're very concerned about the whole strategic  
2 sourcing program or better buying program, I think it's  
3 also been referred to. These are required use  
4 contracts that we feel actually discriminate -- well,  
5 that may not be the proper word -- they work adversely  
6 to the goal of increasing veteran business  
7 opportunities through government contracting.

8 I mean, even when a strategic source contract  
9 is awarded to the number of -- say there are 10  
10 strategic source contracts given out government wide  
11 for a specific product, and then two of those or one of  
12 those is set aside for an SDVOSB, the problem is,  
13 because of the small numbers, the awardees quickly grow  
14 beyond being small businesses. No SDVOSBs, then, can  
15 move in to take their place for the life of the  
16 strategic source contract.

17 We're concerned about that. I think that  
18 those should be looked at carefully. Thank you.

19 MR. KRAMER: Thanks, Victor. I'll just say  
20 that your point is exceptionally well taken and  
21 something I know we talk about all the time. How do  
22 you, on the one hand, incentivize government agencies  
23 to do that and create successful small businesses that  
24 then do grow and have long term success without  
25 counting them on the books for so long that it is part

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1 of that entrenched part of the small business community  
2 that takes up for others.

3 So, you know, Ken and his folks, and we can  
4 talk about this some more, try to thread that needle  
5 where agencies have the incentive to do that so they  
6 don't realize that we're meeting the goal and taking  
7 people to a level of success that really works against  
8 us, but in a way that doesn't come up the works in the  
9 process.

10 So, we look forward to continuing that  
11 conversation because it's one that we work on quite a  
12 lot.

13 MS. WILLIAMS: Sir, if you don't mind, I just  
14 want to make just a comment on the strategic sourcing  
15 comment.

16 MR. KRAMER: Sure.

17 MS. WILLIAMS: Very well taken. We will take  
18 a look at that. I can tell you that we do look at when  
19 developing the contracting instrument, that we look at  
20 wrap-on and wrap-off capabilities so we can continue to  
21 grow the entry base of small businesses when they  
22 outgrow the contract.

23 We think it's a great thing that they do  
24 outgrow, but we still want to make sure we have a  
25 mechanism or tool in place that we can continue to grow

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1 on the Pacific contract, especially since the contracts  
2 are so large and so long now.

3 Notice taken. We'll take that back to the  
4 department, take a deeper look at your comments on  
5 this.

6 MR. BLUM: This is Matthew Blum. If I can  
7 also add to that, I want to think the on ramp off ramp  
8 is an excellent point because I know it's an issue both  
9 legal and policy that we've looked at and probably  
10 something that we need to delve into and see that we're  
11 taking full advantage of it.

12 The second point is that within the last  
13 couple of years, our office has actually enlarged the  
14 conversation about how to better rationalize the way  
15 that the government buys to think in terms of category  
16 management. In other words, organizing around  
17 categories that spend as opposed to just trying to  
18 accomplish efficiencies through leveraging  
19 opportunities.

20 So, while they will continue, and should  
21 continue, to be opportunities where we leverage our  
22 buying power, I think what you'll see under the  
23 category management initiative and framework is that  
24 there are many ways in which we can improve  
25 efficiencies from improved, for example, demand

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1 management, better use of data, and a lot of the work  
2 that Eric and his team are doing that give us the  
3 ability to save money, while at the same time taking  
4 advantage of many, for example, open market  
5 opportunities and not just strategic sourcing.

6 MR. KRAMER: Very good. Well, let's keep  
7 moving. Why don't we go to VA at this point. Tom, why  
8 don't you provide the report you have.

9 MR. LENEY: I guess I'd like to start out by  
10 providing some kuddos to the SBA. As we looked at the  
11 recommendations about the development program, I think  
12 there has been a lot of really great work done by the  
13 SBA and our partners, VIP, the VBOCs, on providing the  
14 developmental capability (inaudible) small business,  
15 enabling us to focus on expanding opportunities for  
16 what we call procurement-ready small businesses.

17 One of the things that we are graveling with  
18 this year, and I would suggest it as a possible topic  
19 for this task force, is veteran employment. We just  
20 announced our next generation T4 IT services  
21 procurement. It's a very, very large IDIQ. It is  
22 right smack in the middle of the strategic sourcing  
23 category management debate.

24 But the thing I wanted to point out that's new  
25 and very different is that for the first time in the

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1 VA, and I think I have not seen anywhere else in the  
2 government, I would love to hear if anybody else is  
3 doing it, we made veteran employment an evaluation  
4 criteria.

5 As an agency, we are now looking at expanding.  
6 I won't say we've dipped our toe in the water, but at  
7 \$22 billion, IDIQ is probably more than a dip of a toe  
8 in the water. But we're looking at expanding the  
9 notion of utilizing veteran employment as an evaluation  
10 criteria.

11 The second thing that we are looking at is the  
12 simplified acquisition threshold. I'm pleased to see  
13 some work being done in DoD on this. I think we need  
14 to take a much deeper look as a task force, because the  
15 challenge that was brought up in the briefing is, quite  
16 frankly, I don't believe, at least in the VA, KOs do  
17 not bear the burden of balancing development assistance  
18 with mission needs. They bear the burden of generating  
19 cost effective contracts that meet the needs of the  
20 taxpayer and the veteran.

21 It is unreasonable, I think, to expect a KO to  
22 try to do that balancing. But under the simplified  
23 acquisition threshold framework we think we can address  
24 the risk issue. It's a great way to address the risk  
25 issue. There's been a lot of discussion about that.

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1 But I think the time has come, and this task force may  
2 be the place to look at the details of that  
3 information.

4 I mean, I think we're all aware that the law  
5 says that under the simplified acquisition threshold,  
6 100 percent of all procurements will be set aside. I  
7 didn't notice any data here on DoD's performance it  
8 that regard, and I'm not trying to do a shout on their  
9 success or failure, but I will say in the VA we don't  
10 meet that goal.

11 I think there's a lot of opportunity there,  
12 particularly, Doug, in looking at what we can do in a  
13 year. We're not going to address or solve strategic  
14 sourcing or category management in a year, but I think  
15 we could make some serious inroads and have something  
16 to point to within a year in the realm of simplified  
17 acquisition threshold.

18 That's all I have.

19 MR. KRAMER: Great, thanks. I'm going to push  
20 back a little because, Tom, I think you're exactly  
21 right, and I'm very, as I said, aware of my own  
22 approaching mortality in this.

23 But I do think the strategic sourcing and  
24 category management conversation is so alive right now,  
25 that even if we can't come up with something

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1 compartmentalized and sustainable and all that, I think  
2 we want to make sure we're actively thinking about  
3 being a part of that conversation. Some of the ideas  
4 you brought up are very much in that vain. If we can  
5 insert those ideas earlier in the process, the better.

6 MR. LENEY: Well, having now been at this for  
7 five years, that's one we'll be cheering you on from  
8 the gallery.

9 MR. KRAMER: Yes, that's probably one that  
10 we'll probably not see completion on on my tenure.

11 MR. BLUM: Just to jump in, one point I forgot  
12 to make on strategic sourcing is I think from the get  
13 go, there was always a commitment in OMB's guidance  
14 that in doing any initiative, you would always baseline  
15 small business participation and be able to demonstrate  
16 as part of the business case how you can maintain and  
17 increase that activity. So, we can certainly go back  
18 and look at some of those figures.

19 But let me also slide to the SAT question,  
20 because I think it actually dovetails very nicely with  
21 the conversation we had earlier. That is, last year  
22 the administration proposed to increase the SAT from  
23 \$150,000 to \$500,000. To be perfectly blunt, my sense  
24 of this is that congress was going to ho-hum about it.  
25 Now, I'm not being, in any way, critical of that.

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1 I think one of the reasons for this is the  
2 purpose of the SAT, what role it plays in acquisition  
3 today, which happens to be very different than it was  
4 20 years ago. So, 20 years ago, people clamored when  
5 they created the SAT because it was a very key tool to  
6 get access to the marketplace in a simplified way.

7 What's happened in the last 20 years? A lot  
8 of that work, as Max's data showed, has migrated,  
9 understandably, to these IDVs, these multiple word task  
10 order contracts, because of the efficiencies that can  
11 be provided to contracting officers in getting their  
12 job done and getting value from prequalified  
13 contractors.

14 But, as a result of that, I don't think that  
15 contracting officers look as aggressively to using the  
16 SAT because they don't need to. They can get the  
17 simplification by placing an order, whether it's  
18 against the schedules, or a GWAC, or another multiple  
19 award contract.

20 So, what we missed in the conversation,  
21 though, is exactly what Jennifer was saying, and that  
22 is it remains an important tool either from either new  
23 entrance or may young entrance that don't have their  
24 feet really wet. I think we need to be able to tell  
25 that story.

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1 So, the administration is again prepared to  
2 recommend increasing the SAT to the \$500,000 level.  
3 What I really think we should probably do, if we have  
4 the opportunity to speak to the Hill, is maybe, whether  
5 it's Jennifer or one of her colleagues as a contracting  
6 officer that can tell a couple of stories that give  
7 some people a flavor behind the 70,000-or-so  
8 acquisitions that would be subject to the belief that  
9 the (inaudible) between that \$150,000 and \$500,000.

10 MR. KRAMER: That is an excellent point.

11 MR. LENEY: I guess I would suggest that we  
12 might focus on making sure the simplified acquisition  
13 program is simple. I think one of the other evolutions  
14 over the years is it's become less and less simple.  
15 Therefore, contracting officers do turn to IDVs when  
16 they seek simplicity.

17 While there has been discussion about  
18 increasing at the 500K -- and that might be a great  
19 idea. I'm not prepared to opine on that -- I guess I  
20 would suggest that we look at success at \$150,000. If  
21 we aren't succeeding in meeting the obligations and the  
22 expectations below \$150,000 where the level of risk to  
23 a contracting officer, to an agency, is very, very low,  
24 by the very nature of the size of the procurement,  
25 increasing it to \$500,000, I'm not sure we will have

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1 done anybody any favors.

2 MR. FERRARO: And to add to that, the data  
3 that the young lady from the Census Bureau presented,  
4 to me, was fascinating, the percentage of businesses,  
5 first of all, that were second income, if you will,  
6 like cottage businesses, and the ones with under four  
7 people. So, the target population, I think it was the  
8 80 percent we were discussing, is really, really small  
9 veteran-owned businesses. So, it's almost like looking  
10 for a needle in a haystack, quite frankly.

11 I wrote it down in my notes. That's the  
12 target audience. That's the number. So, to get a  
13 government contract, government work, with three or  
14 four people, it's tough to do that. So, I think it may  
15 be bigger than the task force. But with that data  
16 informing where we want to go on recommendations, it  
17 may be we're trying to target too small a group against  
18 too small a target in the sense of government  
19 contracting.

20 Not that I want to discourage anything we're  
21 doing, it's critical, of course, and we can control it,  
22 but if there's other efforts surrounding getting those  
23 small cottage industry's business, that may be  
24 something worth --

25 MR. KRAMER: So, I'm going to get us back on

105	<p>1 the agenda and move on to the American Legion here.</p> <p>2 But I think this is an excellent conversation we should</p> <p>3 follow up on, because I think the observations in the</p> <p>4 last couple of speakers have been -- really, when you</p> <p>5 look at the dynamic, the government contracts we should</p> <p>6 be focused on are those \$150,000 and below.</p> <p>7 Then, Tom made the very good point that if we</p> <p>8 find that the simplified processes aren't simplified</p> <p>9 enough anymore, that they have come up with other work-</p> <p>10 arounds to be able to hit those \$150,000 and below, the</p> <p>11 answer may not be taking it up to \$500,000, which is</p> <p>12 not what those large groups of veterans might be</p> <p>13 looking for, but to rethink that.</p> <p>14 So, I think that's a very good conversation</p> <p>15 that is something worth the time of this group.</p> <p>16 So, with that, then, I'll turn it over to the</p> <p>17 American Legion.</p> <p>18 MR. LEGHORN: So, the American Legion splits</p> <p>19 our time in small business with partially advocacy and,</p> <p>20 in part, program services. So, I'd just like to take</p> <p>21 the opportunity to talk about some of the events that</p> <p>22 we have concluded and some of the events that we have</p> <p>23 going forward, as well as just one point on advocacy.</p> <p>24 So, we just came off of our winter conference.</p> <p>25 During our winter conference, we posted a two-day</p>	107	<p>1 report. This does affect veteran entrepreneurs</p> <p>2 because, obviously, if you're in a niche business, any</p> <p>3 trade or professional service like truck driver, home</p> <p>4 services, you can be an architect, you can be a PLLC,</p> <p>5 you all need to have some sort of license or</p> <p>6 credentialing to do those jobs. So, the focus of that</p> <p>7 event is going to be getting the states to recognize</p> <p>8 military training towards some sort of accreditation.</p> <p>9 Again, that's on April 11th.</p> <p>10 On March 23rd, we're going to have a vet</p> <p>11 resource expo locally. It's going to be in</p> <p>12 Springfield, Virginia. It has a broad focus. It's</p> <p>13 going to focus on claims, mental health care, a little</p> <p>14 bit of small business, and also employment. So, if you</p> <p>15 have the chance, please come out. It's at our large</p> <p>16 American Legion post in Springfield, Virginia. I just</p> <p>17 can't remember the number right now, I apologize.</p> <p>18 UNIDENTIFIED PERSON: One seventy-six.</p> <p>19 MR. FERRARO: Yes, 176, thank you. So, the</p> <p>20 one point I will touch on advocacy, because I agree</p> <p>21 with everything Victor said earlier, those are all the</p> <p>22 same things that the legion is tracking.</p> <p>23 There's one thing that Victor didn't mention,</p> <p>24 which he did mention last time, was fairness to</p> <p>25 veterans. We've talked about it before, so I'm not</p>
106	<p>1 procurement focus small business workshop with the</p> <p>2 National Veterans Small Business Coalition. Many</p> <p>3 government agencies were present to discuss benefits,</p> <p>4 programs, and opportunities, contracting with the</p> <p>5 federal government. We had legal experts from large</p> <p>6 international law firms to discuss legislative changes</p> <p>7 and the effect on small businesses, how to protest, and</p> <p>8 what to do when you're being protested.</p> <p>9 Also, one thing that we had that was extremely</p> <p>10 helpful this year was a seminar on how to protect</p> <p>11 businesses or how to protect your business from a bad</p> <p>12 JV partner. So, thank you, guys, for that, because I</p> <p>13 know the SBA, MVA, and DoD were critical in helping us</p> <p>14 put that on.</p> <p>15 The other thing that we have going on is we</p> <p>16 have a licensing credentialing roundtable scheduled for</p> <p>17 April 11th. This is not the full summit that we do</p> <p>18 every two years. It's a roundtable, it's a checkup.</p> <p>19 Again, we're going to have multiple state credentialing</p> <p>20 bodies, stakeholders, trade associations. VA and DoL</p> <p>21 are always present. Every branch of the service is</p> <p>22 also included in this forum.</p> <p>23 We're going to continue to work between our</p> <p>24 large license credentialing summits to do these things</p> <p>25 because at the end of this we are printing out a</p>	108	<p>1 going to go over what it's all about, but we have</p> <p>2 another stumbling block. The Parliamentarians are</p> <p>3 kicking it back to the House on account of a</p> <p>4 technicality.</p> <p>5 At the time we introduced it, we wrote it to</p> <p>6 ride through the Highway Reauthorization Act. As you</p> <p>7 guys may have noticed, we did pass the Highway</p> <p>8 Reauthorization Act, but it was called the Fast Act.</p> <p>9 So, they're kicking it back to the House. It's most</p> <p>10 likely going to have to pass by four vote again with</p> <p>11 that slight adjustment. So, it is what it is.</p> <p>12 The passage of this act would give veteran</p> <p>13 contracting businesses a huge leg up in opportunities.</p> <p>14 It's just unfortunate that it's being bounced around</p> <p>15 right now. But, you know, the Legion is working on it.</p> <p>16 Vet Force is working on it. It passed the floor by</p> <p>17 four vote. We're certain that it will do so again.</p> <p>18 MR. KRAMER: Thank you very much for that.</p> <p>19 Why don't we turn to OMB.</p> <p>20 MR. BLUM: Thanks very much. Three issues</p> <p>21 that we're focused on right now, I think consistent</p> <p>22 with some of our prior discussions. One is on new</p> <p>23 entrance, which I think, by the way, as we think</p> <p>24 towards our refining and our goals would be, I think, a</p> <p>25 good one to make sure is covered. Innovation labs and</p>

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1 a couple points on our IDVs.  
 2 One the new entrance, we already talked about  
 3 the SAT and maybe rethinking that tool and how it can  
 4 help us with new entrance and young entrance. Just one  
 5 factual point, this doesn't answer Tom's good caution  
 6 that we need to make sure that it is working  
 7 successfully and truly simplified, but small businesses  
 8 are currently receiving over 50 percent of the work  
 9 between \$150,000 and \$500,000 when we did an analysis  
 10 through FPDS.  
 11 So, to the extent that the theory holds true  
 12 that there's a lot of activity that goes on in that  
 13 space that really have the characteristics of very  
 14 small dollar acquisitions, much more than the larger  
 15 ones, why not try to take advantage of that process  
 16 simplification with the caveat we need to make sure we  
 17 really are providing process simplification.  
 18 The second point on new entrance that we've  
 19 been thinking about, as I mentioned before, this notion  
 20 of an innovation set-aside. To put it into larger  
 21 context, I guess when we've thought about what  
 22 procurement-ready means, there's really four  
 23 components. One is the business development component  
 24 that everybody thinks about and what Max was talking  
 25 about earlier. The second is the process, knowing how

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1 to do competition and compete in a federal marketplace,  
 2 understanding the unique process requirements.  
 3 Third is compliance, which I don't know that  
 4 we expressly talked about this one. I don't know, Max,  
 5 if your study really looked at that. I know you talked  
 6 about process. But, for example, knowing how to  
 7 compete doesn't mean that you know how to comply with,  
 8 for example, the requirements of the Service Contract  
 9 Act.  
 10 I'm not being in any way critical, but if you  
 11 have a four-person company and you actually do know how  
 12 to compete but you have a clerical person as one of  
 13 your four people, should we be trying to get that  
 14 person in if they have a new technology that we need,  
 15 even though they may not understand feel comfortable  
 16 that they can comply with the requirements to make sure  
 17 that that clerical person is meeting the requirements  
 18 of the Service Contract Act, that the employer is  
 19 meeting the requirements.  
 20 Then, fourthly is the value proposition, which  
 21 we were talking about earlier as well, which is  
 22 contracting officers are looking at whether you're  
 23 going to get greater efficiency cost savings and so  
 24 forth, and they're going to be uncomfortable with  
 25 taking in a company if they feel like they might have

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1 promise, but if they can't demonstrate that promise on  
 2 an instant procurement, is there cover. So, they would  
 3 need to understand from whether it's OMB or this  
 4 community what sort of managed risk taking they can  
 5 apply.  
 6 So, we are going to be resubmitting our  
 7 proposal for an innovation set aside, which essentially  
 8 is the ability for an agency to be able to limit  
 9 competition or actually even do a sole source to a  
 10 company that is new to the federal marketplace if it is  
 11 offering a new technology or a provide a process, an  
 12 innovative process that cannot easily be found in the  
 13 federal marketplace.  
 14 But having said that, if you drill down on  
 15 what I just said, it becomes rather complicated. What  
 16 do we mean by not being able to find something from an  
 17 existing provider? Do we really mean that we're ready  
 18 to take in a company that, for example, might be a wiz  
 19 bang at developing software using agile technologies,  
 20 but doesn't necessarily have that great new software  
 21 idea at hand.  
 22 Finally, the way that this proposal is  
 23 written, it's really for a one-shot deal. So, they  
 24 could come in. You could use this once or we could  
 25 allow for an agency to do it a couple times. But is

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1 that really enough to get the business development that  
 2 the company needs to be able to compete successfully?  
 3 If you created, for example, a schedule, a GSA  
 4 schedule, it sounds like a good idea, but I can  
 5 certainly understand if our GSA colleagues would say,  
 6 wait a minute, we're not experts in developing small  
 7 businesses in the ways that, you know, some of the  
 8 things that they need. That may not be the right fit.  
 9 The point is, I think we have an entree and we  
 10 have some interest on the Hill, but we need to continue  
 11 to kind of build up this proposal and figure out with  
 12 new entrance to address all of these areas that they  
 13 need.  
 14 Very briefly, innovation labs, we mentioned  
 15 before that we are asking agencies to stand up and make  
 16 sure they have similar mechanisms for acquisition  
 17 innovation labs. Labs are not new to the federal  
 18 government, but oftentimes they're used or mostly used  
 19 in the R&D space. We think that a lot of the synergies  
 20 that we see in R&D can be applied to acquisition.  
 21 When HHS stood up a lab, I think I mentioned  
 22 it at our last meeting, they had a very successful  
 23 acquisition where they were able to give a small  
 24 stipend to small businesses that conducted a fly-off  
 25 prototype that helped them to migrate legacy systems to

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1 a new single web site. It worked very successfully.  
 2 SBA, through their ideal lab, I think has been  
 3 using agile techniques with the small business to  
 4 reengineer SBA's one program for getting businesses  
 5 qualified through your various small business programs.  
 6 So, we think by pushing on this, there's a nice  
 7 dovetail to get people thinking in a more creative way  
 8 that also is consistent with taking advantage of some  
 9 of our innovative small businesses that may be  
 10 currently overlooked.  
 11 Lastly, on our IDV, Eric had mentioned vets,  
 12 the GWAC, which was a presentation to this panel last  
 13 time to talk about the billions of dollars that have  
 14 gone through vets through that program. That is done  
 15 pursuant to the current Clinger-Cohen Act where GSA  
 16 acts as an executive agent. OMB is in the process of  
 17 reviewing the package. I'm very confident that we will  
 18 support the renewal of that vehicle.  
 19 Lastly, the FAR Council is working with SBA to  
 20 think about on some of the vehicles that aren't set  
 21 aside but provide for all different types of small  
 22 businesses, whether in the implementation of the Jobs  
 23 Act. It makes sense as a policy matter if there's a  
 24 benefit to being able to do set asides within set  
 25 asides within a GWAC that has multiple different small

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1 businesses having a set aside service-disabled veteran-  
 2 owned small businesses.  
 3 I think SBA raised some challenges or  
 4 questions with that in its initial implementation,  
 5 which requires some careful consideration. We also  
 6 want to think about what successes we've seen in the  
 7 GSA and other vehicles in using other applications of  
 8 that tool.  
 9 MR. KRAMER: Okay, very good.  
 10 I want to keep us moving because I want to  
 11 make sure we leave a little bit of time here at the  
 12 end. I'm going to go briefly off script because I know  
 13 we have a representative from the Department of  
 14 Commerce from ITA here who is going to talk about Vets  
 15 Go Global and just provide an update. I'll allow Murat  
 16 to do that at this time.  
 17 MR. MUFTARI: Thank you, sir. My name is  
 18 Murat Muftari. I'm with the U.S. Department of  
 19 Commerce International Trade Administration. I just  
 20 want to thank the SBA and Barb Carson for inviting us  
 21 here today.  
 22 We just wanted to share a little bit about our  
 23 program because we think it makes sense as this task  
 24 force moves forward to consider the International Trade  
 25 Administration and the Department of Commerce as part

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1 of this conversation of veteran business development,  
 2 and particularly our voice in international business  
 3 development.  
 4 I'm also joined by our senior advisor to our  
 5 deputy assistant secretary, Phu Huynh, and our  
 6 assistant secretary, Antwaun Griffin, at ITA.  
 7 So, Vets Go Global is a grassroots initiative  
 8 founded by myself and fellow colleagues that are all  
 9 veterans and that work for the International Trade  
 10 Administration. We're spread out across the field  
 11 domestically here. I, myself, am part of the East  
 12 Michigan office. But we engage with veteran-owned  
 13 businesses really on a daily basis. What we've  
 14 identified is a small gap in programs that try to  
 15 support veteran-owned businesses that are looking to  
 16 expand internationally.  
 17 Just a couple quick points on data. The  
 18 reason for that is 95 percent of consumers live outside  
 19 U.S. borders holding 80 percent of global purchasing  
 20 power. So, if a business, veteran or non, is not  
 21 considering the international market space as a  
 22 potential way to diversify and build a more sustainable  
 23 business model, we think that they're missing out on a  
 24 prime opportunity.  
 25 Just like we've heard here, a lot of the

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1 agencies want to identify procurement-ready companies.  
 2 When we talk about identifying companies that could  
 3 succeed in the international market space, we typically  
 4 talk about dealing and working with export-ready  
 5 companies. If they're not export ready but close, we  
 6 can get them enough education and tools to make them  
 7 export ready and then help them navigate that  
 8 international market space.  
 9 What really gives us that capability is that  
 10 we're embedded in 80 countries within the U.S.  
 11 embassies and consulates with U.S. commercial  
 12 diplomats. Under them, they have local, national  
 13 industry experts that are the boots on the ground of  
 14 our agency in dealing with foreign businesses, foreign  
 15 business associations, foreign governments, on a daily  
 16 basis to kind of match opportunity with capability and  
 17 with company. So, that's kind of how we're structured.  
 18 Just a couple things that we're doing this  
 19 year, particularly for veteran-owned businesses.  
 20 Really, this program is supported by kind of corporate  
 21 sponsors with some of our national partners, like UPS  
 22 and Fed Ex, to kind of help facilitate some of these  
 23 programs. Right now, it's just a field-driven  
 24 initiative.  
 25 We're hosting two trade missions this year.

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1 One is to Asia, particularly to Singapore, Vietnam, and  
2 Thailand, that will bring veteran-owned businesses that  
3 are in the information and communication industries to  
4 that part of the world to meet with businesses and with  
5 associations that want to kind of expand and have those  
6 technologies that American companies are offering.

7 The other one is an infrastructure and green  
8 construction trade mission to Mexico. Mexico, through  
9 our top markets report, has been identified as the  
10 number two market with infrastructure development  
11 needs. So, we're going to bring veteran-owned  
12 businesses, particularly from Texas and California, and  
13 a lot of them will have that Hispanic background, the  
14 Latin American background as well, and matching them  
15 with opportunities in Mexico.

16 Those are just a couple of the programs we  
17 envision creating, similar to the National Veterans  
18 Small Business Engagement Conference that the VA helps  
19 organize. We've presented in those learning sessions  
20 the last few years at that conference. Again, we have  
21 veteran companies kind of stand up and say, we would  
22 love if international business was an additional avenue  
23 of economic opportunity, just like procurement  
24 opportunities are.

25 So, we're looking with our partners like the

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1 UPS to develop an international business conference  
2 that will be some sort of two-day forum to invite  
3 veteran-owned businesses and expose them to  
4 opportunities by bringing our international colleagues  
5 to the domestic conference and matching them with those  
6 opportunities.

7 MR. KRAMER: So, Murat, you have talked pretty  
8 effectively about the sort of direction you're heading  
9 and what you're doing. Is there any way right now that  
10 veterans represented by groups here or that these folks  
11 deal with can plug into those programs yet, or is it  
12 more just sort of keeping an eye on the way that this  
13 develops?

14 MR. MUFTARI: Some of the programs that are  
15 already kind of operating, a lot of it is just about  
16 getting the word out and kind of being that multiplier  
17 to your veteran business community. Again, this  
18 initiative is about a year and a half old, so we're  
19 still trying to gain exposure.

20 We've connected with the certifying agency at  
21 the VA. They've given us their database of around  
22 8,000 companies that are certified through the VA. The  
23 National Veteran Business Development Council is a  
24 third-party certifier. They've given us their  
25 database.

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1 The SBA International Finance Office, they've  
2 given us their database of veteran-owned businesses  
3 that they've financed over the last three years. So,  
4 we are getting the word out, but a lot of times it's  
5 more of that face-to-face interaction that's going to  
6 kind of expose them to these opportunities.

7 The last piece of data I want to share is the  
8 reason that we see this gap is right now we identified,  
9 and this is coming from Census, that around nine  
10 percent of veteran-owned businesses export. Relative  
11 to women-owned and minority-owned businesses, women-  
12 owned are around 12 percent, and minority-owned are  
13 around 17 percent.

14 However, when you look at that small number of  
15 veteran-owned businesses, the export, the ones that do  
16 export are the highest employer of those other minority  
17 groups. Veteran-owned businesses that do export employ  
18 around 68 employees versus women-owned, which is around  
19 40, and minority-owned, which is around 20. So,  
20 they're the biggest job creators in that space.

21 So, again, our mission ultimately leads to job  
22 creation. We think if we could get that nine percent  
23 number to something around 15 percent of veteran-owned  
24 businesses exporting, we'd see significant gains in job  
25 creation.

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1 MR. KRAMER: Okay, thank you very much. So,  
2 let me keep moving. Real quick, just to confirm, is  
3 there anybody on the phone with a report from the  
4 Treasury Department?

5 (No verbal response.)

6 MR. KRAMER: Not hearing that, let's move on  
7 to the Military Officers Association of America.

8 MS. BAINTON: Thank you very much. I'll be  
9 very brief. A lot of what I was thinking has already  
10 been said. I just wanted to put that our organization  
11 is really focused on the due diligence piece. I know  
12 that everyone here has great intentions, as do we. We  
13 just want to make sure that when we're proposing  
14 something and something is going through or when we  
15 develop an initiative, that it's helping the greatest  
16 population of veterans.

17 For example, with contract awarding, we're all  
18 for that. That is something that's important. But if  
19 we're taking a contract away from an organization  
20 that's not owned by a veteran but employs a large  
21 number of them, is that the better service.

22 So, just making sure of that. That's  
23 something that's important to us. Just making sure  
24 that we're doing our homework. I was really pleased to  
25 hear what Tom said about making veteran employment a

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1 criteria when it comes to awarding contracts and so on  
2 and so forth. So, things like that are very important  
3 to us.

4 Just on what we're doing as far as our  
5 organization and entrepreneurship, we really are  
6 focused on the education piece, educating our staff  
7 about the resources here. There's a lot of resources  
8 that I didn't even know about and I spent a lot of time  
9 researching. So, this is very helpful to me and our  
10 organization.

11 Making sure our staff is informed. When  
12 they're out there talking to our members, our  
13 nonmembers, or anyone in the military community, that  
14 we can share that information. So, that's critical to  
15 us in getting the word out.

16 A few events that we have participated in  
17 recently, we were just at the International Franchise  
18 Association's convention. I believe it was their 25th  
19 anniversary for VetFran, which franchisers sign on to  
20 give veterans their very best discount in franchising.  
21 They were kind enough to let us speak on their panel.  
22 They're doing quite a bit to try to get veterans into  
23 franchising. We are very proud to be a part of that.

24 We are supporting at an event at the franchise  
25 expo on the 19th of March. Everyone is welcome to

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1 attend. It's free for veterans. It's a panel of  
2 veterans. It's not franchiser selling. It's people  
3 who can speak to the business ownership piece and also  
4 resource specialists. So, we welcome anyone to attend  
5 that.

6 Then, another piece that I wanted to mention  
7 was that our June 30th networking forum will be  
8 happening at the Air and Space Museum in D.C. We have  
9 three career tracks. One is solely focused on  
10 entrepreneurship. We had great success with it last  
11 year. The goal is to just bring in mentors,  
12 organizations, resources, people there, like I said,  
13 the due diligence piece, who are in it for the right  
14 reasons and not trying to take advantage of this  
15 demographic.

16 I'm interested in getting in front of the  
17 transitioning audience because they don't always think  
18 business ownership right away, but we think that's  
19 critical. So, we'd love to have your involvement.

20 If you have any questions, I'm available.

21 MR. KRAMER: Great, thank you very much.

22 Next, Alice from DoD, do you want to --

23 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, thank you so much. I'm  
24 really in a receiving mode today. I was here to  
25 represent Mr. Wesley, to take as much information back

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1 and try to address as many of the topics as possible as  
2 I go back to the office.

3 Great synergy today in regards to the topic  
4 areas. I know he will have some comments on some of  
5 the reports that were presented today. So, I'm looking  
6 forward to getting back with him on that.

7 But as the responsible party for the  
8 socioeconomic program, I can't help but make a few  
9 comments. I do want to let you know about the market  
10 research tool that we have. We call it MARCO. We  
11 think it's a great tool that we're planning to launch  
12 this summer. It's an internal and external tool that  
13 allows us to appropriately match capabilities for  
14 existing requirements. We think we'll get a lot of  
15 synergy there insuring that veterans get their fair  
16 portion of opportunity supporting a DoD platform.

17 As it relates to the simplified acquisition  
18 goal, we're doing very well. We always can do better.  
19 There's always room for improvement. We're doing about  
20 65 percent of all small business owners in the  
21 simplified acquisition area. With the new rules  
22 working with OPM, we hope that the \$500,000 threshold  
23 won't hinder us. I think it will be a great  
24 opportunity to increase the thresholds without putting  
25 so much burden on the process.

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1 So, if the process stays the same and the  
2 increase goes up, I think we have better synergy in  
3 making sure that we get fair opportunities as supposed  
4 to be to ensuring the small business get the simplified  
5 acquisition buyers and awards.

6 We mentioned earlier today about overseas  
7 contracting. We have an excellent program that we're  
8 proposing as it relates to overseas. We're first  
9 working on training the acquisition community first  
10 with the U.S. dollars now being (inaudible) overseas as  
11 it relates to veterans and any other socioeconomic  
12 category. We want to make sure that the acquisition  
13 community really has an understanding of what that  
14 means as it relates to part 19, ensuring that a fair  
15 portion of those contracts overseas go to the veterans,  
16 service-disabled vets, or any other category.

17 So, we have initiatives that we're pursuing.  
18 We're going to be working with SBA coming up soon on  
19 that, getting some direction from SBA as well. I'm  
20 leading that effort, so I'm very excited about it and  
21 looking forward to actually executing that mission  
22 overseas.

23 But again, I want to just say thank you,  
24 Deputy Administrator. I really appreciate the invite  
25 and the opportunity to sit here on behalf of Mr.



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1 Wesley. I think there's some great topics that have  
2 been presented today with the Census Bureau and the DoD  
3 survey. I'm looking forward to getting that back.

4 We're also looking forward to participating  
5 and providing recommendations to serve you as well.  
6 So, again, thank you.

7 MR. KRAMER: Thank you for your contributions  
8 throughout the meeting today, Alice.

9 Next, Ken Dodds from our Office of Government  
10 Contracting and Business Development. Ken.

11 MR. DODDS: Thank you, Doug. I'm going to  
12 start with goaling and then talk about some of the regs  
13 and legislation that's coming up that might be of  
14 interest to you.

15 The administrator last Thursday announced the  
16 FY '15 numbers, so for the third year in a row, we met  
17 the small business 23 percent goal of over 25 percent.  
18 We doubled the SDV number as a government, 10 percent.  
19 We met the women-owned small business goal for the  
20 first time ever, over 5 percent. Then, we had the  
21 highest percentage ever for SDVO at 3.9 percent. So,  
22 it was a very good event, and it was very good news, we  
23 think.

24 Moving on to the regs that we're working on,  
25 the limitations on subcontracting rule that allows you

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1 to rely on similarly situated entities, out of the NDA  
2 of 13 law, that rule is at OMB right now for  
3 interagency review. That usually takes 90 days, so I  
4 expect that this rule will be published as a final rule  
5 at the end of May or early June.

6 There's still work to be done, though, because  
7 they have to take it and put it into the FAR and put  
8 those changes into the FAR clauses themselves to get  
9 into contracts. So, there's still going to be more  
10 work to be done, but our final rule will start that  
11 process. They'll start that process once we have a  
12 final rule.

13 The Mentor Protégé Program for all small  
14 businesses, that final rule hopefully will go to OMB in  
15 the next week or two. That would put it as publication  
16 maybe in late June. Even though my hope is that it  
17 will be published late June, I don't believe that we're  
18 going to start accepting applications in June when it's  
19 published. I think there's going to be some delay as  
20 we ramp up to accept applications from what could be  
21 large amount of small businesses. So, once we finalize  
22 the rule, we'll announce when we're going to start  
23 accepting applications. I don't know when it's going  
24 to be.

25 There's been a lot of activity around the

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1 women-owned small business program. Sole-source  
2 authority was done by us and then put into the FAR  
3 December 31st, 2015. We did the new study of the NAICS  
4 codes where you can do set asides and sole-source  
5 awards. On March 3rd, we announced what the new NAICS  
6 are, and they're available on our web site now. So, it  
7 expands the industries where you can do a set aside or  
8 sole source award for women-owned small businesses.

9 On certification, we did advance notice of  
10 proposed rule making. Got a lot of comments. So, the  
11 next step for that, we have to somehow figure out are  
12 we going to do a women-owned small business  
13 certification program that SBA does, are we going to  
14 use third party certifiers, are we going to do both  
15 like we did back with SDB a long time ago, are we going  
16 to rely on other agencies or state agencies.

17 So, that was the issues that we wanted to get  
18 comments on. So, it remains to be seen. The next step  
19 for us would be to do a proposed rule laying out what  
20 we think is the best way to proceed on that.

21 Two items of interest in the NDA of 2016 that  
22 I'll mention, one has to do with what we were talking a  
23 little bit about with strategic sourcing and those kind  
24 of issues. You may or may not know that we give  
25 agencies a grade. Right now, their grade is based on

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1 prime contracting, subcontracting, and success factors.

2 Starting in '17, when we give agencies a  
3 grade, one of the things they want us to analyze is the  
4 number of small business concerns and other groups, HUB  
5 zone, SDVO, and so forth, awarded prime contracts  
6 compared to the prior fiscal year. So, I think they  
7 want us to somehow measure and grade them on the number  
8 of awards as part of their overall grade. So, that's  
9 something that will change and affect, maybe affect,  
10 agency's behavior.

11 Then, the last thing I'll mention is HUB zone  
12 changes. There's new authority for HUB zones in  
13 presidentially declared disaster areas, around base  
14 closure areas, because we had authority for base  
15 closure areas, but a lot of times the actual economic  
16 activity is around the base. They were not necessarily  
17 being included.

18 So, that's going to expand the areas around  
19 the base closure area which will be eligible for HUB  
20 zone status. Then, it also allows Native Hawaiian  
21 organizations to own HUB zone firms. So, that,  
22 hopefully, will be done as we're hoping a direct final  
23 rule sometime in May or June.

24 That's about all I have. Are there any  
25 questions about anything?

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1 MR. KRAMER: Information packed update, so,  
2 thanks, Ken. If folks have questions, they can --  
3 because there is a lot there. Ken just summarized like  
4 a whole week of my life, I think, with all of that. He  
5 does it much more efficiently than I do. So, thanks,  
6 Ken.

7 Max, I know you had an opportunity for a  
8 little expanded discussion today, but if there were any  
9 other issues that you wanted to just report on, I'm  
10 happy to give you a minute to do that as well. If  
11 you're exhausted and need to recover, feel free.

12 MR. KIDALOV: Sir, I just want to thank you  
13 for asking additional questions. I want to thank  
14 Matthew and everybody else. At 106 pages, we had to  
15 make a decision that the mind can absorb no more than  
16 the seat can endure. We do recommend additional  
17 research, for example, to the entrenchment point. We  
18 recommend research on the types of mechanisms that are  
19 being used for the different firms, how are they  
20 actually getting the money. We certainly try to use  
21 the IDV as a proxy for a lot of that or just the  
22 general nonprogram awards as a proxy.

23 Certainly on SAP, again, great research area.  
24 The FPDS actually cuts off the size of the spreadsheet  
25 at some point. I think it's 30,000 lines or something.

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1 So, again, wonderful and between major announcements,  
2 we could probably keep writing even longer.

3 But again, great issue areas and just  
4 encourage to continue doing research on this.

5 MR. KRAMER: Well, the good thing is we don't  
6 lose you after today, right? Like, I think I have more  
7 than enough information to consider the point you were  
8 talking about today with regard to the contracting  
9 mechanisms. I think you've also revealed to the group  
10 the sort of resource you can be as these other issues  
11 come up certainly between now and June and then beyond.

12 MR. KIDALOV: Yes, sir. And I'll engage with  
13 you and Barb after this as well. Thank you.

14 MR. KRAMER: Great.

15 MS. CARSON: Thanks for the opportunity to  
16 just wrap up a couple things. I heard loud and clear  
17 also capacity building and capability building for  
18 small business. Really, that's on our shoulders to  
19 help them compete for the opportunities that you're  
20 making available. We want to do that.

21 So, through SBA resource partners, SBDC Score,  
22 Women's Business Center, and Veteran Business Outreach  
23 Centers in particular, are focused on vets. We will  
24 see what more we can do.

25 I already talked about her program, but

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1 Barbara Ashe is here. I'm just going to say a quick  
2 one instead. But I want you to know she's here and you  
3 can connect with her after. She is the pointing end of  
4 our spear for procurement-ready veteran-owned  
5 businesses. And although we said 200, it doesn't sound  
6 like a lot. But when you have now seen by census how  
7 many are actually competing and looking for this  
8 business, it is significant. They are going to be  
9 ready. So, we will look for ways to expand what she's  
10 doing with us.

11 I wanted to thank Murat for your initiative  
12 and for your support. We are going to demonstrate  
13 interagency collaboration through the Veteran Institute  
14 for Procurement International Trade Program, which  
15 we're developing this year. We'll execute it next  
16 year. But we're going to come together to use all the  
17 resources of the government to do more in international  
18 trade. So, thank you so much for being here today.

19 MR. KRAMER: So, I know that we're coming up  
20 against our time, and I want to respect that because I  
21 know I and other people have commitments. I also know  
22 that I want to make sure that we provide the  
23 opportunity and reopen public comment again if there's  
24 anything that came up during the meeting that folks  
25 wanted to comment on, or raise, or put on the record.

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1 So, at this point, if anybody who wasn't part  
2 of the normal reporting had anything to add, I'd be  
3 willing to -- yes, sure. Let's get you a microphone,  
4 if we could.

5 MR. WYNN: Testing.

6 MR. KRAMER: Perfect.

7 MR. WYNN: Got one, thank you. Good morning,  
8 Joe Wynn, VET Force and member of (inaudible) Vets.  
9 Thank you for the opportunity to make a few comments  
10 here at the interagency task force meeting.

11 Just kind of a follow up on one point in  
12 particular. Max and Jen's research report, I think,  
13 was very well done. A lot more to look at. One of the  
14 things that I picked up on coming out of that report  
15 was the absence of business development in the  
16 veteran's federal procurement program.

17 This whole ball game started off with 10650 in  
18 '99 setting the base three percent goal, creating also  
19 the Office of Veterans Business Development here at  
20 SBA, The Center for Veterans Enterprise. There was  
21 also another veterans corporation that is no longer  
22 with us, all for the purpose of trying to help service-  
23 disabled veterans in federal procurement.

24 I know there's been some conversation about  
25 how much of an effort should be made toward service-

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1 disabled vets and federal procurement versus veterans  
2 in general just trying to get in business. But I just  
3 keep coming back to the purpose of the interagency task  
4 force with the federal agencies here, which is really  
5 all about federal procurement and increasing that  
6 number of service-disabled vets. We need to increase  
7 the pool.

8 We were talking about this in 2003 when they  
9 came up with the mandatory requirement that all  
10 agencies create a program that would get to the three  
11 percent or more. President Bush came in 2004 with an  
12 executive order, 13360, and, going back some, I just  
13 want to mention, though, that that executive order  
14 really was the catalyst to push forward the legislation  
15 that was created for the service-disabled vet program.

16 We've kind of gotten away from it over the  
17 years. SBA was the targeted agency to kind of manage  
18 that effort under the executive order. That kind of  
19 moved away from requiring agencies to do a written  
20 report and publicly post it on their web sites saying  
21 how they were going to increase contracting  
22 opportunities.

23 All that being said, without going back  
24 through the whole history, all that being said, still  
25 direct awards to service-disabled veteran-owned

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1 businesses is going to increase the capacity and the  
2 ability for service-disabled vets to grow and do more  
3 business with the federal government.

4 This interagency task force, I would strongly  
5 urge you to submit recommendations to let's push that  
6 forward. Whether it happens or not, if it's up to  
7 congress, let congress decide. But at least let your  
8 voices be heard. We are not here to talk about how to  
9 increase contracting opportunities for the HUB zone,  
10 women, and 8(a), but they are veterans, too. How about  
11 that.

12 But, at the same time, let's push forward some  
13 proposals and recommendations that is really going to  
14 help contracting officers do -- as Jen said, they have  
15 some discretion, but it gets a little mixed with all  
16 these other programs. Let's push for service-disabled  
17 vets to increase that pool of contracting  
18 opportunities.

19 So, with that, again, thank you for the  
20 opportunity to make a few comments.

21 MR. KRAMER: Thank you for those comments,  
22 Joe.

23 Anybody else?

24 (No verbal response.)

25 MR. KRAMER: Well, thank you all. The one

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1 final challenge I'd give, not only to members of the  
2 task force but also everybody else that's here, as I  
3 said, we will spend a lot of time in the next few  
4 months looking at our 18 recommendations and really  
5 coming up with a game plan to go forward. What often  
6 gets left out of that exercise is making sure that  
7 we're cultivating the new ideas.

8 I know that I have written down four or five  
9 potential new recommendations that I'll be following up  
10 on with our staff. If all of you could just take some  
11 time as you're looking at your notes from today on the  
12 drive back or the metro back to your office, or  
13 whatever, but while this is fresh in your mind, think  
14 about the other things that we should put on the table  
15 and try to filter out between now and June.

16 We might create some space in June to not only  
17 talk about the existing 18 but then also maybe a new 10  
18 to 15 recommendations people have put out there and  
19 kick those around a bit. So, if you don't do it today,  
20 it's not going to happen. I think we just had a great  
21 recommendation of maybe challenging ourselves to come  
22 up with a specific congressional sort of pitch that we  
23 all could agree on. That's just another of the ones  
24 that we put in. So, do that as well.

25 Otherwise, we appreciate your participation

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1 today. We appreciate what we'll be doing over the next  
2 couple of months to refine all this down a bit. And we  
3 will look forward to seeing you in June, sometime in  
4 June.

5 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: June 9th.

6 MR. KRAMER: June 9th? I don't even want to  
7 say something. We'll see you all in June. So, thank  
8 you all very much. Have a good day.

9 (Whereupon, at 2:55 p.m., the meeting was  
10 adjourned.)

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

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