



**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.gov

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 22, 2008

VA To Deploy Mobile Counseling Centers across America *50 Motor Coaches to Bring Services Closer to Veterans*

WASHINGTON – The first of a fleet of 50 new mobile counseling centers for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vet Center program was put into service today with the remainder scheduled to be activated over the next three months.

“Our widespread distribution of this fleet from coast to coast marks a new chapter in VA's innovation to reach rural and underserved veterans with high-quality readjustment counseling,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake.

Each vehicle will be assigned to one of VA's existing Vet Centers, enabling the center to improve access to counseling by bringing services closer to veterans.

The 38-foot motor coaches, which have spaces for confidential counseling, will carry Vet Center counselors and outreach workers to events and activities to reach veterans in broad geographic areas, supplementing VA's 232 current Vet Centers, which are scheduled to increase to 271 facilities by the end of 2009.

Vet Centers, operated by VA's Readjustment Counseling Service, provide non-medical readjustment counseling in easily accessible, consumer-oriented facilities, addressing the social and economic dimensions of post-war needs. This includes psychological counseling for traumatic military-related experiences and family counseling when needed for the veteran's readjustment.

The team leader at each Vet Center will develop an outreach plan for use of the vehicle within that region, not being limited to the traditional catchment area of a particular Vet Center.

These vehicles will be used to provide outreach and direct readjustment counseling at active-duty, reserve and National Guard activities, including post-deployment health reassessments for returning combat service members.

Mobile Vet Centers 2/2/2/2

The vehicles will also be used to visit events typically staffed by local Vet Center staff, including homeless "stand downs," veteran community events, county fairs, and unit reunions at sites ranging from Native American reservations to colleges.

While most of their use will be in Vet Centers' delivery of readjustment counseling services, the local manager may arrange with VA hospitals or clinics in the region to provide occasional support for health promotion activities such as health screenings.

The normal counseling layout can be converted to support emergency medical missions, such as hurricanes and other natural disasters.

The 50 vehicles are being manufactured for VA by Farber Specialty Vehicles of Columbus, Ohio.

###

Note: A list of the cities where the 50 vehicles will be based is attached.

Home Bases of Planned Vet Center Vehicles

Alabama

Birmingham

Arizona

Chinle
Prescott

Arkansas

Fayetteville

California

Corona
Fresno
Santa Cruz
Eureka

Colorado

Colorado Springs

Florida

Pensacola

Georgia

Savannah
Macon

Idaho

Boise

Kansas

Wichita

Kentucky

Lexington

Illinois

Springfield

Louisiana

New Orleans

Maine

Caribou
Lewiston

Massachusetts

Springfield

Michigan

Escanaba

Minnesota

St. Paul

Montana

Missoula
Billings

Nebraska

Lincoln

New Mexico

Sante Fe
Las Cruces

New York

Watertown

North Carolina

Greenville

North Dakota

Minot
Fargo

Ohio

Dayton

- More -

Mobile Vet Centers 4/4/4/4

Oregon

Eugene

Pennsylvania

Erie

Scranton

South Carolina

Columbia

South Dakota

Rapid City

Tennessee

Johnson City

Memphis

Texas

Amarillo

Midland

San Antonio

Utah

Salt Lake

Vermont

White River

Junction

Virginia

Richmond

Washington

Spokane

Tacoma

West Virginia

Morgantown

Beckley

Wyoming

Casper

#