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**Report/Article Title** Agenda and attachments: Veterans Administration  
Advisory Committee on Health-Related Effects of  
Herbicides, March 6, 1984, Meeting

**Journal/Book Title**

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**Description Notes** Attachments include: Agent Orange Activities slides, Agent  
Orange Registry - An Overview, dated February 10, 1984,  
Fact Sheet, Air Force Health Study (Project Ranch Hand II),  
Tentative Schedule for Senate Committee on Veterans'  
Affairs, 2nd Session, 98th Congress Hearing/Markup  
Schedule, dated January 17, 1984, and Audiovisual and  
Printed materials Available in the VA Library Network  
(VALNET)

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH-RELATED EFFECTS OF HERBICIDES

Veterans Administration Central Office  
Room 119  
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20420  
March 6, 1984

*Amly*

8:30 AM	Call to Order and Opening Remarks by the Chairman	Barclay M. Shepard, M.D.
8:35	Recent Activities	Dr. Shepard
8:50	Agent Orange Registry Statement	Dr. Shepard
9:05	Report on Australian Activities	Mr. John S. Coombs, QC John Matthews, M.D.
9:20	Ranch Hand Study	Col. George D. Lathrop, M.D., Ph.D.
9:45	CDC Epidemiology Study	J. David Erickson, D.D.S., Ph.D.
10:00	CDC Birth Defects Study	Joseph Mulinare, M.D.
10:05	Recess for Subcommittee Meeting	
1:00 PM	Reconvene for Reports of Subcommittees	Mr. Fredrick Mullen, Sr. Richard A. Hodder, M.D., M.P.H.
1:30	Comments and Discussion	Audience
1:50	Future Agenda Items	
2:00	Adjournment	

SUBCOMMITTEE ON VETERANS' EDUCATION/INFORMATION

Veterans Administration Central Office  
Room 139  
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20420  
March 6, 1984

10:15 AM	Call to Order and Opening Remarks by the Subcommittee Chairman	Mr. Fredrick Mullen, Sr.
10:20	Old Business	Mr. Mullen
10:30	Progress Report on New Videotapes	Mr. Danny C. Jones
10:45	Library Efforts	Ms. Jean McVoy
10:55	Discussion of Veterans' Concerns	Subcommittee
11:20	Comments and Discussion	Audience
11:25	Future Agenda Items	Subcommittee
11:30	Adjournment	

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EPIDEMIOLOGY/BIOSTATISTICS

Veterans Administration Central Office  
Room 119  
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20420  
March 6, 1984

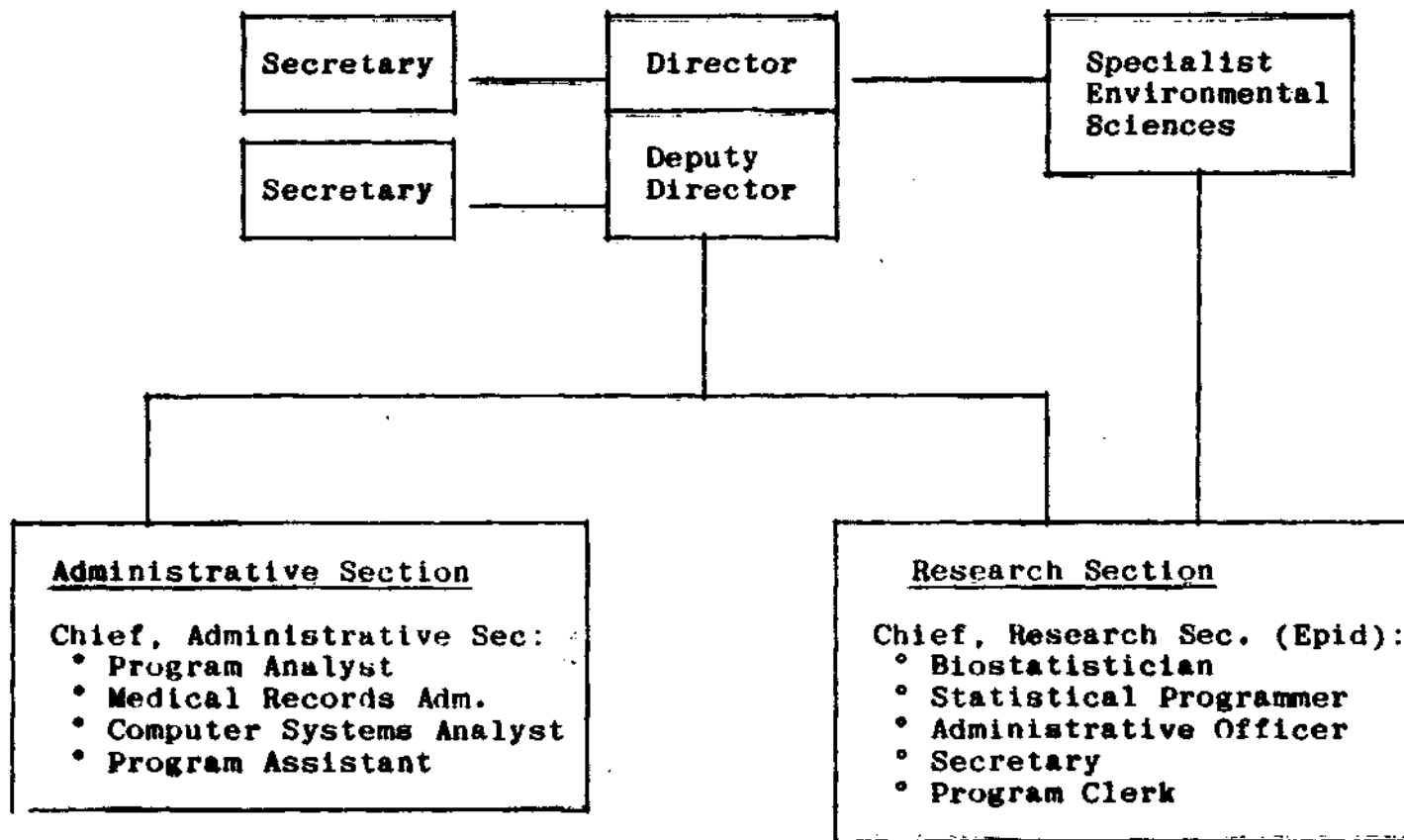
10:15 AM	Call to Order and Opening Remarks	Richard A. Hodder, M.D., M.P.H.
10:20	Further Discussion of CDC Epidemiology Study	J. David Erickson, D.D.S, Ph.D.
10:35	Discussion of Australian Morbidity Study	John Matthews, M.D.
10:55	Patient Treatment File/Soft Tissue Sarcoma Review	Han K. Kang, Dr. P.H.
11:10	Michigan Soft-Tissue Sarcoma Study	Daniel Williams, M.D.
11:25	Future Agenda Items	Subcommittee
11:30	Adjournment	



**Veterans  
Administration**

# **Agent Orange Activities**

**AGENT ORANGE PROJECTS OFFICE  
(10A7)**



## II. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- A. AGENT ORANGE REGISTRY
- B. CHLORACNE TASK FORCE
- C. PATIENT TREATMENT FILE
  - VIETNAM SERVICE INDICATOR
- D. PUBLIC LAW 97-72
  - TRACKING MECHANISM
- E. INFORMATION FOR VETERANS
  - "AGENT ORANGE: A SEARCH FOR ANSWERS"
  - PAMPHLETS
  - AGENT ORANGE REVIEW

## **II. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (CONT'D)**

### **F. EDUCATION FOR VA STAFF**

- CONFERENCES**
- CONFERENCE CALLS**
- AGENT ORANGE BULLETIN**
- INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUMS**

### **G. MONOGRAPH SERIES**

- PHENOXY HERBICIDES**
- AGENT BLUE (CACODYLIC ACID)**
- BIRTH DEFECTS AND GENETIC COUNSELING**
- CHLORACNE**

### **H. LITERATURE ANALYSIS UPDATE**

### **III. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**

**A. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY**

**B. MORTALITY STUDY**

**C. VIETNAM EXPERIENCE TWIN STUDY**

**D. ADIPOSE TISSUE STUDY**

**E. AIR FORCE HEALTH STUDY (RANCH HAND)**

**F. CDC BIRTH DEFECTS STUDY**

**G. AUSTRALIAN STUDIES**

**H. OTHERS**

**- SPECIALLY SOLICITED LABORATORY STUDIES**



**IV. COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES**

**A. AGENT ORANGE WORKING GROUP**

**-SCIENCE PANEL**

**B. VA ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**V. VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS**

**VI. CONGRESSIONAL/STATE RELATIONS**

**A. U.S. CONGRESS**

**B. STATE AGENT ORANGE COMMISSIONS**

Veterans Administration  
Agent Orange Projects Office (10A7)  
February 10, 1984

## AGENT ORANGE REGISTRY -- AN OVERVIEW

### History

The Agent Orange Registry was initiated by the Veterans Administration in mid-1978 in response to concerns expressed by Vietnam veterans who were increasingly worried that they may have been exposed to chemical herbicides which might be causing a variety of ill effects. VA Circular 10-78-219, dated September 14, 1978, established the framework of the Registry.

A special Data Analysis Task Force was formed in June 1980 when it became obvious that the Registry's data input procedures needed improvement. The Task Force recommended a number of changes during 1981 and, in August 1982, Circular 10-82-154 directed an updating of the names and addresses for the veterans listed in the Registry. This was followed by Circular 10-83-38 dated March 1, 1983 that completely revised the reporting process in order to improve the coding of demographic and medical information, thereby permitting easier data retrieval.

Registry records consist of two components: the medical record maintained at the VA Medical Center where the veteran was examined and a computerized extract from that record. The veteran's medical record includes the full medical history, physical examination, laboratory reports and other clinical findings. The computerized extract, better called the "register," includes the veteran's name, address, the examining medical center, some information about the veteran's military service, an estimate of herbicide exposure and elements of the findings at the time of the physical examination. The computerized register constitutes an index to this nationwide set of medical records. A copy of the currently used code sheet is attached.

### Purpose

The principal purpose for which the Agent Orange Registry program was designed remains unchanged. It is a process which serves all veterans who are worried about the possible adverse health effects of their exposure to herbicides while serving in Vietnam. It provides the veteran an opportunity to receive a complete health evaluation and answers to questions concerning the current state of knowledge regarding the relationship between herbicide exposure and subsequent health problems. Following completion of the examination the veteran is given the results of the physical exam and laboratory studies. This information is provided to the veteran by both a face-to-face discussion with a physician familiar with the health aspects of the Agent Orange issue and a follow-up letter summarizing the results of the examination.

The Registry serves an important second purpose in that it enables the VA to provide veterans current information as it develops regarding their concerns. In addition it would permit the VA to contact veterans for further testing in the event that continuing research efforts should make this action advisable. The Registry serves yet another purpose, namely, to provide a means of detecting clues or suggestions of specific health problems in the event that unexpected or unusual health trends show up in this group of veterans. Such clues could then form the basis for the design and conduct of specific epidemiological studies.

#### Potential Uses and Limitations

Because of the self-selected nature of the Registry participants, this group of veterans cannot, with any scientific validity be viewed as being representational of Vietnam veterans as a whole. Therefore the health-related information contained in the data base cannot be used as an epidemiological tool. The information can, however, be used to detect suggested health trends, as noted above, and can provide some descriptors as to the characteristics of the group itself. For example, it is possible to show the numbers in each branch of military service, the period(s) of service in Vietnam, the kinds of symptoms the veterans are experiencing and some of the results of the physical examinations. From this type of information, it is possible to develop the relative frequency or internal proportional distribution of certain factors or data elements. However, since participation in the Registry program is entirely voluntary, one cannot make statistically valid comparisons directly between this group of veterans and other groups of veterans or non-veterans.

#### Summary

The Agent Orange Registry remains the VA's most effective means of identifying concerned Vietnam veterans. Any eligible Vietnam veteran expressing a concern relating to exposure to herbicides is encouraged to participate in the Registry program. The veteran is asked demographic and identifying information, military information including branch of service and dates of service in Vietnam, and the circumstances of exposure to Agent Orange. In addition, past medical history is obtained and documented. The veteran is then provided a complete physical examination and several base-line laboratory studies. Appropriate additional tests and consultations are obtained when medically indicated by the veteran's physical condition or past medical history.

As of December 31, 1983, the VA had completed 130,220 initial Agent Orange Registry examinations of which approximately 13,600 have utilized the new code sheet. In addition, 31,471 follow-up examinations have been performed.

FACT SHEET

Air Force Health Study  
(Project Ranch Hand II)

Baseline Morbidity Study Results

Study results of Ranch Hand personnel versus a comparison group do not support a cause and effect relationship between herbicide exposure and adverse health in the Ranch Hand group.

General Health - Both groups in good health for age.

Cancer

- No soft tissue sarcoma found in Ranch Handers - one in comparison
- No difference in the occurrence of "systemic" cancer
- More verified skin cancer in Ranch Hand group - not adjusted for sun exposure which is major cause of skin cancer

Fertility/Reproductive

- All findings in this area are based on parental reporting in absence of medical records or birth/death certificates; hence, all fertility results must be considered preliminary until records verification completed.
- No significant Ranch Hand findings in sperm count or defective sperm; fertility or infertility; miscarriages; still births; live births; or severe or moderate birth defects in offspring
- More minor birth abnormalities (rashes, birth marks, skin discoloration, etc.) reported by Ranch Handers.

- Neonatal deaths were reported more frequently in Ranch Handers; misclassification between still birth, neonatal death and infant death very possible; review of medical records/death certificates pending.
- Significant associations were noted in both groups between maternal smoking during pregnancy and learning disabilities, physical handicaps, infant deaths and birth defects. Maternal alcohol use also associated with physical handicaps.

### Liver

- No porphyria cutanea tarda was diagnosed.
- Ranch Handers self-reported more liver and PCT-like symptoms
- No difference in frequency of liver disease detected by physical examination or laboratory tests.
- Several minor lab test differences but none of clinical significance; most tests were similar between groups
- No difference in past occurrence of hepatitis, jaundice or cirrhosis
- More verified miscellaneous disorders in Ranch Handers; significance unknown

### Neurology

- No significant differences in major areas. Borderline difference in Babinski reflex but no other relevant clinical findings.
- Profound effects of alcohol and diabetes detected

### Cardiovascular

- No major cardiovascular findings noted

- Ranch Handers not developing heart diseases prematurely
- No significant differences in most clinical tests. There were significant differences in two specific peripheral leg pulses in Ranch Handers with no other clinical adverse findings. Pathogenesis and clinical relevance unclear at this time.

### Psychology

- No difference in IQ and performance tests
- High school educated Ranch Handers self-reported more symptoms in the areas of fear, anger, anxiety, etc.--not assessed for differential reporting or Post Viet Nam Stress Syndrome

### Dermatology

- No chloracne suggested from questionnaires
- No chloracne diagnosed from physical examinations or biopsies

### Other

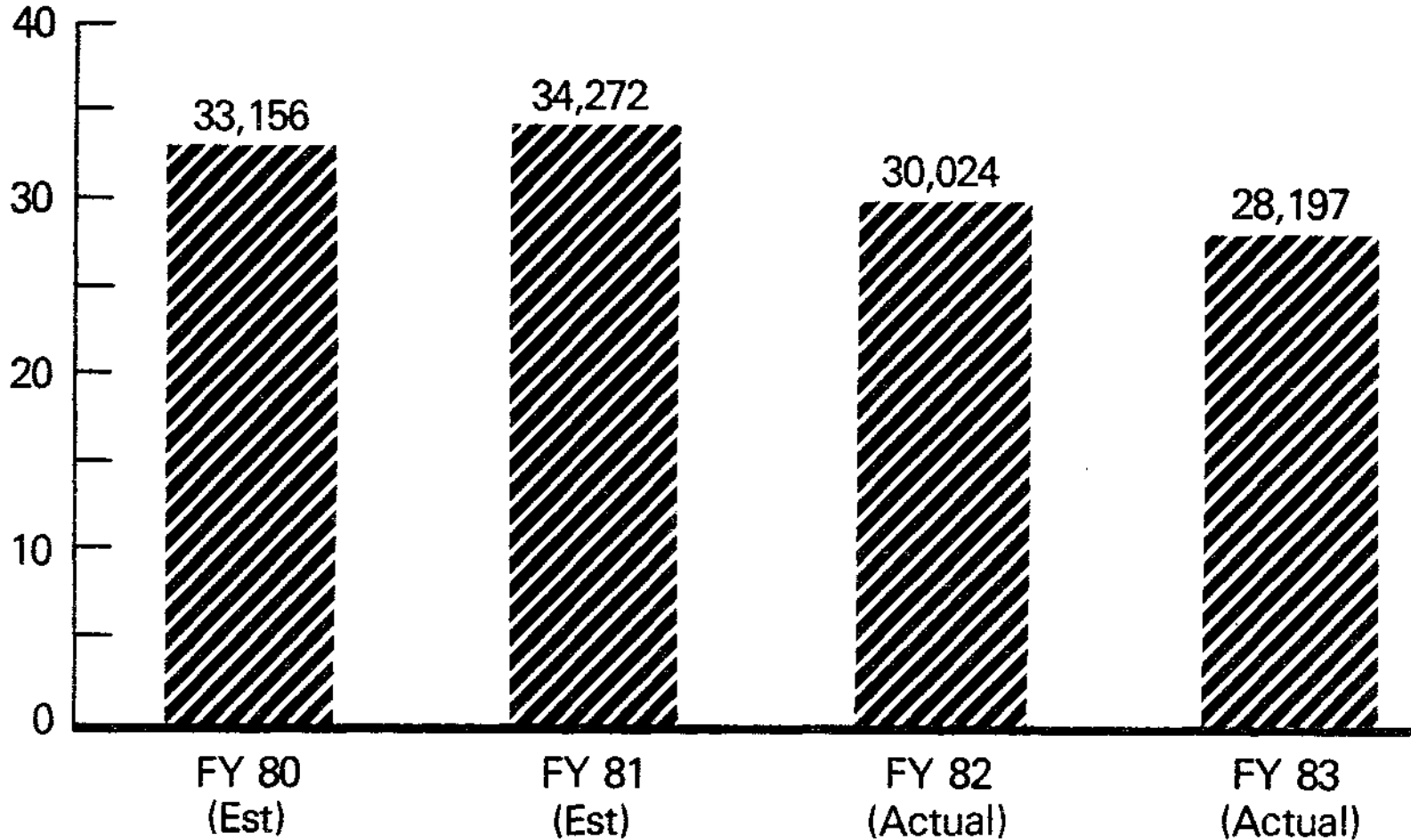
- No clinically significant differences in immunology, hematology, renal, pulmonary or endocrine areas. Some minor differences found but judged to be not clinically relevant.

Numerous medical findings, most of a minor or undetermined nature, that will require detailed follow-up.

Further physical examinations and questionnaires will be administered at the 3 (1985), 5, 10, 15 and 20 year points.

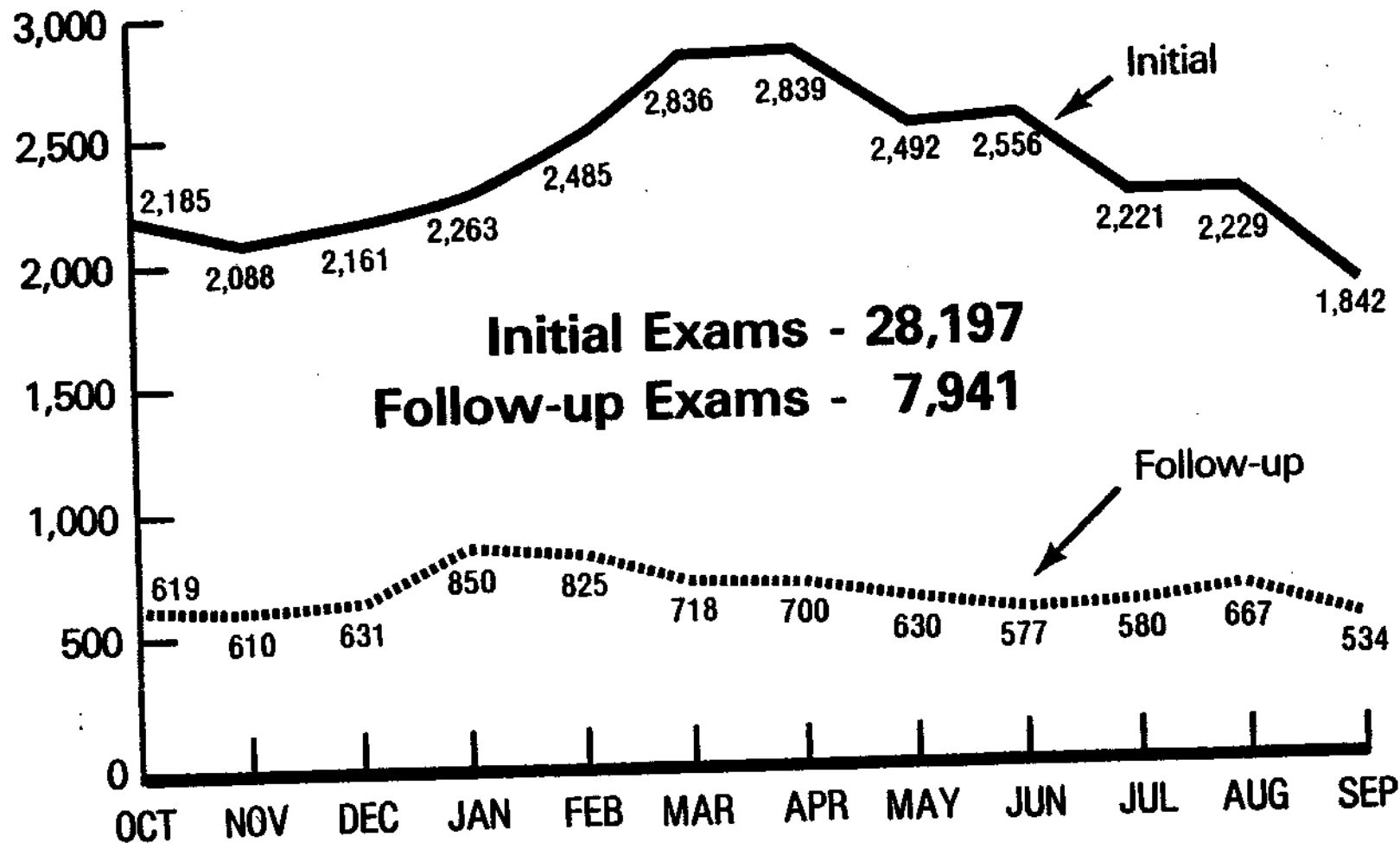
# Agent Orange Examinations

Examinations  
in thousands



Cumulative Total Number Examinations as of September 30, 1983 - 125,649

# Monthly Total of Agent Orange Examinations FY 83





*Substantive Schedule*

17 January 1984

SENATE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

2nd Session

98th CONGRESS HEARING/MARKUP SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Time/Chair</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>LA</u>
7 Feb 84	T	Joint Committee Hearing: Legislative Priorities of the DAV	9:30 a.m.	SD-106 Dirksen SOB	JFB
8 Feb 84	W	Committee Hearing: VA Budget--FY 85	2:00 p.m.	SR-418 Russell SOB	BNG
29 Feb 84	W	Committee Hearing: Oversight on Vet Centers and Loan Guaranty Program	10:00 a.m.	SR-418 Russell SOB	VPR JFB
6 Mar 84	T	Committee Hearing: Legislative Priorities of the VFW	11:30 a.m.	SD-106 Dirksen SOB	JFB
7 Mar 84	W	Committee Meeting: Markup on VA Budget	9:30 a.m.	SR-418 Russell SOB	BNG
7 Mar 84	W	Committee Hearing: Oversight on VA Nursing Home Construction	10:30 a.m.	SR-418 Russell SOB	VPR
<u>21 Mar 84</u>	W	Committee Hearing: Oversight on Agent Orange	10:00 a.m.	SR-418 Russell SOB	VPR CFA
28 Mar 84	W	Joint Committee Hearing: Legislative Priorities of AMVETS, Purple Heart, BVA, PVA, and WWI	9:00 a.m.	SR-325 Russell SOB	JFB
4 Apr 84	W	Committee Hearing: Legislative Hearing on Health (Part I)	10:00 a.m.	SR-418 Russell SOB	VPR CFA
11 Apr 84	W	Committee Hearing: Legislative Hearing on Health (Part II)	10:00 a.m.	SR-418 Russell SOB	VPR CFA
2 May 84	W	Committee Meeting: Markup on Health Bill	10:00 a.m.	SR-418 Russell SOB	VPR CFA
9 May 84	W	Committee Hearing: Legislative Hearing on Compensation	10:00 a.m.	SR-418 Russell SOB	BNG
23 May 84	W	Committee Hearing: Oversight on Interagency Agreement, VA/DOD Sharing and Supply and Procurement Policies	10:00 a.m.	SR-418 Russell SOB	VPR
6 Jun 84	W	Committee Hearing: Oversight on Inspector General /Medical Inspector	10:00 a.m.	SR-418 Russell SOB	VPR
20 Jun 84	W	Committee Meeting: Markup Compensation Bill	10:00 a.m.	SR-418 Russell SOB	BNG VPR

AUDIOVISUAL AND PRINTED MATERIALS AVAILABLE IN THE VA LIBRARY NETWORK  
(VALNET)

Audiovisuals

1. Agent Orange: a search for answers, Veterans Administration, 1981, (videocassette), All Health Care Facilities
2. Genetic counseling: a practical demonstration of a counseling session for parents of a Down's child, 1978, (videocassette), District
3. Practical aspects of genetic counseling, United States Army Medical Department, Fort Sam Houston, 1973, (videocassette), District

Audiovisuals in Production

1. Agent Orange: clinical update (audience - hospital staff), estimated completion date December 1984, (videocassette), All health care facilities
2. Agent Orange: update (audience - general public) estimated completion date December 1984, (videocassette), All health care facilities

VA Video Digest

- #3, Special report on Agent Orange, 1983, (videocassette), All health care facilities,

Audiovisuals on the Vietnam War or Vietnam War era

1. Anderson platoon, Films Incorporated, 1969, (videocassette), Regional
2. Front line, Filmmakers Library, 1979, (videocassette), Regional
3. Frank, a Vietnam veteran, Fred Simon Productions, 1981, (videocassette) Regional
4. Good morning, Vietnam, Foxhole Production, 1978, (videocassette) Regional
5. Hearts and minds, BBS Productions, 1974, (16 mm), Regional
6. Spooks and cowboys, gooks and grunts, CRV Television Network, 1976, (16 mm and videocassette), Regional
7. Vietnam: ten thousand day war, Information Television Productions Limited and Cinequity Funding, Inc., 1980, (26 videocassettes) Regional
8. Vietnam: a television history, Public Broadcasting System, 1983, (videocassette), Regional
9. Vietnam memorial, Public Broadcasting System, 1983, (videocassette), Regional
10. The war at home, Catalyst Films/Madison Film Production Co, 1979, (videocassette), Regional
11. Warriors' women, Dorothy Tod Film, 1981, (videocassette), Regional
12. Young veterans program, Veterans Administration, 1982, (videocassette), Regional

Print materials

All print materials listed below have been delivered one copy to Library Service at each health care facility

1. Birth Defects, Genetic Services, International Directory, 7th edition, 1983, The National Foundation - March of Dimes
2. Case Control Study of Congenital Anomalies and Vietnam Service, Australian Government, 1983 (ordered but not yet received)
3. Chemical Sythe: lessons of 2,4,5-T and dioxin by Alastair Hay, Plenum Publishing Corp., 1982
4. Clinical Genetics and Genetic counseling by Thaddeus E. Kelly, Year Book Medical Publishers, 1980

AUDIOVISUAL AND PRINTED MATERIALS AVAILABLE IN THE VA LIBRARY NETWORK  
(VALNET)

5. Continuing Education Conference on Herbicide Orange (2nd : 1980 : Washington, D.C.), Proceedings from the 2nd Continuing Education Conference on Herbicide Orange, Veterans Administration, Department of Medicine and Surgery, 1981

6. "Cytogenetic Diseases," Clinical Symposia, volume 35, no 1, 1983. CIBA Pharmaceutical Company

7. "Dioxin," Chemical and Engineering News, vol 61, no 23, June 6, 1983, American Chemical Society (two copies sent to Library Service at each medical center, one for the medical library and one for the patient library)

8. Genetics in medicine by James S. Thompson and Margaret W. Thompson, 3rd edition, Saunders, 1980.

9. Human and environmental risks of chlorinated dioxins and related compounds edited by Richard E. Tucker, Alvin L. Young and Allan P. Gray, Plenum Press, 1980

10. Operation Ranch Hand: the Air Force and Herbicides in Southeast Asia 1961-1971, United States Air Force, Washington, D.C., 1982

11. Review of the literature on herbicides, including phenoxy herbicides and associated dioxins, Veterans Administration, Department of Medicine and Surgery, 1981

12 Vietnam: a history by Stanley Karnow, Viking Press, 1983. (The order is in process)

Regional delivery level means one copy is in the Library Service at each of the 7 Regional Medical Education Center host hospitals. The regional libraries are in Birmingham, AL, Cleveland, OH, Long Beach, CA, Minneapolis, MN, Northport, NY, Salt Lake City UT, and St. Louis, MO.

District delivery level means one copy in Library Service at a designated library in each of the 28 VA medical districts. The district libraries are located in Togus, ME, Buffalo, NY, Northport, NY, Lyons, NJ, Pittsburgh, PA, Perry Point, MD, Salem, VA, Durham, NC, Augusta, GA, Tuskegee, AL, Lexington, KY, Miami, FL, Cleveland, OH, Battle Creek, MI, Danville, IL, Wood, WI, Chicago, IL, Minneapolis, MN, Little Rock, AR, Waco, TX, St. Louis, MO, Topeka, KS, Des Moines, IA, Denver, CO, Prescott, AZ, Long Beach, CA, Palo Alto, CA, and Vancouver, WA

All health care facilities delivery level means one copy is in Library Service at each medical center. VA medical centers with two divisions have one copy for each division.