

# AN OUTLINE OF VETERANS ASSISTANCE

REPUBLIC OF CHINA

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● REPUBLIC OF CHINA

# CONTENTS

I、 HISTORY

II、 MISSIONS

III、 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

IV、 RECIPIENTS OF ASSISTANCE

V、 EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

VI、 HOME CARE

VII、 MEDICAL CARE

VIII、 SCHOOLING ASSISTANCE AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

IX、 OVERSEAS SERVICES & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

## **I. HISTORY**

The government of the Republic of China established its Retirement System for ex-servicemen in 1952. Our purpose was to help separate from the military those officers and men who were no longer fit for active duty, and to inject new vigor into and ensure the vitality and combat strength of our armed forces. On November 1st, 1954, our government established the Vocational Assistance Commission for Retired Servicemen, Executive Yuan (also known as VACRS) in order to plan and coordinate executive operations of veteran's affairs.

In its initial stages, VACRS rendered vocational assistance only to these veterans. Afterwards, however, its operations were broadened to cover employment assistance, medical care, home care, schooling assistance and general services and care. Therefore, in 1966, VACRS was renamed the Veterans Affairs Commission (also known as VAC). Furthermore, in order to express our gratitude to those veterans who offered their efforts and services to the nation, the government also granted to them the title of "Honorable Citizens".

## **● II. MISSIONS**

The VAC's principle mission is mainly to inject new vigor into our armed forces, ensuring the vitality and combat strength, as well as to care for our veterans. ***We hope to make good use of talented people so that the able-bodied shall be employed, the ill, hospitalized, the aged, cared for, and the young, educated.***

The ROC veterans assistance system has fulfilled the functions of "Insuring the vitality of the Armed Forces", "Securing Social Stability and Prosperity", "Supporting National Reconstruction", and "Developing

Substantive Diplomacy”.

● **III. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The Republic of China established The Veteran’s Affairs Commission in 1954 as a cabinet-level commission.

The VAC is a commission, whose members include leaders of various ministries and commissions. The Minister, with the assistance of two Deputy Ministers, is in charge of all VAC activities. Functioning under the Minister are a Secretary-General, two or three Deputy Secretaries-General, fourteen Departments and Offices. In addition, there are a Veterans Placement Foundation, Veterans Medical Care Foundation, and a Legal Affairs (Appeals) Committee.

In order to smoothly implement veterans employment assistance, medical care, home care, schooling assistance and vocational training, and to provide for general services, the VAC has gradually established various affiliated organizations. Basically, ***the VAC is a flat organization that has few levels in its hierarchy, with faster decision making, shorter communication paths and a high involvement style of management.***

## Organization Structure of VAC



## **1. Service Organizations**

After leaving the Armed Forces, veterans may live scatteringly throughout the country. In order to properly care for them, the VAC has gradually established twenty-two veterans service departments in each city and county since 1962. These service departments are responsible for assistance and services to veterans in their living support, employment, medical, educational and other needs.

## **2. Home Care Organizations**

- To take care of those veterans with service connected disabilities and aged veterans who can no longer work, the VAC has established fourteen veterans homes to provide care at government expenses. Since 1990, the VAC has established another four self expense domiciliary centers (DC) to care for the elderly veterans who are receiving monthly pensions.

## **3. Medical Care Organizations**

We have established fifteen veterans hospitals to meet veterans' needs. Over nearly fifty years, these VAC's hospitals have become a chain link in our national medical organizations. These medical facilities not only provide veterans and their dependents with adequate medical services, but also extend such services to the general public.

## **4. Vocational Training Organization**

The VAC has activated a Veterans Training Center to assist our veterans and those officers and men about to retire in obtaining their respective vocational and technical specialties, so as to upgrade their competitiveness in the job market.

## **5. Production Organizations**

Since 1954, the VAC has also gradually activated various veterans production organizations. We intend to solve employment problems among

young veterans. Since their activation, these organizations have always followed the principles “to nurture business with business” and “to create business with business” with a view toward not depending upon government funding. Our goal is to promote the development of self-supporting organizations. Since 1989, following the implementation of our government policies, like “The Government Restructuring Program” and “Privatization of Enterprises”, these production organizations have been gradually reduced. Currently, there are in existence only 14 production enterprises operating in the fields of agriculture, forestry, construction, industry, and labor services.

#### ● **IV. RECIPIENTS OF ASSISTANCE**

The recipients who are eligible for VAC assistance are those with a VAC Veteran’s ID card. The officers, NCOs, and men, who possess required retirement, separation orders or certificates in accordance with the “By-Laws for the ROC Retired Servicemen Assistance Act”, are eligible to apply for this ID card.

Although the main recipients of VAC assistance are veterans themselves, our services also extend to their spouses and to their children.

Concerning the above-mentioned recipients of assistance, up to the end of 2004, there were 525,517 veterans with 2,159,312 dependents. This grand total of 2,684,829 constitutes 11.6% of the population in the Taiwan and Fuchien areas.

#### ● **V. EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE**

At present, we assist our veterans mainly in the following two ways:

“Direct employment with VAC organizations” and “Employment with other organizations through VAC recommendations”.

### **1. Direct Employment with VAC Organizations**

In the beginning when VAC was first established, our role was limited to direct employment placement in VAC organizations or their affiliates. As a result, VAC created various kinds of production organizations as well as investing in privately managed companies. The direct employment placement also enabled the production enterprises under the VAC to grow and flourish.

In recent years, however, due to saturation of job placements within the VAC structure as well as liberalization and internationalization of our nation's economy, direct job placement can no longer meet the demands of this new era. Therefore, VAC's employment assistance program has shifted its main focus to employment with other organizations by way of referral, and also supporting direct employment placement within VAC organizations.

### **2. Employment with Other Organizations through VAC's Recommendation**

This type of employment means that various government agencies, schools, and private-sector enterprises hire veterans who are recommended by VAC in accordance with their physical conditions, special expertise, wishes, and the demands of the society. However, in fact, employment opportunities for VAC veterans have been decreasing in recent years because our government agencies and public enterprises have all been devoting themselves to staff reductions. Hence, only private-sector enterprises are capable of accepting a large number of veterans for job placement. Thus, job placement with private-sector

organizations through VAC's recommendation has become a very important task in regard to veteran's employment assistance.

### **3. Special Civil Service Examinations for Veterans**

Since most retired officers and men have been working in the ROC military for quite a long time, many of their areas of expertise do not meet the requirements of public agencies. In view of this fact, special examination should be periodically held for these veterans.

Through coordination with the Examination Yuan, which is responsible for civil servants examinations, these special examinations have indeed been conducted for veterans in accordance with actual staffing requirements since 1958. Thus, those non-qualified veterans who are willing to serve public agencies may improve themselves through further study and obtain civil service qualifications through these special examinations which have been held every other year since 1977.

## **VI. Home Care**

*For the purpose of caring aged veterans (over 61 years of age), there are 14 veterans homes and four self-expense domiciliary centers under VAC. The veterans homes are neat and tidy and are with picturesque environments, so that veterans may lead a happy life in their waning years. In order to cope with fast-changing life-styles, in 2003, we selected some Veterans home and remodeled them into Home-Cared Zones for veterans with spouses or parents and Nursing-Home Zones for veterans with spouses or parents or disabled children.*

## **● VII. Medical Care**

### **1. Veteran Medical-Care Organization and System**

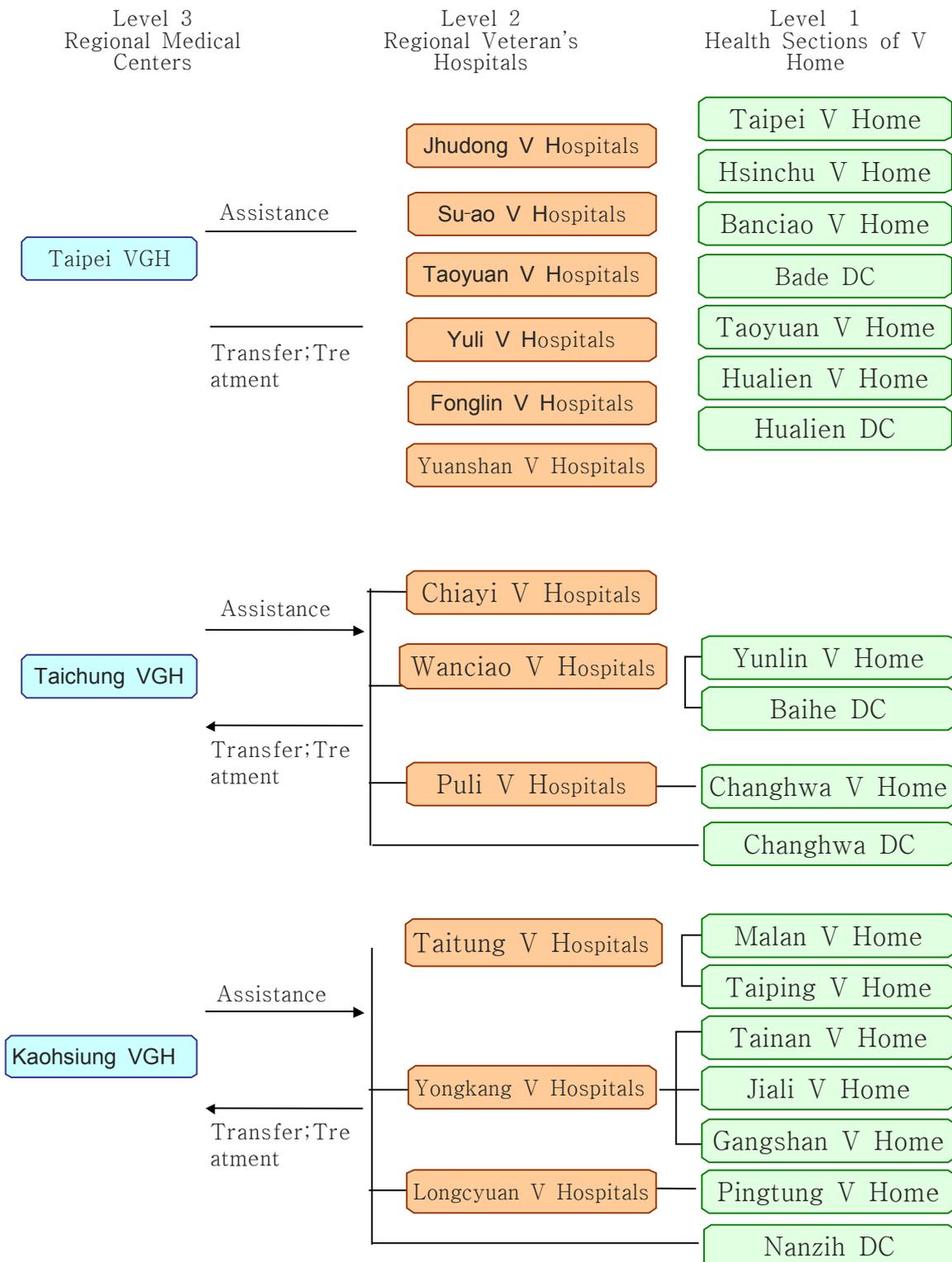
At present, there are three veteran's general hospitals and twelve regional veterans hospitals under VAC. In order to coordinate with appropriate medical resources in various areas, VAC has integrated various medical resources under its veterans' homes and veterans medical organizations. As a result, the VAC medical services are divided into three levels:

The first level constitutes basic care by the health sections at various veterans' homes and self- expense domiciliary centers.

The second level refers to assistance rendered by regional veteran's hospitals in charge of supporting the health sections of nearby veteran's homes.

The third level pertains to medical centers such as Taipei VGH, Taichung VGH and Kaohsiung VGH. Within the framework of their responsibilities, these centers provide: Implementation of mutual support systems for doctors, nurses and rehabilitation personnel, professional, medical and technical assistance, and also implement further medical studies and education, as well as effectively utilize sickbeds within their area.

# Medical Service Network of Veterans Medical System



- **VIII. SCHOOLING ASSISTANCE AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

- 1. **Schooling Assistance**

Schooling assistance is mainly designed to assist those veterans who wish to receive higher education, to up-grade the quality of manpower, to intensify competitive strength for employment, and to strengthen our national human resources. Veterans spent long time periods in military service, and thus could not devote large parts of their lives, while in the service, to having a good learning environment. It is difficult for them to compete with young job seekers who have just graduated from school. So, the ROC government has enacted the following laws and procedures to benefit veterans concerning their schooling: The Constitution (as amended), The Military Service Law, The University Law and The ROC Retired Servicemen's Assistance Act. In accordance with these laws and procedures, the VAC has instituted the: "Procedures for Veterans Schooling Assistance", in order to positively promote our veterans schooling assistance.

- 2. **Vocational Training**

One key employment challenge facing military ex-servicemen is their lack of skills required by the job market. Because of their leadership, ability and experience in administration and management, it is believed that these veterans will enjoy a competitive edge if they are equipped with employable skills. In view of this point, VAC began to offer vocational training in 1957. Most of the training classes were either sub-contracted to private training centers or conducted in partnership with employment agencies.

- **IX. OVERSEAS SERVICES & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

- 1. **Strengthening the Link with Overseas Veterans**

VAC established its first overseas ROC Veteran Association (ROCVA) in Tokyo, Japan in 1974. Since then, VAC has gradually helped establish 38 overseas ROC Veteran Associations in places where many veterans reside.

## **2. Promoting International Diplomacy of a Substantive Nature**

In order to promote international diplomacy of a substantive nature, VAC maintains constant contacts with veteran's organizations of friendly countries. Through years of continued efforts, VAC has established relationships with 74 countries and 95 veteran's organizations throughout the world. In addition, VAC applied to join The World Veterans Federation on November 7, 1990, and became one of the 61 formal member countries of this world organization, under the official name of VAC, Republic of China on Taiwan.