



U.S. Small Business
Administration

Interagency Task Force (IATF) on Veterans Small Business Development
June 5, 2024 - Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Dilawar A. Syed, Deputy Administrator, SBA

Rob Yannuzzi, Assistant Administrator, Office of Veterans Business Development (OVBD)

- Mathew Blum, Associate Administrator, Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP), U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
- Margarita Devlin, Deputy, Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)
- Scott Jensen, Executive Director, National Veteran Small Business Coalition
- Carla Johnson, Associate Director, Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP), Acquisition & Sustainment (A&S), U.S. Department of Defense
- Paul Martin, Director, Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)
- Lisa Oliva, Deputy Director, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), U.S. Department of Treasury
- Kimberly Osborne, Acting Executive Director, Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- Fran Perez-Wilhite, Program Manager, North Carolina Military Business Center (NCMBC)
- Michael Phipps, Representative, American Legion
- Kristopher Rick, Director, Office of Strategic Outreach, U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)
- Joe Wynn, Vice Chair, on behalf of Victor Klingelhofer, Executive Committee Member, Veterans Entrepreneurship Task Force (VET-Force)

- 1. Call to Order** – The Quarterly Public Meeting of the IATF was called to order at 1:16 p.m. on June 5, 2024, by Rob Yannuzzi, Assistant Administrator of the Office of Veterans Business Development, and Designated Federal Official, U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).
- 2. Welcoming Remarks and Introduction** – Mr. Yannuzzi welcomed committee members and the public to the meeting and introduced SBA Deputy Administrator Dilawar Syed.

3. Comments by Deputy Administrator Syed – Deputy Administrator Syed talked about support for veteran-owned entrepreneurs, given the increased targets that we have this year and an operations update when it comes to SBA’s support of veteran entrepreneurs. The Deputy said we have increased the target for service-disabled veteran small business owners from three percent to five percent. SBA has a number of programs, such as Boots to Business and others, which the Deputy wants to make sure are promoted through interagency efforts to ensure veterans are aware of these various training programs. The Deputy said he wants to make sure people are aware of these programs and told committee members he would appreciate their collaboration in driving awareness.

- a. Unified Certification Platform** – The Deputy said technology efforts to support certifications are underway. SBA will be rolling out a Unified Certification Platform where small business owners will be able to go to one place, one platform, to apply, maintain, and view all certifications. The SBA hopes to have it done in the coming months.
- b. VetCert Platform** – Deputy Syed acknowledged the VA working as a team with SBA in the VetCert Platform. The Deputy said he believes 15,000 certifications have been processed.
- c. Customer Relationship Management (CRM)** – My SBA is launching a CRM initiative this year. The first release came out a couple of months ago to women-owned small businesses. The Deputy said this would be an effort where users can have a single view of loans, the ability to make a payment on loans, and have access to certification in one platform. It will benefit all SBA customers, including veteran small business owners.

4. Comments by Timothy Green, Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Veterans Business Development, SBA – OVBD sent out a notice of funding opportunity for expanding the Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC) program. Mr. Green explained that OVBD has been receiving additional funding recently and is looking to potentially add three more VBOCs, for a total of 31 centers. Mr. Green said OVBD is getting support from the Administrator and from Capitol Hill.

- a. Customer Service** – OVBD is rolling out a customer service survey within VBOCs. DAA Green said OVBD will start to get good data on how we’re serving veteran-owned small businesses to see if we are providing the services they need and assess their satisfaction rate.
- b. Other OVBD Priorities: Military Spouses** – OVBD has been looking at access to capital for military spouses and creating more programs with a focus on military spouses. Mr. Green said Stan Kurtz of OVBD was leading the effort to create a curriculum for military spouses that mirrors the Boots to Business Program.
- c. Access to Capital** – OVBD is recently focused on identifying barriers to accessing capital for veteran-owned small businesses and military spouses. Mr. Green said there’s really no data on military spouses and the challenges they have with access to capital.

5. **Comments by Stan Kurtz, Director, Policy and Engagement** – OVBD launched Pathway to Business, which is specifically for military spouses, in July 2023. OVBD is currently working to establish the Pathway to Business course on the Ascent Online Digital Platform, which is SBA’s training platform.
 - a. **Military Spouse Entrepreneurship Summit** – OVBD held a Military Spouse Entrepreneurship Summit on May 9, 2024. Mr. Kurtz said OVBD does a military spouse summit every year to bring partners in to talk about the services and programs they provide. This year, the focus was on the whole of SBA’s concept, featuring SBA programs such as access to capital, certification programs, and other programs within SBA that assist military spouses and everybody thinking about starting or growing a business.
6. **Entrepreneurship: A Veteran-Owned Business Journey – Remarks by Mike Phipps, Representative, American Legion, and Managing Director, The Millenium Group Int’l, LLC.** – Mr. Phipps spoke to the committee about his journey as a federal contractor and what he sees as challenges for federal contracting.
7. **Technical difficulties** – Due to technical media difficulties, the meeting adjourned at 1:39 pm. ET by Rob Yannuzzi.

The next meeting will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams on September 11, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. ET.

All SBA programs and services are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis.