

In the Matter of:

Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business
Development

March 12, 2015
Public Meeting

Condensed Transcript with Word Index



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<p>1 2 3 4 5 INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE 6 7 ON VETERANS SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT 8 9 PUBLIC MEETING 10 11 THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2015 12 13 14 U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION 15 409 THIRD STREET, SW 16 WASHINGTON, DC 20416 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p>	<p>1 does seek entrepreneurship, how successful are they in 2 getting access to capital and contracts, for example, in 3 the federal workspace. 4 So, we expect to hit a major milestone in this 5 program: 25,000 service members will have gone through 6 Boots to Business in the next few weeks. We will share 7 that news more broadly than this group soon and look 8 forward to what that means. 9 We are also working with DOD at looking at 10 transition numbers. Right now, we've been told it's 11 250,000 per year. It varies as services tailor exactly 12 the force that they need for the missions at hand. We, 13 for now, are using a goal of 10 percent, is what we would 14 like to see come through Boots to Business, reflective of 15 the civilian experience where one in ten small businesses 16 is veteran-owned. Whether that will bear out remains to 17 be seen. 18 We are looking at installation and service 19 behavior, where there are certain service cultures where 20 entrepreneurial activity seems to be more in line with 21 those that are separating than others. For example, the 22 Navy has rather low participation in this 23 entrepreneurship track compared to the other services. 24 So, we're working with transition managers and also at 25 the headquarters level to understand is it something</p>
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<p>1 OPENING REMARKS/INTRODUCTIONS 2 MS. CARSON: Good morning, and thank you for 3 coming today to the Interagency Task Force of Veterans 4 Small Business Development. We have with us today the 5 Department of Veteran Affairs and the Department of 6 Defense and SBA, and hopefully more of our members will 7 join by phone. 8 I'll just check now. Is anyone on the phone? 9 No, okay. So, we may have a brief meeting. 10 You know, I thought we would have the display, 11 but we don't. So, I'm just going to go ahead into the 12 Training, Counseling and Outreach Committee. We are 13 going to have a new member from the Department of Labor. 14 Ms. Ruth Smardig has been given a detail over to 15 Commerce, so Mr. Mark Tolles may be joining us shortly. 16 But for now, I will cover what SBA is doing in training 17 and counseling for veteran entrepreneurs. 18 Focus primarily is on Boots to Business. The 19 expansion is going well from -- we're all across the 20 United States, in both the Asian and European theaters. 21 We are starting to get a lot more data on what the demand 22 looks like, and the performance is hopefully to come 23 soon. We're working through OMB processes for surveys, 24 registrations, so that we can show from the beginning to 25 the end what happens when a transitioning service members</p>	<p>1 about the program, is it just a culture, or is it, for 2 example, for Navy being deployed overseas and on ships. 3 We are working at various ways to deliver programming as 4 one of the ways to address that issue. 5 CAPT. BALZANO: Ms. Carson, I -- 6 MS. CARSON: Go ahead. 7 CAPT. BALZANO: -- if I remember, a couple of 8 meetings ago, I think I made the introduction between you 9 and Admiral Erb (phonetic). Did that help at all, or -- 10 MS. CARSON: Yes. 11 CAPT. BALZANO: You may not remember. I know 12 it was a little bit ago. 13 MS. CARSON: I need to follow up again. So, 14 we're working also through the transition assistance, the 15 executive council, and with the VA, DOD, Labor, and 16 Education, and trying to go there, as well. And right 17 now we've got team members out at individual 18 installations, getting on-the-ground feedback on exactly 19 what we could be doing. 20 CAPT. BALZANO: Mm-hmm. So, that's a Commander 21 of Naval Installations Command issue. 22 MS. CARSON: Thank you. 23 CAPT. BALZANO: I'll help connect the dots with 24 you. 25 MS. CARSON: I appreciate that.</p>

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1 Another interesting data point is that the
 2 larger installations have lower uptake in entrepreneurial
 3 track. So, the small installations have a higher
 4 percentage of those who are leaving who choice to take
 5 the entrepreneurial track. And that is something else
 6 that we don't understand it but we're looking into. It
 7 just doesn't make sense.
 8 CAPT. BALZANO: Well, the larger installations
 9 will be the homes for some of our major weapon systems,
 10 so and some of the major big contractors are there, who
 11 usually suck up the guys coming out because they're
 12 trained on those systems and blah, blah, blah, blah,
 13 blah. So, the smaller installations will have folks who
 14 don't necessarily have those skill sets because they're
 15 not doing maintenance on the jets or on the aircraft
 16 carriers or whatever. So --
 17 MS. CARSON: That is interesting.
 18 CAPT. BALZANO: -- that may be the link of why
 19 that's happening. Just a comment.
 20 MS. CARSON: And you already made this meeting
 21 worthwhile. That's a great thing for us to investigate.
 22 Thank you. Okay.
 23 I'm going to move into access to capital for
 24 us, unless there are questions on Boots to Business
 25 specifically.

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1 CAPT. BALZANO: No, but I'd like to point out,
 2 though, one of the things that the Defense Department was
 3 asked by OMB, your administrator testified on the 24th of
 4 February.
 5 MS. CARSON: Mm-hmm.
 6 CAPT. BALZANO: And she, in her testimony,
 7 requested an additional \$950,000 for Boots to Business.
 8 And we not only pushed that along, we also -- we
 9 concurred with no objections is the official term that we
 10 gave to OMB. So, I think you're going to hopefully see
 11 that move forward.
 12 MS. CARSON: Thank you. That brings up -- and
 13 I don't want to shut down discussion on training because
 14 I know that VA probably -- you may have some things you
 15 want to say in this area, too, but that budget item I
 16 would love to talk about for a second because it reminded
 17 me that I left out a few of our training programs that we
 18 should absolutely talk about. That money will help go
 19 towards an expansion of Boots to Business, to all areas
 20 of veterans, and we're calling that Boots to Business
 21 Reboot. It's a public/private partnership that will make
 22 it possible.
 23 Where this can be a very -- a great value-add
 24 is it's modular. It's the same curriculum that's from
 25 Boots to Business, but we can take it out to cities, we

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1 can add it on to events like something that we may do
 2 with the American Legion or another partner or resource
 3 partner, especially Guard and Reserve. We are having --
 4 we continue to find challenges, and I know this it
 5 throughout transition, every organization that's involved
 6 in this transition piece is having the same issue with
 7 Guard and Reserve. They're eligible for it, but they're
 8 not getting it necessarily --
 9 CAPT. BALZANO: Right.
 10 MS. CARSON: -- in the numbers we'd like to
 11 see. So, this is one way to address it. In June, we
 12 will be able to announce exactly what that partnership
 13 looks like, who's joining us in this space. We're very
 14 grateful for the support and expect that we will be
 15 making an announcement in April or May.
 16 And the scope of what that may do is between 50
 17 and 100 events across the United States each year. The
 18 test run that we did through our district offices last
 19 year, we had attendance from 30 people in a session to
 20 over 120. So, we will work on figuring out what the
 21 right mix is and where.
 22 Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of
 23 Entrepreneurship is -- the next one will be in
 24 Washington, D.C., the last week of May. We continue to
 25 see great results there with 200 women expected to be

8

1 there, perhaps more this time. It's been wait list for
 2 months already. We will have two more sessions this
 3 year. Those business starts, similar to our other three-
 4 phase program for service-disabled vets, we're seeing
 5 startup rates in the 40 to 50 percent rate within a year
 6 of taking the course. And the mortality of those
 7 businesses, although VWISE is new, is also looking good.
 8 They're stronger start and faster start.
 9 Yes?
 10 MR. LENEY: Just a point of clarification.
 11 MS. CARSON: Please.
 12 MR. LENEY: We have been marketing Boots to
 13 Business -- I want to make sure that I'm correct when I
 14 say you don't have to be part of the TAP program; you can
 15 be out of the service and still utilize that program. Am
 16 I incorrect?
 17 MS. CARSON: At this moment, that's not
 18 correct.
 19 MR. LENEY: Okay.
 20 MS. CARSON: So, Boots to Business, without
 21 Reboot after it, is only for service members and their
 22 spouse --
 23 MR. LENEY: Transitioning.
 24 MS. CARSON: -- who are transitioning and
 25 eligible for TAP. But we are working with DOD on the

9	<p>1 military life cycle and what that looks like, because, 2 honestly, we would like to see military spouses be 3 eligible to go through the entrepreneurship track at any 4 time, whether the person they're married to is eligible 5 for TAP or not because entrepreneurship is an excellent 6 way to maintain a career and progress when one moves 7 frequently.</p> <p>8 MR. LENEY: Mm-hmm.</p> <p>9 MS. CARSON: So, we are making progress on that 10 with DOD. And then I would like to be able to say that 11 we can support that. We are not yet resourced to go 12 beyond the transitioning population.</p> <p>13 MR. LENEY: Got it.</p> <p>14 MS. CARSON: But I think we could.</p> <p>15 MR. LENEY: Thank you for the clarification, 16 because there are a number -- we do run into a number of 17 veterans who --</p> <p>18 MS. CARSON: Mm-hmm.</p> <p>19 MR. LENEY: -- either transitioned earlier, 20 didn't take advantage of the TAP program, who are 21 interested in the entrepreneurship. There are other 22 programs and other schools, but, okay.</p> <p>23 MS. CARSON: You remind me also that we should 24 not -- and we would not -- do this in a vacuum, that 25 working with DOD to see where is the need, and obviously</p>	11	<p>1 while veteran lending is trending along with other SBA 2 trends, we are a little lower than I'd like to see. The 3 match is also there for the -- across the diverse NAICS 4 codes, for example. Veterans do follow the same trends 5 as other businesses. So, there were some potentially 6 within our agency and elsewhere that vets would only do 7 certain kinds of activities. That's not the case. And 8 they are doing well.</p> <p>9 We are seeing the greatest number of loans 10 under \$350,000, but there are vets who are quite 11 successful in getting the higher-dollar-value loans. So, 12 we will get those slides for you.</p> <p>13 And, Selah, may I ask, is anyone upstairs?</p> <p>14 MS. MUN-RHODES: Yeah, Joe's actually --</p> <p>15 MS. CARSON: Perfect. Okay, so I'd like to 16 take a deeper dive on that when we have a moment, and 17 then I'll also go over the Veterans Advantage, which is 18 in place right now, a savings, as we talked about last 19 meeting, of up to \$30,000 for a veteran who's looking for 20 a loan. It's no fee at all for them for a loan up to 21 350,000, and above 350,000 up to 5 million it's a half 22 fee, and that's where that savings of up to 30K could be. 23 The spouse is also eligible for this small business 24 guaranteed loan.</p> <p>25 Okay. Is there anything --</p>
10	<p>1 with your populations as well, Tom, if we could work with 2 VA to find those locations and coordinate.</p> <p>3 MR. LENEY: By the way, the VA does have a 4 program by which people can utilize their GI bill for 5 education benefits for these kinds of entrepreneurial 6 programs, but the program has to be preapproved. So, and 7 but there are approved programs for doing that. I was 8 just mistaken in thinking that Boots to Business -- I 9 will correct -- I will correct my statements in the 10 future.</p> <p>11 MS. CARSON: Okay. But Reboot absolutely will 12 be that, so we'll keep you and your whole team --</p> <p>13 MR. LENEY: Okay.</p> <p>14 MS. CARSON: -- up to date on what happens with 15 that.</p> <p>16 MR. LENEY: Super.</p> <p>17 MS. CARSON: Okay. For -- do you mind if I go 18 into access to capital for a moment from SBA's portfolio?</p> <p>19 CAPT. BALZANO: Please.</p> <p>20 MS. CARSON: Okay. We, for the first time, 21 have had some access to the data beyond what is the 22 number of units of veteran loans and what's a dollar 23 value of those loans. And we are at the first steps of 24 really understanding that. I'd like to get some slides 25 for you before we end today so that I can show you that</p>	12	<p>1 CAPT. BALZANO: Is there a name for that 2 program?</p> <p>3 MS. CARSON: Veterans Advantage. SBA Veterans 4 Advantage.</p> <p>5 Is there anything on training, counseling, 6 outreach or access to capital for the Department of 7 Veteran Affairs?</p> <p>8 MR. LENEY: No. The Vets Advantage is not a -- 9 does not guarantee the loan, however, am I correct?</p> <p>10 MS. CARSON: There is a guarantee associated 11 with it because it's part of the SBA Express, so 30 -- 12 it's a 50 percent guarantee, 350 and below; and above 13 that, within the 7A programs, it's whatever the guarantee 14 is for the program that it's applied for.</p> <p>15 MR. LENEY: Okay.</p> <p>16 MS. CARSON: So, that can be up to 85 percent. 17 Thank you.</p> <p>18 Tom, was there anything you wanted to cover?</p> <p>19 MR. LENEY: No, ma'am.</p> <p>20 MS. CARSON: Okay. Is there anything that you 21 would like --</p> <p>22 CAPT. BALZANO: From the Defense Department?</p> <p>23 MS. CARSON: Mm-hmm.</p> <p>24 CAPT. BALZANO: Yeah, I can give a quick update 25 to some folks.</p>

13	<p>1 MS. CARSON: Thanks.</p> <p>2 CAPT. BALZANO: We spoke a few minutes ago</p> <p>3 about the 950K that we objected with -- we concurred with</p> <p>4 with no objection, so that's a great thing. The other --</p> <p>5 we had two other kind of major initiatives. In our</p> <p>6 office, the Office of Small Business Programs, we handle</p> <p>7 a fair amount of technology programs, and so the name is</p> <p>8 a little misleading.</p> <p>9 And, well, first of all, let me apologize. Mr.</p> <p>10 Wesley could not be here this morning because he is</p> <p>11 actually giving awards to one of our programs called the</p> <p>12 Mentor/Protegee Program. And that's a program that we</p> <p>13 take large companies and they take small companies, and</p> <p>14 then they help them understand how to become prime</p> <p>15 contractors for the Defense Department. We teach them</p> <p>16 about accounting, their systems, and all of that.</p> <p>17 And it's been so successful that over the years</p> <p>18 the Congress has only authorized it, you know, like a</p> <p>19 year here, two years here, and for the last year and a</p> <p>20 half, one of my efforts has been to work a legislative</p> <p>21 proposal to get that program authorized long-term. And</p> <p>22 OMB has agreed to it, which is the hugest step. So, now</p> <p>23 the White House will submit the language to the Congress</p> <p>24 to approve that program for five years, authorize it for</p> <p>25 five years with its own appropriation line of -- it's in</p>	15	<p>1 were authorized to do that program, but we were scraping</p> <p>2 up pieces of the money left over at the end of the year</p> <p>3 to pay for it. Now it's going to have its own</p> <p>4 appropriations line, which is another huge step for us.</p> <p>5 Mr. Gudger, I guess I forget to mention this,</p> <p>6 as well, I think Mr. Wesley mentioned it, but he is</p> <p>7 officially now the Assistant Secretary of Defense for</p> <p>8 Manufacturing and Industrial Base. And we are sad to see</p> <p>9 him go. I am sad to him go. He's been a -- he was a</p> <p>10 great boss for me while I've been there. And Mr. Wesley</p> <p>11 is the Acting Director until someone is appointed to that</p> <p>12 position. But he still comes over. He called me</p> <p>13 yesterday and just asked how I was going, and I said</p> <p>14 enough with the small talk, what do you need?</p> <p>15 MS. CARSON: Right.</p> <p>16 CAPT. BALZANO: And he said, no, I'm just</p> <p>17 checking on you, so he truly does still care and he still</p> <p>18 checks on us.</p> <p>19 MS. CARSON: Fantastic.</p> <p>20 Sir?</p> <p>21 MR. GATEWOOD: Yes, Skipper. That's really</p> <p>22 great what you guys are doing. You've got an incentive</p> <p>23 program for Native Americans. Do you have an incentive</p> <p>24 program for veterans?</p> <p>25 CAPT. BALZANO: Well, we have our goaling</p>
14	<p>1 the 30-plus million per year for that program. So,</p> <p>2 that's, believe it or not, a big victory us, because we</p> <p>3 weren't getting any traction for a few years trying to</p> <p>4 get that authorized.</p> <p>5 And the reason that's big is because now</p> <p>6 industry sees, hey, this is authorized for a period of</p> <p>7 time, not just a year or whatever. So, we will get</p> <p>8 involved, so we'll see more participation in that. And</p> <p>9 almost the identical thing has happened in our IIP</p> <p>10 program, the Indian Incentive Program. We have a program</p> <p>11 where we incentivize companies to use Indian American-</p> <p>12 owned companies to buy things, for instance, like an</p> <p>13 example would be like a Lockheed Martin would buy their</p> <p>14 component for one of their aircraft from a company that's</p> <p>15 owned by a Native American, and for that, we give them a</p> <p>16 5 percent rebate. So, say they spend \$10 buying this</p> <p>17 component from the American firm, then we give them \$5</p> <p>18 for that. But that's because the price isn't normally as</p> <p>19 competitive as it could be, but it's our way of kind of</p> <p>20 forcing that program into the market.</p> <p>21 So, those are two -- the big thing on that is</p> <p>22 that we had to brief the Senate Indian Affairs committee,</p> <p>23 and we got their full backing, and now we have an</p> <p>24 official authorization request from our comptroller for</p> <p>25 that program, which is \$15 million a year. Every year we</p>	16	<p>1 system for all of the subcategories.</p> <p>2 MR. GATEWOOD: I understand that. Do you have</p> <p>3 an incentive program for service-disabled vets --</p> <p>4 CAPT. BALZANO: We do not have a particular</p> <p>5 program.</p> <p>6 MR. GATEWOOD: But we have one for Native</p> <p>7 Americans?</p> <p>8 CAPT. BALZANO: We do, sir. It's been in for a</p> <p>9 long time.</p> <p>10 MR. GATEWOOD: Thank you.</p> <p>11 CAPT. BALZANO: It's a good point. Let me just</p> <p>12 check my notes and make sure I covered everything. Oh, I</p> <p>13 have --</p> <p>14 MS. CARSON: I can hear, Mr. Gatewood, but if</p> <p>15 you don't mind coming up and speak into the microphone so</p> <p>16 we can make sure we get your comments in and your name.</p> <p>17 That would be helpful. I'm sorry, I forgot to say that</p> <p>18 when we started.</p> <p>19 MR. GATEWOOD: Yeah, I just -- you know, I've</p> <p>20 been in business for 27 years and I keep on seeing the</p> <p>21 (inaudible). We're veterans, particularly DOD. First of</p> <p>22 all, Skipper, I welcome you here. I'm a retired Marine,</p> <p>23 a Vietnam veteran -- retired Marine and Vietnam veteran,</p> <p>24 but I want to say that you guys over at DOD need to</p> <p>25 really start walking the walk. You've yet to get your 3</p>

17	<p>1 percent made. The law's been in place since 1999.</p> <p>2 CAPT. BALZANO: That's not true, sir. We</p> <p>3 reached our goal last year.</p> <p>4 MR. GATEWOOD: Last year, first time --</p> <p>5 CAPT. BALZANO: First time in history.</p> <p>6 MR. GATEWOOD: -- and since 1999.</p> <p>7 CAPT. BALZANO: That's due to my boss -- well,</p> <p>8 my former boss, Mr. Gudger.</p> <p>9 MR. GATEWOOD: Well, the fact of the matter is</p> <p>10 it's really nice that we do these things across the</p> <p>11 Federal Government, but if you take any information back</p> <p>12 to DOD and back to the Secretary, it's that our veterans</p> <p>13 who have served, particularly our veterans that have</p> <p>14 served in combat and been grossly wounded in action and</p> <p>15 so forth, need these same incentives as Native Americans</p> <p>16 or any other group. To me, it's morally bankrupt to put</p> <p>17 other people before our service-disabled vets. And I'm</p> <p>18 not here to chastise you.</p> <p>19 CAPT. BALZANO: Oh, no, sir. It's --</p> <p>20 MR. GATEWOOD: I'm just saying in my voice what</p> <p>21 I say.</p> <p>22 CAPT. BALZANO: That's a political decision,</p> <p>23 though.</p> <p>24 MR. GATEWOOD: It's the politics of Washington.</p> <p>25 CAPT. BALZANO: Exactly.</p>	19	<p>1 CAPT. BALZANO: -- have them, we will --</p> <p>2 MS. CARSON: If you share those with us and if</p> <p>3 you have signed in for this meeting, you were asked to</p> <p>4 give your email address. If you do that, then I can</p> <p>5 share with you the presentation that we don't see on the</p> <p>6 screen and anything that I get from the members here,</p> <p>7 I'll send it along. Thank you.</p> <p>8 CAPT. BALZANO: And we have two -- two other</p> <p>9 events that we normally have, which are the SBIR SBTR,</p> <p>10 beyond phase two, which is -- if you're not familiar with</p> <p>11 those acronyms, Small Business Innovative Research and</p> <p>12 the Small Business Technology Transfer, those are \$1.2</p> <p>13 billion programs where we go out to small businesses to</p> <p>14 try to find companies that are making things that we</p> <p>15 need, little things, big things, innovative things that</p> <p>16 the Boeings and Lockheeds and General Dynamics are not</p> <p>17 bringing to the table for us. And it's where we find we</p> <p>18 get our most innovation. So, it's a hugely important</p> <p>19 program for us, and I will pass on all of this</p> <p>20 information as soon as we have it coordinated.</p> <p>21 MS. CARSON: Thank you.</p> <p>22 CAPT. BALZANO: And I think that's it from DOD.</p> <p>23 Any questions? I'm happy to answer them as best I can,</p> <p>24 as long as you don't ask anymore.</p> <p>25 (Laughter)</p>
18	<p>1 MR. GATEWOOD: And, you know, for the DOD in</p> <p>2 particular not to put their service-disabled vets first</p> <p>3 is morally bankrupt. That's all I want to say, sir.</p> <p>4 CAPT. BALZANO: No, I -- I'm not going to say I</p> <p>5 agree with you because I see the efforts of folks in the</p> <p>6 building and what they're trying to do. Does the program</p> <p>7 exist? The answer is no, and you are correct about that.</p> <p>8 Is there something that can be done? Of course there is.</p> <p>9 It's well above my pay grade, sir.</p> <p>10 MR. GATEWOOD: I know that, sir.</p> <p>11 CAPT. BALZANO: So --</p> <p>12 MR. GATEWOOD: If Andrew were here, I'd tell</p> <p>13 him the same thing.</p> <p>14 CAPT. BALZANO: I will pass it on.</p> <p>15 Moving on, we have a couple of outreach events</p> <p>16 coming up that I don't have any information for, but I</p> <p>17 will get it to you as soon as it's all coordinated. But</p> <p>18 we have been directed by our boss, the Undersecretary,</p> <p>19 Mr. Kendall, to conduct two forums, small business DOD</p> <p>20 forums for training and support to companies who want to</p> <p>21 get into our business. The first one will be held out in</p> <p>22 San Diego, and there will be another one on the East</p> <p>23 Coast. I don't -- as I said, I don't -- we don't have</p> <p>24 the details yet, but once we do --</p> <p>25 MS. CARSON: Okay.</p>	20	<p>1 MR. GATEWOOD: I'm sorry (off microphone). I'm</p> <p>2 jaded, you know.</p> <p>3 CAPT. BALZANO: That's all right. It's fine.</p> <p>4 It's fine.</p> <p>5 MR. GATEWOOD: It's in our face.</p> <p>6 CAPT. BALZANO: No, I don't disagree.</p> <p>7 MR. PHIPPS: Hi, my name is Michael Phipps. I</p> <p>8 also sit on the veteran committee that we had yesterday.</p> <p>9 Some of the goaling now that is required to be tracked is</p> <p>10 the -- some of the contingency contracting funds. Has</p> <p>11 DOD started tracking those funds, because the 3 percent</p> <p>12 would be much -- grossly lowered if you start tracking</p> <p>13 all of the funds allocated for contracting.</p> <p>14 CAPT. BALZANO: I'm not quite exactly</p> <p>15 following. What do you mean "contingency contracting</p> <p>16 funds?"</p> <p>17 MR. PHIPPS: So, how money is allocated for</p> <p>18 contracting --</p> <p>19 CAPT. BALZANO: Right.</p> <p>20 MR. PHIPPS: -- and how you -- how you kind of</p> <p>21 goal that 3 percent --</p> <p>22 CAPT. BALZANO: Right.</p> <p>23 MR. PHIPPS: -- does not include all federal</p> <p>24 contracting dollars.</p> <p>25 CAPT. BALZANO: Okay.</p>

21

1 MR. PHIPPS: And, so, there's a number --
2 there's a huge amount of federally -- federal contracting
3 dollars that are not --

4 CAPT. BALZANO: That are for contingencies,
5 right.

6 MR. PHIPPS: -- that are for contingencies and
7 other -- and other areas. And some of it's -- and State
8 Department --

9 CAPT. BALZANO: Right.

10 MR. PHIPPS: -- some of the local funding, you
11 know.

12 CAPT. BALZANO: Right.

13 MR. PHIPPS: And then we understand some of
14 that. Recently, I was at a USAID brief, and they are
15 starting to track all subcontracting goals and dollars,
16 even if it's not part of that -- of that main tracking of
17 regular contracting funds. Is DOD starting to track some
18 of those funds in that manner?

19 CAPT. BALZANO: Well, first, I think the
20 goaling question is really more of an SBA question,
21 because we don't really control that. But the
22 subcontracting that you refer to, we have -- I have been
23 in this job for two years, and we have been working with
24 the Congress. There's a thing called the Comprehensive
25 Subcontracting Plan, which allows several of the large

23

1 MR. DODDS: It is true that when we, you know,
2 calculate goals and report goals that overseas contracts
3 are excluded currently, and that's been the case since I
4 started at SBA in the '90s. We've been talking about it
5 since then, you know, whether they should be included and
6 legally we've had some arguments at GAO, at other places,
7 weren't successful. And we're -- but we are talking
8 about it right now, you know --

9 MR. PHIPPS: Has there been new legislation
10 passed that --

11 MR. DODDS: There was.

12 MR. PHIPPS: -- about --

13 MR. DODDS: You're correct.

14 MR. PHIPPS: -- what funds to track?

15 MR. DODDS: Yeah, the NDA of 2013 basically
16 said you can't -- don't exclude things just because the
17 FAR says it doesn't apply, you know. And, so, the FAR
18 that we're talking about is in Part 19 at the beginning
19 and says this part doesn't apply, you know, outside the
20 United States. And, so, we've had a lot of problems with
21 that language because, you know, we think you can still
22 do those things overseas, even if you're not required to
23 do the rule of two, but some people interpret that as
24 we're not allowed to do anything overseas. We've had
25 that, you know? So, that language causes a lot of

22

1 companies to avoid reporting how they do all their
2 subcontracting, and we don't have any vision into that.

3 Our office has been working very close with the
4 Congress to establish a new system. And forgive me,
5 because I am not a contracts person, but FPDS and another
6 system that track these types of numbers that you're
7 talking about, we have allocated funds and we are working
8 with SBA, GSA, and OMB to redo that system so it can have
9 vision into where all these dollars are going. And I'll
10 be -- I'll be very honest, a lot of the big companies
11 that have been in that program are fighting very hard
12 preventing us from doing that. They haven't been super
13 successful, but they have managed to slow us down a
14 considerable amount, because they don't want it.

15 MS. CARSON: And Mr. Dodds is here from the
16 Government Contracting and Business Development. You
17 actually have a nameplate, if you'd like to join us.

18 MR. DODDS: Okay.

19 MS. CARSON: He's our federal procurement --

20 MR. DODDS: I'll try to answer --

21 CAPT. BALZANO: Maybe you can, yeah, help me on
22 this.

23 MR. DODDS: -- and help DOD a little bit here.

24 CAPT. BALZANO: Yeah. Bail me out here, will
25 you?

24

1 problems from SBA's perspective.

2 If we do, as a government, and we've talked to
3 DOD and USAID and State and some of the other agencies,
4 if we do decide to include it in the goaling, you know, I
5 think we all know that there's going to have to be
6 guidance in the FAR on how that's going to be
7 implemented, because it is different, contracting
8 overseas. There are different considerations. The
9 question is should it just be the rule of two we have
10 right now or should it be something different, you know,
11 and that's something that would have to be worked out.

12 MR. PHIPPS: We do -- I have done a lot of
13 support overseas for DOD, and there are a ton of small
14 businesses overseas, especially a lot of veteran-owned
15 small businesses that are very comfortable doing business
16 in contingency environments. It would be great to see
17 some of that directed.

18 MR. DODDS: Right. I mean, you can get -- you
19 can get to those numbers in FPDS. It's not -- you know,
20 as I said, we exclude it, but you can see, and there is
21 activity, you know, it's -- it's not anywhere near 23
22 percent. It's lower. So, it's not necessarily going to
23 help overall achievement at the beginning anyway.

24 MR. PHIPPS: I think just the reporting -- the
25 required reporting --

25

1 MR. DODDS: Right. If we include it in the
2 goals and we change the policies, then it should ramp up,
3 you would think. But that's something that we all have
4 to -- SBA and DOD and all the agencies affected -- and
5 OFPP and some others, we have to work out and make sure,
6 you know, if we're going to make that leap we're all
7 onboard and do it together.
8 MR. PHIPPS: Thank you very much, Ken.
9 MR. DODDS: Yeah.
10 MR. PHIPPS: Thank you, sir.
11 MS. CARSON: Anything else, Captain?
12 CAPT. BALZANO: I have nothing further.
13 MS. CARSON: Okay.
14 Tom, do you have anything --
15 MR. LENEY: Are you going to come back to the
16 access -- TAP access?
17 MS. CARSON: Yes.
18 MR. LENEY: Okay, then I'll wait. I have a
19 question about the trends, but I will wait until you dive
20 deeper into it.
21 MS. CARSON: Okay, that sounds good. I'm just
22 going to -- I'm hoping -- we're working on our technology
23 at the moment. So, I'm going to move on, if it's all
24 right with this group, to the Federal Procurement and
25 Contracting Program subcommittee reports.

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1 And I'll turn it over to you first. Is there
2 anything else you want to talk about in that arena?
3 CAPT. BALZANO: No, I covered --
4 MS. CARSON: I think you did everything at
5 once.
6 CAPT. BALZANO: -- yeah, I'm sorry, I thought -
7 -
8 MS. CARSON: That's perfect.
9 CAPT. BALZANO: -- I guess I didn't realize,
10 but I would like to just add one thing to the gentleman
11 who was just up here. The reporting for overseas stuff
12 is -- that's one element of it, but the bigger element
13 that is difficult, and if you have worked overseas, sir,
14 you completely understand this, we have status of forces
15 agreements with countries when we go in to conduct
16 operations or to be there for whatever reason, and you --
17 sometimes those agreements require that we use the in-
18 country support for different things and stuff like that.
19 So, it isn't as -- it isn't as clear as it may seem that,
20 hey, let's just find out these numbers and there's a
21 bunch of opportunities for our folks. It may be a fact
22 of the matter that we just physically can't be doing this
23 because, you know, I was the liaison officer for the
24 Sultan of Oman, and the Sultan, that's his country, and
25 we did everything that he wanted because that's what he

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1 wanted. And we didn't have the opportunity to put
2 American companies in to work there, only on particular
3 cases.
4 MR. PHIPPS: Agreed, agreed.
5 CAPT. BALZANO: So, it's a different --
6 difficult nut to crack. We'd love to see it, but it's
7 hard.
8 MR. PHIPPS: And there are some contracts where
9 the large primes really get an edge over the small
10 businesses because of who they have on their staff, their
11 access to government --
12 CAPT. BALZANO: Correct.
13 MR. PHIPPS: -- and so maybe just for those
14 particular contracts that aren't excluded we can force
15 some of the large businesses to start engaging the small
16 businesses or just giving some of those small --
17 especially the veteran-owned small businesses that access
18 as well to those competitively competed contracts.
19 CAPT. BALZANO: And what was in the -- there
20 was a -- in the NDA 14 there was a provision for training
21 using -- using -- I'll have to look it up, but there was
22 a provision for training small businesses to conduct
23 business overseas. It's in -- it's in the NDAA FY14, and
24 I can't remember -- I can't remember the verbiage.
25 MR. PHIPPS: Is that the Department of

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1 Commerce?
2 CAPT. BALZANO: No, it was the --
3 MR. PHIPPS: Export?
4 CAPT. BALZANO: -- it's in HASC and small
5 business were the ones proposing it, and I remember it --
6 we didn't object, we just said if that's what you want --
7 MR. PHIPPS: Does DOD have any related
8 programs?
9 CAPT. BALZANO: We don't. It was a provision
10 that allowed I think funds from the PTACs to be used for
11 training small businesses to work --
12 MR. PHIPPS: Is that the Defense Initiative?
13 CAPT. BALZANO: I'm just going off memory right
14 now.
15 MR. PHIPPS: I'll do some research. Thank you
16 very much. I appreciate your addressing that issue.
17 CAPT. BALZANO: Mm-hmm.
18 MS. CARSON: That's another thing that we will
19 look and see if we can find the information on that and
20 share that as well with this group.
21 MR. PHIPPS: Thank you, sir.
22 MS. CARSON: We have our technology, but we can
23 keep going on subcontracting and contracting. Turn it
24 over to you, Tom, and we also have Ken Dodds.
25 MR. LENEY: Just an information item for the

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1 folks in attendance, the VA has undertaken to include
2 veteran employment as an evaluation criteria in its
3 forthcoming T4 next generation program. T4 next
4 generation is our major IT services IDIQ. It's a multi-
5 billion-dollar IDIQ over the next five years and
6 something that's new and different is that veteran
7 employment is an explicit evaluation criteria. So, just
8 -- that's an information item. It's going to affect a
9 lot of IT services companies.

10 And there is movement on The Hill -- there's
11 interest on The Hill in expanding sort of thinking about
12 veteran employment, and there's interest within the VA to
13 see how we can include veteran employment in our
14 procurement -- as an element in our procurement
15 preferences. So, I don't -- again, I just -- I mention
16 that so as people are looking over the horizon at what's
17 coming that's not -- well, I think that's a light at the
18 end of the tunnel, but for some people, that may be a
19 train.

20 That's all I have, ma'am.

21 MS. CARSON: Thank you. Ken, may I ask you to
22 share with us an update on the current proposed rules
23 that are upcoming and other topics?

24 MR. DODDS: Yeah.

25 MS. CARSON: Thank you.

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1 MR. DODDS: SBA has been very active in
2 rulemaking because Congress has been very active giving
3 us things to make rules about ever since the Jobs Act of
4 2010. It seems like in each National Defense
5 Authorization Act there is more things that then we have
6 to work on and are working on. Two of the biggest ones
7 that came out recently, the first was issued at the end
8 of December and it has to do with limitations on
9 subcontracting and the performance requirements that
10 apply to set-aside contracts.

11 For years, you know, we've had a system where
12 you calculated based on the cost incurred for personnel.
13 For example, for services and, you know, the same thing
14 kind of for construction, and so Congress has changed
15 that to a definition of amount paid, so it's not going to
16 be as complicated to calculate. It's supposed to be
17 simpler, but it will be -- it will impact how you, you
18 know, probably do business and how things are calculated
19 when you go to do a set-aside type contract.

20 The second major piece of that legislation was
21 that you'll be able to use similarly situated entities to
22 help you meet those performance requirements. Right now,
23 that's already allowed under the SDBO, out set-aside
24 program, and the HUBZone program. You're allowed to --
25 when you're trying to meet, let's say, a 50 percent

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1 requirement, it can be you plus a sub for those programs.
2 But in others, like small business, women-owned, and
3 8(a), you cannot use subcontractors to meet that, and
4 that's based on the way the statutes are written. You
5 know, when it's written in a way that they say the prime
6 must do it, we apply that just to the prime, where
7 Congress is silent, we've gone -- we've allowed the
8 subcontractors to count towards that performance.

9 And, so, we think that will be helpful for
10 purposes of teaming. Teaming is being more and more
11 required by agencies when they're doing these IDIQs where
12 you really don't know what you're actually going to buy.
13 They actually sometimes want to see teams, you know,
14 sometimes they don't. But we've all -- we've had for
15 years rules around joint venturing, but that can be
16 complicated. There are legal issues that can come up.
17 There can be -- you know, some people prefer as a
18 business decision to do a prime/sub relationship as
19 opposed to a joint venture. And, so, we think these
20 rules, when they get finalized, will be very helpful for
21 teaming.

22 Along those same lines, we are proposing to
23 loosen up our joint venture rules a little bit. Right
24 now, if two firms joint venture, we basically aggregate
25 you and collectively you have to meet the size standard.

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1 But we also have some rules which allow you just
2 individually to be small for certain large contracts, and
3 what we're proposing is just to have the rule be as long
4 as each participant in the joint venture meets the size
5 standard, we'll consider that to be a small business.

6 Now, obviously, if you do too much of that, if
7 there's too much interaction and commingling, you could
8 eventually be affiliated, you know, so it's -- it can be
9 a tool for you to do bigger contracts, hopefully, as a
10 joint venture, but at the same time, if you do it too
11 much you would find yourself to be ineligible, so you
12 have to be careful with these rules.

13 And I should have said up front that these were
14 issued at the end of December. The comment period closed
15 at the end of February, but we had a lot of stakeholders
16 ask for an extension of time, so we extended that until
17 April 6th. So, the comment period continues. We've had
18 over 160 comments. They're all publicly available on
19 regulations.gov, and that's where you can go as an
20 individual or a company or a trade group or whatever to
21 go provide your comments on our rules.

22 The last thing I'll mention, there's a lot of
23 little things in this rule, but one of the other areas
24 we're trying to address is the non-manufacture rule. I
25 don't know if there's anyone in the room that has to deal

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1 with that, but our rules aren't real clear on the
2 procedures and what we want to happen, so we're trying to
3 propose the rules to make it more clear. I mean,
4 basically that rule says on a supply contract you have to
5 supply the product made by a small business. That's the
6 basic rule. But there are ways to get a waiver where you
7 can actually supply the product of a large business on
8 the small business set-aside if you get a waiver.

9 And, so, we want to make it clear, because when
10 you misrepresent your status you can run into trouble as
11 a small business, so we want to make the rules more clear
12 so that everybody knows whether there's a waiver or not,
13 the contracting officer notifies, you know, companies
14 that are trying to compete and so forth.

15 Another area we're trying to address is the
16 issue of software. You know, under our rules, if we hire
17 you to create software, that's considered a service. But
18 there's a lot of software that's bought in the government
19 market as a commodity basically. They think of it as a
20 supply. And, so, we're trying to figure out when are we
21 going to treat software as a supply and, you know, when
22 are we going to create it as a service. If it's a supply
23 but then there's a lot of large business services
24 attached to it, maybe we won't consider that to be, you
25 know, a small business -- you know, something we would do

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1 a waiver for because there's so many services attached.
2 And, so, we're going to get comments on that and try to
3 figure out a way to make it more clear in the market how
4 the rules apply to those kind of purchases.

5 As I said, when the comment period closes on
6 April 6th, we'll -- you know, we have to evaluate the
7 comments, address them in our rule, and then draft a
8 final rule. Then -- that usually takes, you know,
9 several months. It has to go to OMB for interagency
10 review, VA, DOD, all the agencies get to comment on it,
11 and then eventually we'll come up with a final rule.

12 Once we do that, we send it to the FAR council.
13 That's when they take it and start to actually put it
14 into the FAR clauses and put it into the FAR parts that
15 will apply. So, there's still some time that will have
16 to pass before that actually gets into those clauses that
17 the contracting officer is going to be putting in
18 contracts.

19 So, I'm hoping that we can be done with that
20 sometime in the fall. You know, it's -- a lot of it's
21 outside of our control in terms of rulemaking.

22 The second major rule we issued was the
23 mentor/protegee proposed rule. You know, back in the
24 '90s, 1998, SBA created a mentor/protegee program for the
25 8(a) program. It allows, if you're an 8(a) participant,

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1 you're allowed to have a mentor, if approved by SBA, and
2 then you get to joint venture basically as a small
3 business, even if your mentor may happen to be large.

4 There's rule around what it means to be a
5 protegee, you know, you kind of have to be in the
6 beginning of the program or not received a lot of
7 contracts. There are rules around, you know, how you
8 qualify as a mentor, you have to provide assistance,
9 technical assistance and business development assistance
10 and things like that.

11 In the Jobs Act of 2010, Congress gave us
12 authority to create a similar program for the service-
13 disabled veteran, HUBZone, and women-owned program, and
14 so we were working on those rules and getting them ready
15 to go, and then in the NDA of 2013 before we got our
16 rules done, they actually said, we'll go ahead and allow
17 one for all small businesses. So, at the beginning of
18 February, we issued a proposed rule to try to implement
19 this.

20 So, it's a mentor/protegee program, it's
21 modeled on the 8(a) program, a lot of questions about
22 what it means to be -- how long you can be in the
23 program. You know, for example, 8(a), you graduate after
24 nine years, but a service-disabled veteran company can go
25 on, you know, forever. There's no ending point; there's

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1 no graduation, unless you outgrow your size standard.

2 So, you know, we have to think about what kind
3 of firms are we going to allow be protegees. Obviously,
4 we have to vet the protegees and the mentors to make sure
5 that, you know, the protegee's actually going to benefit
6 from this assistance. That's the purpose of it, is to
7 provide technical and business assistance to develop
8 these protegees to let them compete.

9 The comment period on that rule goes through
10 April 6th. We have had requests to extend the comment
11 period, so I can't say right now whether we will or we
12 won't. But, you know, as we get closer to April 6th,
13 we're going to probably get more requests to extend the
14 comment period to allow more comments. But we'll see.

15 So, that's a proposed rule. Once we get all
16 the comments, we'll figure out how we're going to do it.
17 Also in that rule is a requirement that we review the
18 mentor/protegee programs of other agencies, not including
19 DOD. DOD was specifically exempted from our review, but
20 I think Congress wants us to decide. Right now, you
21 know, we have the DOD program, we have the 8(a) program,
22 and then each agency -- or a lot of agencies have created
23 their own mentor/protegee programs. And they can be
24 different. We don't have a lot of information right now,
25 so I think Congress wants us to take a look at that and

<p style="text-align: right;">37</p> <p>1 decide are we going to allow all these other ones to 2 continue or are we just going to have one under SBA 3 again, excluding DOD. 4 So, that's one of the things we're going to get 5 comments on. And that won't happen, under the law, until 6 one year after we issue a final rule. So, if you're 7 already in a program, that's fine, you can continue, and 8 that's going to continue, and you'll be fine for, you 9 know, several more months or years probably. But at some 10 point, there may just be one under SBA. 11 On the other hand, we may decide that those 12 programs are great, maybe we'll just extend the benefits 13 of our mentor/protegee programs to firms that are already 14 in a mentor/protegee program at another agency. That's 15 an option as well. A lot of this will depend on the 16 resources we have to implement this, because we want to - 17 - we want to make sure the benefits flow to the intended 18 recipients, and that takes people to vet the protegees 19 and the mentors and then to monitor how the assistance is 20 flowing. There's a lot of language in the rule around 21 reporting on the benefits that you're going to give the 22 protegee, annually and things like that. 23 So, those are the two big ones that are out 24 right now. There's two that are going to be coming that 25 I'll just briefly mention. In the NDA of 2014, we were</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">39</p> <p>1 they're -- women are under-represented. Congress has 2 asked us to do a new study by January of 2016. So, we're 3 working right now to get that study done. 4 And then the last piece they threw in there was 5 a requirement to be certified. Right now, the women- 6 owned program is similar to our service-disabled veteran 7 program and our small business program that we've always 8 had, which is a self-certification program with, you 9 know, a protest process behind that. The legislation 10 talked about certification by SBA, a federal agency, a 11 state agency, private certifiers. So, we're going to 12 have to figure out how we're going to implement that. We 13 do have some private certifiers right now that we've I 14 guess contracted with or, you know, identified as a 15 private certifier, but if we're going to do that more in 16 the future we're going to have to, you know, maybe think 17 about whether we have to open that up or what kind of 18 monitoring we're going to do to that, or is SBA going to 19 actually create a certification program, similar to what 20 we have right now for the 8(a) program and the HUBZone 21 program. 22 So, those are the things that -- those are the 23 things I think you might be interested in that we're 24 working on right now. And if -- I don't know if there 25 are any questions, maybe I can help.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">38</p> <p>1 given authority to allow if you have an individual 2 subcontracting plan -- this applies to large businesses - 3 - to allow you to count lower-tier subcontracts towards 4 the goal that you have for that contract. Right now, if 5 you're a large business and you have a subcontracting 6 plan, you're only reporting at the first-tier level. 7 And, so, this gives you authority -- or us authority to 8 allow you to count lower, so, of course, your goals will 9 probably have to reflect that, as well. So, that's a 10 proposed rule we're working on right now. 11 And then in the NDA of 2015, there's a lot of 12 stuff around the women-owned small business program that 13 I'll briefly mention. First, they gave contracting 14 officers the authority to do sole-source awards, similar 15 to the way it works right now in the SDBO and the HUBZone 16 programs, where if you do market research and you can't 17 find two, so you need two to do a set-aside. If you do 18 market research and you don't find two, for example, 19 service-disabled veterans, you can do a sole-source 20 award, you know, if it's under certain thresholds under 21 the law right now. That was extended to the women-owned 22 small business program. 23 Secondly, as you know or you may not know, you 24 can only do set-asides in the women-owned program in 25 certain industries where we've done a study to say</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">40</p> <p>1 MR. GATEWOOD: Thanks for the information, Ken. 2 MR. DODDS: You're welcome. 3 MR. GATEWOOD: One thing I'm concerned about as 4 a small business owner with the Federal Government and 5 I'm seeing right now during a bid on a prime contract we 6 have with one of our Federal Government agencies, but I'm 7 also seeing this clause in most RFPs that are coming out 8 that are going to prove possibly difficult for certain 9 small businesses is cyber security requirements. They're 10 getting really tight with cyber security requirements, 11 cyber security plans, and the fact is if -- if all of 12 these federal governments appear to start -- to have 13 these clauses for a requirement for a cyber security 14 plan, and basically what that means is the small business 15 will be responsible for the protection of any and all 16 information that's going over electronic means, all of 17 it. 18 You know, we have small businesses out here 19 that don't know anything about IT, that, you know, some 20 of them are just getting symptoms in place to communicate 21 with one another. And, you know, there's an opportunity 22 here for some trouble or problems for our small 23 businesses that aren't attuned to cyber security and what 24 it's all about, but you have to have a cyber security 25 plan and show how you are going to definitely protect all</p>

41	<p>1 communications going to and from.</p> <p>2 The clause we have in this one agency we have</p> <p>3 now, that even includes emails to and from the</p> <p>4 contracting officer that address modifications to the</p> <p>5 contract, information about amendments to the statement</p> <p>6 of work and so forth and so on. I had gone with Major --</p> <p>7 with Major Clark to a GSA meeting late last year, and GSA</p> <p>8 was addressing this, as well. Is SBA looking into this</p> <p>9 and see how this is going to impact small businesses?</p> <p>10 MR. DODDS: Not -- I haven't heard</p> <p>11 specifically. We may be. You know, obviously that's a</p> <p>12 huge issue right now in private sector and the</p> <p>13 government, as well, cyber security. It may be a</p> <p>14 situation where -- I don't know that we have rules right</p> <p>15 now around -- like these clauses, I'm assuming they're</p> <p>16 kind of created by the agency as opposed to specific FAR</p> <p>17 clauses, but I haven't --</p> <p>18 MR. GATEWOOD: I'll -- if you'll give me your</p> <p>19 email address, I'll send you the clauses right out of</p> <p>20 these RFPs, Ken.</p> <p>21 MR. DODDS: It may be that we need, you know,</p> <p>22 standards and guidance, either in the FAR or outside of</p> <p>23 it.</p> <p>24 MR. GATEWOOD: Yeah. And Advocacy is aware of</p> <p>25 it, as well.</p>	43	<p>1 MR. GATEWOOD: Great. I'd appreciate that.</p> <p>2 The other thing which I'll ask comment on</p> <p>3 certification, third-party certification is useless to</p> <p>4 us, it really is, in terms of Federal Government</p> <p>5 agencies. That's been tried before. It was started out</p> <p>6 in California by John Lopez back in the '70s, and he had</p> <p>7 convicted felons that would submit counterfeit 214s and</p> <p>8 everything else. Unless the agencies themselves through</p> <p>9 a contract, through a -- through a small business or</p> <p>10 whatever have that small business verify on behalf of the</p> <p>11 agency, there's no hammer. Anybody can come in, any</p> <p>12 fraud could come in, because the third-party commercial</p> <p>13 organization has no recourse in terms of litigation or to</p> <p>14 bar these people from future Federal Government</p> <p>15 contracting or anything else. So, unless a third-party</p> <p>16 vendor is under contract by SBA or anyone else, what good</p> <p>17 is a certification?</p> <p>18 MR. DODDS: Right. I mean, and that's what --</p> <p>19 as I said, these -- the ones we have now were -- we did</p> <p>20 do a contract with them, so they do have some standards.</p> <p>21 MR. GATEWOOD: Right, okay.</p> <p>22 MR. DODDS: The question is are we going to</p> <p>23 continue that. You know, obviously, they charge fees</p> <p>24 that can be hundreds of dollars, maybe thousands. Back</p> <p>25 when we had the SDB program we had SBA doing it and then</p>
42	<p>1 MR. DODDS: And it may be that we need, you</p> <p>2 know, training to make sure that, you know, if these are</p> <p>3 going to be the requirements, make sure our small</p> <p>4 businesses know that they're out there and are prepared</p> <p>5 to do it, because it's probably not something you can do</p> <p>6 overnight.</p> <p>7 MR. GATEWOOD: Well, absolutely. Most of us</p> <p>8 will have to go out and hire consultants.</p> <p>9 MR. DODDS: Mm-hmm.</p> <p>10 MR. GATEWOOD: And put a plan in place.</p> <p>11 CAPT. BALZANO: Sir, DOD, we -- our office has</p> <p>12 an effort for this very subject. We're aware of it.</p> <p>13 We're working towards a training program and stuff to</p> <p>14 help our small businesses understand how to protect their</p> <p>15 information, because it's ultimately our information, as</p> <p>16 well, so...</p> <p>17 MR. GATEWOOD: Right, but, you know, the</p> <p>18 government has a stipulated minimal threshold of</p> <p>19 security. What threshold do you have to have in terms of</p> <p>20 -- in terms of security? You know, what do you have to</p> <p>21 have in place? And it would be nice for small businesses</p> <p>22 to know that before we get in trouble.</p> <p>23 MR. DODDS: Yeah, I'll let, you know, other</p> <p>24 folks at SBA on my team know about this issue and see</p> <p>25 what -- see what's going on out there in the field.</p>	44	<p>1 we had private certifiers. Now, obviously we were free,</p> <p>2 so everybody came to us; the private certifiers didn't</p> <p>3 really get much business.</p> <p>4 So, we're going to have to decide, you know, at</p> <p>5 SBA how we're going to do this. It could go either way.</p> <p>6 MR. GATEWOOD: Right.</p> <p>7 MR. DODDS: And we haven't decided right now.</p> <p>8 It depends on our resources.</p> <p>9 MS. CARSON: And I wanted to clarify that we're</p> <p>10 speaking of women's enterprise -- right, and not veteran</p> <p>11 certification at this time.</p> <p>12 MR. DODDS: Not at this time.</p> <p>13 MR. GATEWOOD: Well, the VA, for instance pays</p> <p>14 -- the veteran who applies for VA verification under --</p> <p>15 under the rule at VA, we don't pay for that.</p> <p>16 MR. DODDS: Right.</p> <p>17 MR. GATEWOOD: VA does that, and they use a</p> <p>18 third party -- or they use a contractor that supports VA</p> <p>19 initiative under the public law.</p> <p>20 MR. DODDS: Right.</p> <p>21 MR. GATEWOOD: Okay?</p> <p>22 MR. LENEY: Just a point of clarification,</p> <p>23 Wayne. We use contractors to assist in the process, but</p> <p>24 we believe it's an inherently federal obligation --</p> <p>25 MR. GATEWOOD: Right.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">45</p> <p>1 MR. LENEY: -- to make the final determination. 2 So, we use contractors -- 3 MR. GATEWOOD: Yeah, we know you do, Tom. 4 MR. LENEY: Yeah, for research and analysis and 5 that -- but I want to be crystal-clear here, we do not 6 outsource the verification to contractors, the decision. 7 MR. GATEWOOD: The adjudication is done by -- 8 MR. LENEY: The -- yes. 9 MS. CARSON: May I ask, who joined on the line, 10 please? 11 (No response) 12 MS. CARSON: Okay. 13 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The few, the proud, the 14 Marines, Wayne. 15 MS. CARSON: Are there any more questions on 16 procurement? 17 (No response) 18 CAPT. BALZANO: No, but he reminded me, it's 19 NDA 15 that has that training, not 14. I misspoke. 20 MS. CARSON: Can you say again the training for 21 the -- 22 CAPT. BALZANO: The training for the small -- 23 small businesses doing work overseas. 24 MS. CARSON: Great. 25 CAPT. BALZANO: Is that division, women-owned,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">47</p> <p>1 you, as well. 2 Want to use mine? It doesn't have numbers on 3 it. Okay, ready? 4 MS. MUN-RHODES: Thanks for having me. As Barb 5 mentioned, just a high level review, what we're doing 6 right now is we're taking a look at not just a snapshot 7 of one fiscal year but trying to accumulate the trends 8 from Fiscal Year 2009 to Fiscal Year 2015. So, the data 9 we're showing you here right now is as of the end of Q1 10 2015. And then some of the trends just really go to 2014 11 so you can see a full picture. 12 This first slide shows you two different ways 13 of looking at the information we have. We're able to 14 collect the number of loans, but we're also able to 15 collect the dollar size of each of those loans. And, so, 16 we're just trying to take multiple points of view. So, 17 if you look at the left side, what we're seeing is if you 18 look at loan numbers, a majority of the loans, as Barb 19 mentioned earlier, are below the 350,000 threshold. So, 20 64 percent of veteran SBA loans were below \$150,000. 21 On the contrary, if you look at the dollar 22 side, on the right side, we're seeing that 53 percent 23 alone are in the 350,000-plus to 2 million range. And 18 24 percent are over the 2 million range. So, what this is 25 showing us is that veterans are successful at getting</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">46</p> <p>1 with the women-owned, so it's NDA FY15. 2 MS. CARSON: Thank you. 3 MR. DODDS: We could probably get that to you, 4 if you want. 5 MS. CARSON: Good, just want to make sure we 6 can all hear. That's perfect. Thank you so much, sir. 7 All right, and we do have some slides, so I'm 8 going to go to those now and ask Selah Rhodes to join me 9 from our team at the Office of Veterans Business 10 Development to talk a bit about lending data. And I want 11 to set expectations on where we are. Our program office, 12 we are not part of cap access, nor do we have someone 13 from that team on ours, but we are working much closer 14 with them, and I'm very grateful for the support that 15 Capital Access has given to us as we begin to explore the 16 finer details of what's going on in veteran lending. 17 So, today, what we're sharing is just the first 18 few steps. It's not going to show you in great detail -- 19 well, not at all -- we're just going to focus on vet. In 20 June, we will show you vet compared to all other 21 populations that are getting SBA-backed or guaranteed 22 loans. So, Selah, may I turn it over to you? And for 23 those of you who don't have slides, as I said, if you 24 have sent your email, then we will get it to you, the 25 presentation. It's behind you and very small in front of</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">48</p> <p>1 higher-dollar loans, depending on their type of business 2 and their background on the application. So, we want to 3 make sure to have a diverse view and not just segment 4 veterans in the smaller loan category. 5 Any questions on this first slide? Okay. 6 The next slide, what we tried to do was show 7 just like an initial segmentation of the industries of 8 veteran loans. And just a point of clarification, when 9 we're saying veteran loans, we're saying that a veteran 10 is going and applying for an SBA loan and then they are 11 self-submitting that they are a veteran. It's not a 12 mandatory field at this time. We're working on providing 13 further transparency. So, this would be for folks that 14 specifically stated that they were a veteran. 15 So, what this slide shows is if you look at the 16 number of loans, across FY09 to FY14, each of those blue 17 bars is a fiscal year. So, we're seeing a consistent 18 trend, relatively speaking, on the top six NAICS code 19 kind of industry sectors. We're looking at construction; 20 retail trade; professional, scientific, and technical 21 services; manufacturing; accommodation and food services; 22 and healthcare and social assistance. 23 So, you can see that there is some variance 24 from year to year, and across the board after 2011, the 25 amount of loans and number of loans being given out,</p>

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1 there was a significant decrease across. So, even in
2 looking at that, we're trying to pinpoint areas of
3 potential outreach. You know, whether they be the lower
4 tier or the higher tier, but also areas where we can
5 start to train, you know, via Boots to Business and other
6 methods, of where veterans are getting loans in what
7 industries.

8 Any questions on this slide? Sure.

9 MR. LENEY: I actually find -- this is Tom
10 Leney from VA. I find this to be a little bit
11 surprising, given that consistently in our engaging with
12 veteran-owned small business financing is an issue, and
13 have you been able to draw any tentative conclusions
14 about why it appears that the -- both the number and the
15 dollar value of the cap access loans is trending downward
16 since 2011? I mean, almost consistently across all six
17 of your major areas, both in dollars and in numbers, that
18 just intuitively doesn't seem to fit with at least the --
19 we have not done a, you know, comprehensive survey, but
20 at least anecdotal evidence, I'm not sure that we found
21 that small businesses have less need for capital.

22 MR. GATEWOOD: You got that right, Tom.

23 MS. MUN-RHODES: And for sure, you know, we
24 will defer to Capital Access for some of the kind of
25 validation of what these visuals are presenting, and when

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1 we come back in May we'll be able to show you kind of the
2 trends. I can tell you at a high level that it sort of
3 depends on the loan program, so SBA has several loan
4 programs, the 7A program has kind of the higher dollar
5 value loans, and they may not necessarily be trending
6 down as significantly as, say, micro loans or 504 loans.
7 So, we're trying to do a segmentation, because the trends
8 actually differ across different loan programs.

9 MR. LENEY: If you could, I think it would be
10 very helpful for the task force and the people who attend
11 if we could dive into this a little bit just because it's
12 so important, and sometimes as you try to go and dig into
13 the loan programs the data is not as clear as it's being
14 presented here. I really appreciate the work that you
15 guys have done, but this does raise a lot of questions
16 that we will be, you know, people will be looking to us
17 for answers on.

18 MS. MUN-RHODES: Sure.

19 MS. CARSON: We absolutely agree that this
20 needs a deeper analysis, so as I said, this is the first
21 step. I think this is the most transparency you've had -
22 -

23 MR. LENEY: Absolutely.

24 MS. CARSON: -- into what is going on in
25 veteran access to capital ever, so you can understand

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1 what we are -- it's going to grow in momentum, but we
2 absolutely owe you more information in June.

3 MR. LENEY: This is a great start. Thank you
4 for taking this on, because it is an issue, I think, for
5 a lot of veteran-owned small businesses, and anything we
6 can do to help them and target this better would be
7 great.

8 MS. CARSON: Yes. And we will move on in a
9 moment, but one other challenge that we have, and many
10 federal agencies come up against this is our forms and
11 what we can gather is also inferior for providing a full
12 picture of what really is happening. So, having a
13 veteran status be an optional item, for example, on our
14 forms, that is a major challenge. I can't tell you that
15 I can see the entire picture. I can only say that those
16 who chose to include their veteran status, this is how
17 it's performing.

18 We're also seeing that apparently our outreach
19 maybe is not as robust as it could be because veterans,
20 when they have an opportunity to take on one of the
21 incentives that we have for a reduction in fees aren't
22 identifying as a veteran and miss that opportunity.

23 MR. LENEY: Yeah.

24 MS. CARSON: That's -- I apologize for the
25 noise. We'll try and resolve that.

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1 MR. GATEWOOD: Hey, Tom, you know, it's been
2 (off microphone) I don't -- I know for me, I don't know
3 about a lot of you folks who are in business, but what
4 I'm seeing is less and less new procurements that are
5 coming out because of budget issues that are affecting
6 the government across the government. For instance, two
7 of our major prime contracts, which are million-dollar
8 contracts, we've had extensions on one for 18 months.
9 So, I have less of a need for capital.

10 And, you know, a lot of these people that have
11 already gotten funded and gotten their first huge
12 contract or large contract are now in a place where
13 capital is available to them. They've got cash flow.
14 So, as less opportunities come down because there's less
15 spending in terms of budgetary constraints, there's less
16 of a need for capital. I know for me now I'm seeing
17 stuff that's just being extended and extended and
18 extended. Until these procurements come about, you're
19 not going to need to apply for a line of credit or for
20 this or that. And to me, that's -- that's the cause of a
21 lot of it.

22 MR. LENEY: I think -- not to belabor this, but
23 I think as you go forward and dig into this, I believe
24 this has -- deals with a lot of lending that's not to
25 people who want to be government contractors; it's people

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1 who are starting, you know, part of the \$3 million
2 businesses of which 99 percent have no business with the
3 government. But I just -- I applaud what you guys are
4 starting to do, and it would be interesting to know if
5 it's something as mundane as veterans aren't checking the
6 block, and that could be something we can put in our --
7 you know, collectively put in our outreach to remind vets
8 often. Unfortunately, oftentimes it's the mundane that
9 drives things, not some grand policy change.

10 MR. GATEWOOD: The other thing is, too, you
11 have organizations like street shares that are out there
12 now.

13 MR. LENEY: Yeah.

14 MR. GATEWOOD: They just got \$200 million. I
15 put it in the news last night in my newsletter, and
16 that's an amazing organization what they're doing for
17 service-disabled vets, vet access to capital. It's just
18 amazing. And I think you have a lot of entrepreneurs and
19 former vets that are coming out and starting these
20 organizations so it's making cash available to our peers.
21 And they don't have to go to the Federal Government.

22 MR. LENEY: That would be great. That would be
23 fantastic.

24 MS. CARSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Gatewood.

25 We will share with our interagency partners all

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1 that we have here, even before the next meeting, so that
2 your insights can inform what we learn, as well. And
3 potentially we can find new areas to collaborate and
4 improve. That is one of the functions of this
5 interagency task force for all of us. It is our
6 responsibility.

7 Go ahead.

8 MS. MUN-RHODES: One question that also kind of
9 addresses this point is on veteran loan demand. We had
10 this question yesterday come up, as well. So, SBA has
11 told us that they can't actually quantify the demand
12 versus the approval. So, once the loan is approved, then
13 we start tracking all the metrics tied to it. So, that's
14 something that we're looking at, because we really would
15 like to see what are the trends and requests for loans
16 and applications, not necessarily just approved loans.

17 MS. CARSON: And I would like to take a little
18 more on that point. We are working, for example, with
19 the FDIC on some training that they're doing with their
20 banks and others that -- we have -- SBA just joined an
21 agreement with credit unions and trying not only to find
22 out what the demand is, because we rely on them to tell
23 us when a vet has come and been turned down and didn't
24 make it to a point where SBA is even tracking, and also
25 to provide technical assistance. We're really like to be

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1 that next stop that a no is not a no forever and that
2 there might be something that our resources are prepared
3 to help a small business owner be ready for that capital.
4 So, those are two other areas that we definitely have
5 room for growth and we're working on it now.

6 MS. MUN-RHODES: Moving to the next slide, we
7 had the same view of industry segmentation, but looking
8 at loan dollar values. So, you see the scale on the left
9 is much higher, and there is some variability, especially
10 that spike in manufacturing. But the interesting thing
11 is that across the years, there's a somewhat consistent
12 trend in the top six industry segments. So, if you
13 looked at the previous slide and this slide, the top six
14 are the same, they're just in different orders. So, the
15 order of the loan dollars in general is manufacturing
16 first; retail; healthcare; accommodation and food
17 services; professional services; and then construction.

18 The final slide we have for today is to show
19 you an example of the different types of metrics that are
20 tied to an improved veteran SBA loan. So, one of the
21 toggles is existing versus new businesses, and we've had
22 questions on do more veteran businesses -- are they
23 startups or are they existing. So, you'll see on this
24 slide, the blue line is actually showing you the number
25 of loans, and then the red bars are indicating the dollar

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1 number of the loans.

2 The left side of the chart is showing you
3 existing businesses; and then the right side of the chart
4 is showing you new businesses. So, just to avoid any
5 concern on 2015 since we're just at the end of Q1, that's
6 why you'll see that it's just a partial completion of the
7 year's forecast.

8 So, you'll see here that -- and just looking at
9 the left side, existing businesses, starting from 2011,
10 there is a consistent trend downwards, not necessarily
11 the case for new businesses from 2009 to 2015. They've
12 stayed relatively constant. We're looking at around 500
13 loans a year, around 200 million in loan dollars. So,
14 we're definitely looking further into this, but it was
15 interesting for us to see at first glance that it's not
16 just startups but veteran loans are being done for well-
17 established businesses, as well.

18 Any questions on this?

19 MS. CARSON: Any questions on access to
20 capital?

21 MR. FIELDER: I just realized looking at the
22 chart for the second time since yesterday, if, in fact a
23 2015 number on the chart is, in fact, only one quarter,
24 does that clearly indicate that if you extrapolate that
25 over a four-quarter year that that would be a significant

<p style="text-align: right;">57</p> <p>1 increase? Thank you? 2 MS. MUN-RHODES: I would think so, yes. 3 MS. CARSON: Any other questions right now? 4 Okay. 5 Let's see. I think to keep us -- we are unique 6 in SBA, the Office of Veterans Business Development, that 7 we have the word "promote," is something that we do have 8 the latitude to do. That is different than outreach, so 9 we can actually have a print ad campaign. So, we are 10 trying to do more outreach. 11 (Interruption from teleconferencing service) 12 MS. CARSON: Is Department of the Treasury on 13 the line? Is Department of Treasury on the line? 14 (No response) 15 MS. CARSON: No. Okay, is American Legion on 16 the phone? No. 17 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Anyone? Anyone? Bueller? 18 MS. CARSON: Nobody's on the line. 19 Okay, thanks for trying to connect us. All 20 right. 21 So, this slide was a little bit out of order, 22 but I just wanted you to see that we are reaching a much 23 wider and broader audience than we had been able to in 24 the past. We are working -- the small seal on the left 25 is Department of Defense, the transition assistance.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">59</p> <p>1 having activity; they should be meaningful. And I can 2 certainly get feedback from the American Legion on that 3 front. 4 MR. PHIPPS: Barbara, I am on the American 5 Legion Small Business Task Force, so I can take notes and 6 pass on anything. 7 MR. GATEWOOD: Oh, yeah, I forgot, I am, too. 8 MS. CARSON: I'm not on the task force, but I 9 am a member, so I will share with our leadership, yes. 10 They are doing an excellent job here, and we look forward 11 to having, for example, those reboot events, that we will 12 continue to partner with the American Legion to reach out 13 to members who want to be entrepreneurial as their way to 14 support themselves and their families. 15 With VET-Force, we are now trying to align our 16 quarterly meetings for the Advisory Committee on Veteran 17 Small Business Affairs and also this interagency task 18 force at each quarter. We line them up so that VET-Force 19 meets the day before our two meetings, so that our 20 members of those committees can have the opportunity when 21 we're paying for their travel to participate in those 22 discussions. So, I'm grateful, as well, for their focus 23 and a lot of activity and interest in what we do. So, I 24 see you, Joe Wynn. Thanks for coming today. I 25 appreciate that very much.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">58</p> <p>1 They've given us quite a lift with reaching our overseas 2 service members and spouses through AFN and other 3 channels, and we're very grateful for that support. 4 This ad, the first appearance of it, is right 5 now in the Military Times Family of magazines, and we 6 look forward to seeing what the conversion is. If people 7 hear about it, are they going to be taking it up. So, 8 again, working through the data and figuring out why we 9 see certain trends, this is one way that we're going 10 after it by looking at our outreach. 11 Okay. And moving over to another section of 12 our agenda to talk about the coordination of federal 13 support, and it may be lightly discussed today. I don't 14 have American Legion here today, and Mr. Jim Willfong is 15 unable to join us. Is there anyone else who's come on 16 their behalf here? 17 Okay. I would like to say SBA has been working 18 with American Legion very closely for a long time, and 19 most recently we were invited to participate in a 20 national conference and to talk specifically about what's 21 going on with veteran small business. A very engaged 22 group and definitely not afraid to give candid feedback, 23 and I'm grateful for that. It's made a significant 24 impact on how we reach veterans and what we're able to 25 do, because we shouldn't be doing things for the sake of</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">60</p> <p>1 Is there anything else on coordination of 2 federal support right now? 3 I would like to say that Treasury, she did try 4 to dial in, our representative, and she will be providing 5 an in-depth brief in June on a small business lending 6 fund that we would -- you can Google it for now. I don't 7 want to speak on their behalf, but it is something that 8 could be of great value to our constituents. 9 Additionally, we learned yesterday of a group 10 that's called NOWaccount that is providing a way for 11 small businesses to -- it's not factoring, it's something 12 much better than factoring, but to turn over their 13 accounts receivable for a fee and get cash for them. So, 14 it was actually a company that is buying the asset, and 15 that allows a company instead of waiting 90 to 120 days 16 or never to get some income to get it immediately. 17 The is something that Treasury is allowing up 18 to 85 percent of businesses to do in the State of Georgia 19 and may be expanding across the United States. So the 20 Department of Treasury should absolutely be the ones to 21 speak on that. I am grateful that that speaker came to 22 talk to us yesterday, and if you'd like her presentation, 23 she's not here with us today, but I'd be happy to share 24 that with you. 25 I wish the people -- we could all be here for</p>

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1 this last one, because it's important -- the interagency
 2 task force reports. We have two annual reports that are
 3 due. 2013 was not published. We are collecting the --
 4 finalizing the data for that report right now. 2014
 5 fiscal year also must be done. I will be checking in
 6 with our compilation of that data that we've received,
 7 and not every member of this task force has yet been able
 8 to provide us the data for 2014, but that is a high
 9 priority for our administrator and the SBA chief of
 10 staff. They are engaging across the agencies that are
 11 members of this task force to ensure that we get this
 12 done and that it's meaningful.

13 Okay, are there any other comments from
 14 members?

15 Okay, I'd like to turn it over to those of you
 16 who were kind enough to attend today. Would you like to
 17 come up and ask any questions? No?

18 Please come up and share your name.

19 MR. WYNN: Good morning. My name is Joe Wynn,
 20 and I'm also a member of the Veterans Entrepreneurship
 21 Task Force. Good to see you this morning, Barbara and
 22 other Task Force members and guests.

23 Just a couple of questions. One you mentioned
 24 about the annual reports that were due for the 2013 and
 25 2014. Those of us that have been supporting the Task

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1 Force over the years and participating in many of these
 2 sessions, we're very concerned about why still at this
 3 point we've not gotten the annual reports. And in not
 4 getting them, the question really now moves to the Task
 5 Force committee itself more so than to SBA, because from
 6 our understanding, the responsibility of the reports was
 7 to be derived from the input and participation of the
 8 Task Force members through the year.

9 So, if they were actually here, which I see
 10 there's very few here anymore, at least today, if they
 11 were participating through the year, what is the
 12 difficulty in them compiling a report to submit at the
 13 end of the year? Now we're talking about two years of no
 14 report. Now, the impact of that, I think we should take
 15 a little more seriously because if the purpose of this
 16 task force committee was to provide input and discussion
 17 on how to improve contracting opportunities for veteran
 18 business owners in the federal marketplace primarily and
 19 recommendations were made out of years when we had the
 20 2011 and 2012 reports, there were recommendations made.
 21 If there's no feedback and no action taken on any of the
 22 recommendations, then how does anything ever get to
 23 improve in the veterans community, in the business
 24 community?

25 So, I mean, if this is going to be an effective

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1 tool that was -- came about by an executive order from
 2 the President to actually try and help improve the
 3 landscape for veteran business owners, it's hard to see
 4 how it's any benefit if the recommendations that were
 5 made from over two years, first of all, we've never heard
 6 any feedback on those recommendations. Did the President
 7 ever see them? Who -- where did they go?

8 And, then, to not have any recommendations made
 9 after two years of work, we're meeting here for two more
 10 years and made no recommendations, it's just very
 11 concerning. So, I wanted to express that, and that's not
 12 just from me personally. That's from our membership and
 13 many veteran business owners, as evidenced by the lack of
 14 participation over the past couple of years. This room
 15 used to be full, and very few veteran business owners see
 16 any importance or effectiveness from this task force.
 17 So, I'm just sharing, okay?

18 The other thing, too, as we go into this year,
 19 what are the goals and objectives of the task force for
 20 this year? What is it that this task force is trying to
 21 accomplish for this year? We had some -- again, some
 22 recommendations from two years ago. I don't know if
 23 that's going to be some follow-up on any of those things.
 24 It's been a lot of discussion on trying to -- you know,
 25 the issues concerning VA, veterans verification, versus

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1 whether to take that across the whole Federal Government
 2 with regard to certifying veteran business owners. I'm
 3 not sure where that discussion is with regard to input
 4 from this task force, right?

5 We talked about, you know, DOL training
 6 opportunities to increase the number of veteran-owned
 7 businesses because the more businesses we have the more
 8 likely they are to hire more veterans, you know, tackling
 9 that employment issue. Not sure where that is at the
 10 moment in terms of, you know, increasing that pool of
 11 veterans seeking employment.

12 So, those were just -- those were just some of
 13 the concerns I was, you know, asked to bring forward
 14 today. And that's it for the moment. Thank you.

15 MS. CARSON: I thank you for bringing this up
 16 again, and I am disappointed that you have to bring it up
 17 every time, because I would like to see us do better. I
 18 absolutely take responsibility for the reports. SBA is
 19 the lead in compiling all the members' input, and if we
 20 can't get it, then that's on me. So, we are working on
 21 that, but I am disappointed that we can't show what we
 22 have done, because -- and if I could, I think that you're
 23 right, that holding -- having a report makes us
 24 accountable because we actually set goals and we can say
 25 whether we met the mark or we didn't.

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1 It gives a chance, also, for those of us who
2 are in this room to do a better job of reaching out and
3 explaining what we're doing, and that is what we're -- if
4 I'm complaining that I am not able to get participation
5 in my programs, wouldn't it be helpful if I had a report
6 to stand behind that says what exactly each agency is
7 doing about it?

8 So, I agree with you that the reports
9 absolutely need to be done and they are important. I
10 didn't want you to leave the table. Welcome back.

11 MR. WYNN: Oh, I'm sorry. Just a follow-up
12 comment --

13 MS. CARSON: Sure.

14 MR. WYNN: -- because I just want to make
15 something clear, too, because we were discussing this the
16 other day. This task force was originally headed up by
17 the SBA deputy administrator.

18 MS. CARSON: Yes.

19 MR. WYNN: So, we understand that it was not
20 the responsibility of the SBA Office of Veterans Business
21 Development to even manage this task force, so you --
22 hopefully, you -- I wouldn't want you to take that as
23 something that you should have been responsible for. You
24 may feel that way now, but we're not looking at it that
25 way. First of all, where's the deputy administrator?

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1 Why has that been such a gap in the time since Marie
2 Johns left? See, we're concerned about that. If this
3 administration is truly concerned and committed to the
4 well-being and growth of veteran businesses in this
5 country, why is that been such a gap? There's been no
6 replacement since she left, and it's almost two years
7 now. So, you know, that's the bigger concern. And we
8 realize that the deputy administrator was truly the chair
9 of this task force.

10 MS. CARSON: Yes.

11 MR. WYNN: But, again, I mention the members of
12 the task force have a personal responsibility to report.

13 MS. CARSON: Yes.

14 MR. WYNN: So, you know, who finally compiles
15 the report, that's a different matter, but the individual
16 task force members, I think, should be personally
17 responsible for providing the input for that report.
18 Thank you.

19 MS. CARSON: Thank you. Thank you, Joe.

20 MR. WYNN: Okay.

21 MR. PHIPPS: Barbara, can I say --

22 MS. CARSON: Please.

23 MR. PHIPPS: Michael Phipps. Does the task
24 force have a public website like the veteran committees?
25 Is there a public website? I mean, this is a public

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1 forum, so is there a website that produces or promotes or
2 shows information about this task force?

3 MS. CARSON: I can speak for SBA that on our
4 website we provide the minutes, and that is what is the
5 body of work of this group. And any annual reports that
6 are posted are posted on SBA. And I don't know whether
7 any other agency has put anything to do with the
8 interagency task force on their own websites.

9 MR. PHIPPS: DOD's represented, VA's
10 represented. I would like to see on the website all the
11 organizations that are --

12 MS. WOLEK: Can you hear me now?

13 MS. CARSON: Yes, I can.

14 MS. WOLEK: Oh, great.

15 MR. PHIPPS: Now they're chiming in.

16 MS. WOLEK: Hello, everybody, this is Sarah
17 Wolek from Treasury. I unfortunately can't be there in
18 person. I broke my foot so I'm calling in and I hope to
19 be there next time. I think we were just having
20 technical difficulties earlier on. Barbara, is this a
21 good time to talk to the group, or should I wait?

22 MR. PHIPPS: I'll just -- my comment's really
23 quick.

24 MS. CARSON: Just one moment, we're just
25 finishing a comment. And if you can't hear the speaker

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1 right now, let me know.

2 Go ahead.

3 MS. WOLEK: Yeah, it's a little bit difficult.

4 I was just trying to find a good time to (inaudible)
5 everybody. Just let me know when it is, and I'll jump in
6 --

7 MS. CARSON: Okay, thank you.

8 MR. PHIPPS: We would like the SBA to post on
9 their website everybody who attended the meeting in
10 person, everybody who called in and was around for a roll
11 call, and that way there's a public record for who's
12 supporting the interagency and who's not, and eventually
13 that has to go into the report and to the White House.
14 Thank you.

15 MS. CARSON: Thanks for that input. I will see
16 what latitude we have on what we can say about who
17 attended. I can understand that there are agencies, we
18 can say which agencies were represented.

19 MR. PHIPPS: Sure.

20 MS. CARSON: But I don't want to put -- just in
21 case any of you didn't want someone to know you were at
22 the interagency task force meeting, whether I can share
23 that.

24 I would like to turn it over to Department of
25 Treasury now. Thank you.

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1 MS. WOLEK: Thanks so much, and apologies for
2 again not being there in person. I hope to be there on
3 the next quarterly meeting.

4 I just want to update the group in terms of
5 some outreach that we've planned that we're very excited
6 about. We hold an annual conference in regard to state
7 small business credit initiative, which our team at
8 Treasury runs the program -- well, you know, it came out
9 of the Jobs Act and if you guys are familiar with it, I
10 don't want to delve into it very deeply, but essentially
11 it is a program where Treasury is providing funding to
12 state economic development agencies and (inaudible) state
13 and small businesses to be able to -- we're instructing
14 them and come out of the recession.

15 As a result of the program, one of the -- one
16 of the annual sort of meetings that we do brings in all
17 of state managers from across the country --

18 MS. CARSON: Can you -- we're having trouble
19 hearing you. Are you on a cell phone?

20 MS. WOLEK: I am actually on a cell phone.

21 MS. CARSON: Okay, can you just say who was
22 brought together by that, and we'll try to get a clearer
23 -- go ahead.

24 MS. WOLEK: Okay. And I can speak more slowly,
25 and maybe that will help. So, this annual conference is

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1 in support of the state small business credit initiative,
2 which is a program that has provided funding to economic
3 development agencies and venture capital firms within
4 three states throughout the country. In this annual
5 conference, the state program managers have come to
6 attend, share past best practices, sort of learn, you
7 know, provide (inaudible) resources on implementation and
8 so forth.

9 And it's just a great event where most of the -
10 - most of the participants in this program are in one
11 place and it's a great way to share information. And
12 that was a vehicle that we hoped to use, and this is
13 upcoming in May to identify by, you know, veteran small
14 business and -- and provide information to the
15 (inaudible) and provide that outreach. It's just a
16 community and it's very (inaudible) to highlight this
17 issue.

18 So, that is what we have upcoming planned, and
19 I just wanted to share that with the group.

20 MS. CARSON: Thanks for the update on outreach.
21 Is there anything else you wanted to cover in the event?

22 MS. WOLEK: No, at this stage, no, that's all I
23 wanted to bring to our group's attention. I think that's
24 the biggest outreach platform that we have for the
25 program anytime of the year, so we wanted to make sure

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1 that that's an opportunity that we avail and we will
2 report back in our next meeting as to how that went and,
3 you know, share more information with you once we've had
4 that event.

5 MS. CARSON: Thank you. And I also promised
6 that in June we could get an update from Treasury small
7 business lending fund and potentially another subject
8 that I will follow up with you on shortly.

9 MS. WOLEK: Yes, sounds good.

10 MS. CARSON: Okay, thank you.

11 Mr. Loney, I don't want to put us on the spot
12 together, so I'll go under the bus with you, but I would
13 love to talk about what you and I are going to do
14 together later this year, if you wouldn't mind.

15 MR. LENEY: Oh, sure. As many of you are
16 aware, we do an annual veteran small business engagement,
17 and we are now working with the SBA formally to combine
18 that engagement with the SBA's Veterans Small Business
19 Week, and so we're going to be partnering together to
20 hopefully improve the experience at the national
21 engagement. We are expecting to do it in November so we
22 can link it. We're not going to step on Veterans Day,
23 obviously, but we're shooting for I think the week before
24 Veterans Day.

25 And the SBA, I think very appropriately, has

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1 agreed to sort of take on the training and learning
2 dimension of that so that the VA and other federal
3 agencies can focus on what we believe to be central to
4 that effort, which is direct access to opportunities.
5 So, we are excited about working with the SBA actively on
6 that event, and then we seek to expand that to some of
7 our other direct access events, because we believe that
8 the SBA is uniquely and best situated to provide the kind
9 of education and training that veteran entrepreneurs
10 need. So, it allows us to focus on the access.

11 MS. CARSON: Thank you. I'd also like to say
12 that Tom and I at the June meeting will be asking our
13 member agencies of this interagency task force to make a
14 commitment to us to support this event and its intent.
15 So, I would be grateful for those -- for DOD and Treasury
16 if you will please keep that in mind. We will be talking
17 about exactly how we can make this a meaningful event for
18 small business -- veteran-owned small business owners.

19 MR. GATEWOOD: Any idea where it may be held?
20 Region, where, state?

21 MR. LENEY: Yes, I expect it will be held in
22 the Northeast. We have a memorandum in to the Secretary
23 for final approval.

24 MS. CARSON: Okay. I believe we are ready to
25 wrap up, unless there are any final public questions or

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1 comments.
2 MR. BLUM: I'd like to thank Barb, you and your
3 staff, for your fresh approach to leadership and your
4 participation in our community and the way you do
5 participate and the transparency you've brought to this
6 office. I think most, if not all of us, appreciate it
7 and we thank you so much.

8 MS. CARSON: Thank you very much for that. I
9 appreciate that. We are adjourned. We will be back the
10 second Thursday in June.

11 (Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 10:38
12 a.m.)
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