

schools; \$10,000 for students training at flight schools; and \$8,500 for students training at correspondence schools. Additionally, the entitlement charge for individuals in receipt of reimbursement for taking a licensing, certification, or national test was one month (rounded to the nearest whole month) for each \$1,460.00 received.

Sections 3313, 3315, and 3315A of title 38, United States Code (U.S.C.), direct VA to increase the maximum tuition and fee and entitlement charge amounts each academic year (beginning August 1) based on the most recent increase determined under title 38 U.S.C. 3015(h). Increases determined under 38 U.S.C. 3015(h) are effective October 1 of each calendar year. As such, the increase determined under 38 U.S.C. 3015(h), which was effective October 1 of the previous calendar year, will be the most recent increase in rates at the beginning of each academic year.

#### 2012–2013 Academic Year Maximum Tuition and Fee Amounts

As of August 1, 2012 (beginning of the 2012–2013 academic year), the most recent increase determined under 38 U.S.C. 3015(h) was a 3.3 percent increase, which was effective October 1, 2011. VA calculated the maximum tuition and fee and entitlement charge amounts listed below for training pursued under the Post-9/11 GI Bill that begins after July 31, 2012, and before August 1, 2013, using the 3.3 percent increase.

#### 2012–2013 ACADEMIC YEAR

Type of school	Actual net cost of tuition and fees not to exceed
<b>Post-9/11 GI Bill Maximum Tuition and Fee Amounts</b>	
Public .....	In-State/Resident Charges.
Private/Foreign .....	\$18,077.50.
Vocational Flight .....	\$10,330.00.
Correspondence .....	\$8,780.50.
<b>Post 9/11 Entitlement Charge Amount for Tests</b>	
Licensing and Certification Tests.	VA will charge one month entitlement (rounded to the nearest whole month) for each \$1,508.18 received.
National Tests .....	

#### 2013–2014 Academic Year Maximum Tuition and Fee Amounts

As of August 1, 2013 (beginning of the 2013–2014 academic year), the 6.2

percent increase determined under 38 U.S.C. 3015(h), which was effective October 1, 2012, will be the most recent increase. VA calculated the maximum tuition and fee and entitlement charge amounts listed below for training pursued under the Post-9/11 GI Bill that begins after July 31, 2013, and before August 1, 2014, using the 6.2 percent increase.

#### 2013–2014 ACADEMIC YEAR

Type of school	Actual net cost of tuition and fees not to exceed
<b>Post-9/11 GI Bill Maximum Tuition and Fee Amounts</b>	
Public .....	In-State/Resident Charges.
Private/Foreign .....	\$19,198.31.
Vocational Flight .....	\$10,970.46.
Correspondence .....	\$9,324.89.
<b>Post 9/11 Entitlement Charge Amount for Tests</b>	
Licensing and Certification Tests.	VA will charge one month entitlement (rounded to the nearest whole month) for each \$1,601.69 received.
National Tests .....	

Approved: December 18, 2012.

**John R. Gingrich,**

*Chief of Staff, Department of Veterans Affairs.*

[FR Doc. 2012–30945 Filed 12–21–12; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 8320–01–P**

#### DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

##### National Academic Affiliations Council, Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. 2, that a meeting of the National Academic Affiliations Council (NAAC) will be held on January 10–11, 2013, in the Office of Academic Affiliations Conference Room 870, 1800 G Street NW., Washington, DC. The sessions will begin at 8:00 a.m. each day and adjourn at 5:00 p.m. on January 10 and at 1:00 p.m. on January 11.

The purpose of the Council is to advise the Secretary on matters affecting partnerships between VA and its academic affiliates.

On January 10, the Council will review the status of recommendations from its previous meetings; receive a report from the NAAC Joint Venture Task Force; hear from Veterans Health

Administration (VHA) officials; and engage in discussions about mental health service enhancements and implications for mental health education. On January 11, the Council will hear from officials of the VHA Office of Research and Development and continue its discussion of opportunities and challenges in academic affiliation relationships. The Council will receive public comments at 12:30 p.m.

A sign-in sheet for those who want to give comments will be available at the meeting. Individuals who speak are invited to submit a 1–2 page summary of their comments at the time of the meeting for inclusion in the official meeting record. Oral presentations will be limited to five minutes or less, depending on the number of participants. Interested parties may also provide written comments for review by the Council to Gloria J. Holland, Ph.D., Special Assistant for Policy and Planning, Office of Academic Affiliations (10A2D), VA, 810 Vermont Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20420 or by email to [Gloria.Holland@va.gov](mailto:Gloria.Holland@va.gov). Any member of the public wishing to attend or seeking additional information should contact Dr. Holland by email or by phone at (202) 461–9490.

Dated: December 18, 2012.

By Direction of the Secretary.

**Vivian Drake,**

*Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2012–30864 Filed 12–21–12; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE P**

#### DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

##### Presumption of Exposure to Herbicides for Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Not Supported

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** On May 20, 2011, at the request of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academy of Sciences issued a report titled, “Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans and Agent Orange Exposure.” The IOM reviewed a wide range of data sources including peer-reviewed literature, exposure and transport modeling, interviews with veterans, ship deck logs, and other government documents, and concluded that there is insufficient evidence to determine whether Blue Water Navy Veterans were exposed to Agent Orange-associated herbicides during the Vietnam War. After careful review of the IOM report, the Secretary determines that the evidence available

at this time does not support establishing a presumption of exposure to herbicides for Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans. VA will continue to accept and review all Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veteran claims based on herbicide exposure on a case-by-case basis.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Terry Walters, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Ave. NW., Washington, DC 20420, telephone (202) 461-1020. (This is not a toll-free number.)

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** During the Vietnam War, the U.S. military used various tactical herbicides as defoliants to help military personnel identify enemy transportation and communication routes and camps, reduce cover for enemy forces, and kill crops that might be used by the enemy. The best known and most widely used herbicide was Agent Orange. Agent Orange was contaminated with the highly toxic chemical 2, 3, 7, 8-Tetrachlorodibenzo-p-Dioxin (TCDD). Numerous adverse health effects in veterans who served in Vietnam have been attributed to exposure to Agent Orange. The Agent Orange Act of 1991, Public Law 102-4, 105 Stat. 11, established a presumption of herbicide exposure for veterans who had served in Vietnam and who developed a disease associated with Agent Orange exposure. The presumption applies to those who served in the Republic of Vietnam on the ground (ground troops) or on its inland waterways (Brown Water Navy Veterans). Veterans who served in deep-water naval vessels off the coast of Vietnam during the Vietnam War are

referred to as Blue Water Navy Veterans. Claims filed by veterans who served on only Blue Water Navy vessels based on herbicide exposure are accepted and reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

On May 20, 2011, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academy of Sciences issued a report titled, “Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans and Agent Orange Exposure.” The report was issued and the underlying study was conducted at the request of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and neither was required by law. VA requested the study in response to veteran concerns and the recommendations in the IOM report “Veterans and Agent Orange: Update 2008.” VA tasked the IOM with establishing a committee to determine whether Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans experienced exposures to herbicides and their contaminants (focusing on dioxin) comparable to those of ground troops and Brown Water Navy Vietnam Veterans.

For the study, the IOM reviewed a wide range of data sources including peer-reviewed literature, exposure and transport modeling, interviews with veterans, ship deck logs, and other government documents. After reviewing and analyzing available data, the IOM concluded that ground troops and Brown Water Navy Veterans had qualitatively more pathways of exposure to Agent Orange-associated TCDD than did Blue Water Navy Veterans. The IOM found that a paucity of scientific data concerning potential exposures for Blue Water Navy Veterans made it impossible to determine whether these veterans were exposed to Agent Orange-associated TCDD and, therefore, that

exposure of Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans to Agent Orange-associated TCDD cannot be reasonably determined.

After careful review of the IOM report, “Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans and Agent Orange Exposure,” the Secretary has determined that the evidence available at this time does not support establishing a presumption of exposure to herbicides for Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans. VA will continue to accept and review all Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veteran claims based on herbicide exposure on a case-by-case basis. The Secretary’s determination not to establish a presumption of exposure does not in any way preclude VA from granting service connection on a case-by-case basis for diseases and conditions associated with Agent Orange exposure, nor does it change any existing rights or procedures.

#### Signing Authority

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or designee, approved this document and authorized the undersigned to sign and submit the document to the Office of the Federal Register for publication electronically as an official document of the Department of Veterans Affairs. John R. Gingrich, Chief of Staff, Department of Veterans Affairs, approved this document on December 19, 2012, for publication.

Dated: December 19, 2012.

**Robert C. McFetridge,**

*Director, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs.*

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