

d. VA Form 10-7078—2 minutes.
Frequency of Response: On occasion.
Estimated Number of Respondents:
 480,100.

- a. VA Form 10-583—68,750 hours.
- b. VA Form 10-2065—36,850 hours.
- c. VA Form 10-2511—122,500 hours.
- d. VA Form 10-7078—252,000 hours.

Dated: May 18, 2001.

By direction of the Secretary.

Barbara H. Epps,

Management Analyst, Information Management Service.

[FR Doc. 01-13423 Filed 5-25-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0012]

Agency Information Collection Activities Under OMB Review

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C., 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs, has submitted the collection of information abstracted below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The PRA submission describes the nature of the information collection and its expected cost and burden; it includes the actual data collection instrument.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before June 28, 2001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR A COPY OF THE SUBMISSION CONTACT: Denise McLamb, Information Management Service (045A4), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420, (202) 273-8030, FAX (202) 273-5981 or e-mail denise.mclamb@mail.va.gov. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0012."

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Application for Cash Surrender Government Life Insurance, VA Form 29-1546, and Application for Policy Loan Government Life Insurance, VA Form 29-1546-1.

OMB Control Number: 2900-0012.

Type of Review: Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired.

Abstract: The form is used by the insured to apply for cash surrender value or policy loan on his/her Government Life Insurance. The

information is used by VA to process the insurer's request for a loan or cash surrender.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published on February 15, 2001 at pages 10564-10565.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 4,939 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 10 minutes.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.
Estimated Number of Respondents: 29,636.

Send comments and recommendations concerning any aspect of the information collection to VA's Desk Officer, OMB Human Resources and Housing Branch, New Executive Office Building, Room 10235, Washington, DC 20503, (202) 395-7316. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0012" in any correspondence.

Dated: April 30, 2001.

By direction of the Secretary.

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

[FR Doc. 01-13422 Filed 5-25-01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Privacy Act of 1974; System of Records

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

ACTION: Notice of System of Records "Spinal Cord Dysfunction-Registry—VA."

SUMMARY: The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(4)) requires that all agencies publish in the **Federal Register** a notice of the existence and character of their system of records. Notice is hereby given that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is establishing a new system of records entitled "Spinal Cord Dysfunction—Registry (SCD-R)—VA" (108VA11S).

DATES: Comments on the establishment of this new system of records must be received no later than June 28, 2001. If no public comment is received, the new system will become effective June 28, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Written comments concerning the proposed new system of

records may be submitted to the Office of Regulations Management (02D), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420. Comments will be available for public inspection at the above address in the Office of Regulations Management, Room 1158, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (except holidays).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE

CONTACT: Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Privacy Act Officer, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420, telephone (727) 320-1839.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Description of the Proposed System of Records

The Spinal Cord Dysfunction (SCD)—Registry provides a registry of veterans with spinal cord injury and disorders (SCI&D). This registry contains pertinent information on veterans with SCI&D and enables better coordination of care among VHA staff. The purpose of the registry is to assist clinicians, administrators, and researchers in identifying and tracking services for veterans with spinal cord dysfunction resulting from trauma or diseases. The SCD—Registry can also facilitate clinical, administrative, and research reports for medical center use. Local Veterans Health Information System and Technology Architecture (VistA) SCD—Registries provide aggregate data to the National SCD—Registry database at the Austin Automation Center (AAC). This centralized AAC registry is used to provide a VA-wide review of veteran demographics and clinical aspects of injury and disorders for administrative and research purposes.

These records contain identifying information including name, social security number (SSN), date of birth, unique record identifiers, and registration date. SCD—Registry registration information may include registration status, neurologic level of injury, etiology, date of onset, type of cause, completeness of injury, and annual evaluation dates offered and received. Each local medical center facility has a VistA based SCD—Registry software package that interactively functions with other clinical VistA based software. The SCD—Registry program and other programs at the respective facilities automatically flag records or events for transmission based upon functionality requirements. Data transmissions between VA health care facilities and the VA databases housed at the AAC are accomplished using the

Department's wide area network. The SCD—Registry Outcomes File has data fields for storing measures of impairment, activity, social role participation, and satisfaction with life. A registrant may have multiple entries in this file.

VHA's Health Services Research and Development Service (HSR&D) and the congressionally-chartered Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) originally developed the SCD—Registry. However, these records are maintained exclusively by VA. Registration may be completed by VA staff entering patients diagnosed with spinal cord injury and disorders applying for or receiving VA health care services.

Electronic and paper records are maintained at the AAC, Department of Veterans Affairs, 1615 Woodward Street, Austin, Texas 78772. They are also maintained at VA health care facilities listed in VA Appendix 1 of the biennial publication of VA's Systems of Records. Records will be maintained and disposed of in accordance with record disposition authority approved by the Archivist of the United States. Depending on the record medium, records are destroyed by either shredding or degaussing.

An individual who wishes to determine whether a record is being maintained in this system under his or her name or other personal identifier, or wants to determine the contents of such record, should submit a written request or apply in person to the last VA facility where medical care was provided, or submit a written request to the Chief Consultant, Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders Strategic Healthcare Group (128N), 1660 South Columbian Way, Seattle, Washington 98108–1597. Inquiries should include the veteran's name, social security number, and return address.

2. Proposed Routine Use Disclosures of Data in the System

VA is proposing to establish the routine use disclosures of information which will be maintained in the system as specified in the "Routine Uses of Records Maintained in the System" section of this notice below. There is no additional privacy impact anticipated from this system of records as part of the broader VHA record of clinical and health care information. Information maintained in the system is limited to that which is relevant and necessary for the planning and delivery of quality patient care services. Access is strictly limited to VA personnel with a bona fide need for the information in the performance of their duties. No persons outside of the "need-to-know" access

criteria will be given access capabilities. Privacy Act access requirements will be adhered to for all situations.

Release of information from these records will be made only in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act of 1974 for investigative, judicial, and administrative uses. The Privacy Act permits disclosure of information about individuals without their consent for a routine use when the information will be used for a purpose that is compatible with the purpose for which the information was collected. VA has determined that release of information for these purposes is a necessary and proper use of information and that specific routine uses for transfer of this information are appropriate for:

(a) Disclosure to a member of Congress or staff person, acting for the member, when they request the record on behalf of, and at the written request of that individual.

(b) Disclosure, as deemed necessary and proper to approved agents/attorneys aiding beneficiaries in the preparation/presentation of their cases during verification and/or due process procedures or in the presentation/prosecution of claims under laws administered by VA.

(c) Disclosure of name(s) and address(es) of present or former members of the armed services and/or their dependents to: (i) Any nonprofit organization if the release is directly connected with the conduct of programs and the utilization of benefits under Title 38, and (ii) any criminal or civil law enforcement governmental agency or instrumentality charged under applicable law with the protection of the public health or safety who has made a written request that such name(s) or address(es) be provided for a purpose authorized by law; provided, further, that the record(s) will not be used for any purpose other than that stated in the request and that the organization, agency or instrumentality is aware of the penalty provision of 38 U.S.C. 5701(f).

(d) Disclosure to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in records management inspections conducted under authority of Title 44 U.S.C.

(e) Disclosure for research purposes determined to be necessary and proper, to epidemiological and other research facilities approved by the Under Secretary for Health.

(f) Disclosure to conduct Federal research necessary to accomplish a statutory purpose of an agency, at the written request of the head of the agency, or designee of the head of that agency.

(g) Disclosure indicating a violation or potential violation of law to the appropriate agency charged with the responsibility of investigating or prosecuting such violation.

(h) Disclosure for program review purposes and the seeking of accreditation and/or certification.

(i) Disclosure in a proceeding before a court, adjudicative body, or other administrative body before which the Agency is authorized to appear.

(j) Disclosure to individuals, organizations, private or public agencies, etc., with whom VA has a contract or agreement to perform such services as VA may deem practicable for the purposes of laws administered by VA, in order for the contractor or subcontractor to perform the services of the contract or agreement.

(k) Disclosed to the Department of Justice and United States Attorneys in defense or prosecution of litigation involving the United States, and to Federal agencies upon their request in connection with review of administrative tort claims filed under the Federal Tort Claims Act, 28 U.S.C. 2672.

3. Compatibility of the Proposed Routine Uses

The Privacy Act permits VA to disclose information about individuals without their prior written consent for a routine use when the information will be used for a purpose that is compatible with the purpose for which the information was collected. In all of the routine use disclosures described, the recipient of the information will use the information in connection with a matter relating to one of VA's programs, to provide a benefit to VA, or to provide disclosure as required by law.

The notice of intent to publish and an advance copy of the system notice have been sent to the appropriate Congressional committees and to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as required by 5 U.S.C. 552a(r) (Privacy Act) and guidelines issued by OMB (65 FR 77677), December 12, 2000.

Approved: May 9, 2001.

Anthony J. Principi,
Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

108VA11S

SYSTEM NAME:

Spinal Cord Dysfunction—Registry (SCD—R)—VA.

SYSTEM LOCATION:

All electronic and paper records are maintained at the Austin Automation Center (AAC), Department of Veterans

Affairs (VA), 1615 Woodward Street, Austin, Texas 78772, and at VA health care facilities listed in VA Appendix 1 of the biennial publication of VA's Systems of Records. Each local medical center facility has a Veterans Health Information System and Technology Architecture (VistA)-based SCD-Registry software package. Data transmissions between VA health care facilities and the VA databases housed at the AAC are accomplished using the Department's wide area network.

CATEGORIES OF INDIVIDUALS COVERED BY THE SYSTEM:

Veterans identified with spinal cord injury and disorders that have applied for VA health care services are included in the system. Occasionally, non-veterans who have received VA health care or rehabilitation services under sharing agreements, contracted care, or humanitarian emergencies will also have information recorded in the Spinal Cord Dysfunction (SCD)-Registry.

CATEGORIES OF RECORDS IN THE SYSTEM:

These records contain identifying information including name, social security number, date of birth, and registration date in the SCD-Registry. SCD-Registry registration information may include information about whether individuals are receiving services from VA's spinal cord system of care, neurologic level of injury, etiology, date of onset, type of cause, completeness of injury, and annual evaluation dates offered and received. The Outcomes File of the SCD-Registry has data fields for storing measures of impairment, activity, social role participation, and satisfaction with life. A registrant may have multiple entries in this file.

AUTHORITY FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE SYSTEM:

Title 38, United States Code, Sections 501 and 7304.

PURPOSE(S):

The SCD-Registry provides a registry of veterans with spinal cord injury and disorders (SCI&D). This registry contains pertinent information on veterans with SCI&D and enables better coordination of care among VHA staff. The purpose of the registry is to assist clinicians, administrators, and researchers in identifying and tracking services for veterans with spinal cord dysfunction resulting from trauma or diseases. The SCD-Registry can also facilitate clinical, administrative, and research reports for medical center use. Local VistA SCD-Registries provide data extracts to the National SCD-Registry database at the AAC. This centralized AAC registry is used to provide a VA-wide review of veteran demographics

and clinical aspects of injuries and disorders.

ROUTINE USES OF RECORDS MAINTAINED IN THE SYSTEM, INCLUDING CATEGORIES OF USERS AND THE PURPOSES OF SUCH USES:

1. The record of an individual who is covered by this system may be disclosed to a member of Congress or staff person, acting for the member, when they request the record on behalf of, and at the written request of that individual.

2. Disclosure of records covered by this system, as deemed necessary and proper to named individuals serving as accredited veterans service organization representatives and other individuals named as approved agents or attorneys for a documented purpose and period of time. These agents/attorneys must be aiding beneficiaries in the preparation/presentation of their cases during verification and/or due process procedures or in the presentation/prosecution of claims under laws administered by VA.

3. A record containing the name(s) and address(es) of present or former members of the armed services and/or their dependents may be released from this system of records under certain circumstances:

a. To any nonprofit organization if the release is directly connected with the conduct of programs and the utilization of benefits under Title 38, and

b. To any criminal or civil law enforcement governmental agency or instrumentality charged under applicable law with the protection of the public health or safety if a qualified representative of such organization, agency or instrumentality has made a written request that such name(s) or address(es) be provided for a purpose authorized by law; provided, further, that the record(s) will not be used for any purpose other than that stated in the request and that the organization, agency or instrumentality is aware of the penalty provision of 38 U.S.C. 5701(f).

4. Disclosure may be made to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in records management inspections conducted under authority of Title 44 United States Code.

5. Disclosure of information, excluding name and address (unless name and address is furnished by the requester) for research purposes determined to be necessary and proper, to epidemiological and other research facilities approved by the Under Secretary for Health.

6. In order to conduct Federal research necessary to accomplish a statutory purpose of an agency, at the

written request of the head of the agency, or designee of the head of that agency, the name(s) and address(es) of present or former personnel or the armed services and/or their dependents may be disclosed;

a. To a Federal department or agency; or

b. Directly to a contractor of a Federal department or agency. When a disclosure of this information is to be made directly to the contractor, VA may impose applicable conditions on the department, agency, and/or contractor to insure the appropriateness of the disclosure to the contractor.

7. In the event that a record maintained by VA to carry out its functions indicates a violation or potential violation of law, whether civil, criminal or regulatory in nature, and whether arising by general statute or particular program statute, or by regulation, rule or order issued pursuant thereto, information may be disclosed at VA's initiative to the appropriate agency whether Federal, State, local or foreign, charged with the responsibility of investigating or prosecuting such violation or charged with enforcing or implementing the statute or rule, regulation or order issued pursuant thereto.

8. For program review purposes and the seeking of accreditation and/or certification, disclosure may be made to survey teams of the Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission, Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), College of American Pathologists, American Association of Blood Banks, and similar national accreditation agencies or boards with whom VA has a contract or agreement to conduct such reviews but only to the extent that the information is necessary and relevant to the review.

9. Records from this system of records may be disclosed in a proceeding before a court, adjudicative body, or other administrative body when the Agency, or any Agency component or employee (in his or her official capacity as a VA employee), is a party to litigation; when the Agency determines that litigation is likely to affect the Agency, any of its components or employees, or the United States has an interest in the litigation, and such records are deemed to be relevant and necessary to the legal proceedings; provided, however, that the disclosure is compatible with the purpose for which the records were collected.

10. Disclosure of relevant information may be made to individuals, organizations, private or public agencies, etc., with whom VA has a

contract or agreement to perform such services as VA may deem practicable for the purposes of laws administered by VA, in order for the contractor or subcontractor to perform the services of the contract or agreement.

11. Relevant information may be disclosed to the Department of Justice and United States Attorneys in defense or prosecution of litigation involving the United States, and to Federal agencies upon their request in connection with review of administrative tort claims filed under the Federal Tort Claims Act, 28 U.S.C. 2672.

POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR STORING, RETRIEVING, ACCESSING, RETAINING, AND DISPOSING OF RECORDS IN THE SYSTEM:

STORAGE:

Magnetic tapes/disks and optical discs. Electronic data are maintained on Direct Access Storage Devices at the AAC. The AAC stores registry tapes for disaster backup at a secure, off-site location.

RETRIEVABILITY:

Records are indexed by name of veteran, social security number, and unique patient identifiers.

SAFEGUARDS:

1. Data transmissions between VA health care facilities and the VA databases housed at the AAC are accomplished using the Department's wide area network. The SCD-Registry program and other programs at the respective facilities automatically flag records or events for transmission based upon functionality requirements. VA health care facilities control access to data by using VHA's VistA software modules. The Department's Telecommunications Support Service has oversight responsibility for

planning, security, and management of the wide area network.

2. Access to records at VA health care facilities is only authorized to VA personnel on a "need-to-know" basis. Records are maintained in staffed rooms during working hours. During non-working hours, there is limited access to the building with visitor control by security personnel. Access to the AAC is generally restricted to AAC staff, VA Headquarters employees, custodial personnel, Federal Protective Service and authorized operational personnel through electronic locking devices. All other persons gaining access to the computer rooms are escorted. Backup records stored off-site for both the AAC and VA Headquarters are safeguarded in secured storage areas.

3. Strict control measures are enforced to ensure that access to and disclosure from all records including electronic files and veteran-specific data elements are limited to VHA employees whose official duties warrant access to those files. The automated record system recognizes authorized users by keyboard entry of unique passwords, access, and verify codes.

RETENTION AND DISPOSAL:

Records will be maintained and disposed of in accordance with record disposition authority approved by the Archivist of the United States. Depending on the record medium, records are destroyed by either shredding or degaussing. Optical disks or other electronic media are deleted when no longer required for official duties.

SYSTEM MANAGER(S) AND ADDRESS:

Spinal Cord Dysfunction—Registry Coordinator (128N), 3350 La Jolla Village Drive, San Diego, California 92161. Officials responsible for policies

and procedures: Chief Consultant, Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders Strategic Healthcare Group (128N), 1660 South Columbian Way, Seattle, Washington 98108-1597.

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE:

An individual who wishes to determine whether a record is being maintained in this system under his or her name or other personal identifier, or wants to determine the contents of such record, should submit a written request or apply in person to the last VA facility where medical care was provided or submit a written request to the Chief Consultant, Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders Strategic Healthcare Group (128N), 1660 South Columbian Way, Seattle, Washington 98108-1597. Inquiries should include the veteran's name, social security number and return address.

RECORD ACCESS PROCEDURES:

An individual who seeks access to records maintained under his or her name may write or visit the nearest VA facility or write to the Chief Consultant, Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders Strategic Healthcare Group (128N), 1660 South Columbian Way, Seattle, Washington 98108-1597

CONTESTING RECORDS PROCEDURES:

(See Record Access Procedures.)

RECORD SOURCE CATEGORIES:

Various automated record systems providing clinical and managerial support to VA health care facilities, the veteran, family members, accredited representatives or friends, "Patient Medical Records"—VA (24VA136) system of records.

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