

2024 Current Fiscal Year Report: Advisory Committee on Structural Safety of Department of Veterans Affairs Facilities

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1. Department or Agency	2. Fiscal Year
Department of Veterans Affairs	2024
3. Committee or Subcommittee	3b. GSA Committee No.

Advisory Committee on Structural Safety of Department of Veterans Affairs Facilities	34
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4. Is this New Fiscal Year?	5. Current Charter	6. Expected Renewal Date	7. Expected Term Date
No	03/03/2023	03/03/2025	

8a. Was Terminated During Fiscal Year?	8b. Specific Termination Authority	8c. Actual Term Date
No	38 U.S.C. 8105(b)	

9. Agency Recommendation for Next Fiscal Year	10a. Legislation Req to Terminate?	10b. Legislation Pending?
Continue	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

11. Establishment Authority Statutory (Congress Created)

12. Specific Establishment Authority	13. Effective Date	14. Committee Type	14c. Presidential?
38 U.S.C. 8105(b)	08/02/1973	Continuing	No

15. Description of Committee Scientific Technical Program
Advisory Board

16a. Total Number of Reports No Reports for this Fiscal Year

17a. Open 0 **17b. Closed** 0 **17c. Partially Closed** 0 **Other Activities** 0 **17d. Total** 0

Meetings and Dates
No Meetings

	Current FY	Next FY
18a(1). Personnel Pmts to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(2). Personnel Pmts to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(3). Personnel Pmts to Federal Staff	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(4). Personnel Pmts to Non-Member Consultants	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(1). Travel and Per Diem to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(2). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(3). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Staff	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(4). Travel and Per Diem to Non-member Consultants	\$0.00	\$0.00
18c. Other(rents,user charges, graphics, printing, mail, etc.)	\$0.00	\$0.00
18d. Total	\$0.00	\$0.00
19. Federal Staff Support Years (FTE)	0.00	0.00

20a. How does the Committee accomplish its purpose?

The Committee discusses various current issues, for example: a) training for damage assessments; b) consolidation of facility criticality designations into a central design manual; c) use of HAZUS for seismic inventory risk evaluation and prioritization; d) implementation of FEMA P-154 for seismic screening into the Facility Condition Assessment program; e) use of VA seismic/structural, fire and life safety, continuity of operations standards and additional quality assurance measures for leased projects; and f) extending the seismic high risk criteria to include buildings in Moderate Low and

Low seismic zones that are evaluated to be at risk of collapse. The Committee continues to serve VA in a highly professional manner by assisting VA's Office of Construction & Facilities Management (CFM) in all matters of structural safety for the development of construction standards that make VA buildings safe, in particular from natural hazards, e.g. earthquakes, severe storms, fire, etc. Since its inception, the Committee has made significant contributions to the updating of VA Handbook Seismic Design Requirements H-18-8, which is periodically revised under the guidance of the Committee. These activities enable the Committee to advise the Secretary on matters to improve healthcare delivery by allowing VA to modernize assets and infrastructure by striving to ensure the construction of safe and operational VA facilities after hazardous events (aligns to VA Strategic Goal 2 by ensuring Veterans' timely care and support after natural disasters).

20b. How does the Committee balance its membership?

Membership is comprised of at least a practicing structural engineer and a research structural engineer who are experts in structural resistance to earthquake, and other natural disasters; a geotechnical engineer; a healthcare architect with expertise in life safety matters; a fire protection engineer; and such other individuals the Secretary deems advisable. When new members are sought, membership solicitations are made open to the public in the Federal Register and professional organizations. Ex-officio members include the Executive Director, Office of Construction & Facilities Management (CFM) and the Executive Director, Office of Healthcare Environment and Facilities Programs, Veterans Health Administration (VHA).

20c. How frequent and relevant are the Committee Meetings?

The Committee meets as necessary to perform its functions, but not less than once a year. Its services will be necessary during the duration of VA's programs to build, remodel, or inspect facilities over which VA has direct jurisdiction or for which it contracts. In FY 2023, the Committee held one hybrid meeting on May 16-18, 2023 in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

20d. Why can't the advice or information this committee provides be obtained elsewhere?

The current Committee is composed of a panel of experts, in the fields of structural engineering, seismic risk, geotechnical engineering, architecture, and fire safety. The Office of Construction & Facilities Management (CFM) strives to obtain world class experts from industry and academia to provide expert advice on such important matters that affect the VA construction program and safety of existing facilities in the event of natural and manmade disasters, such as earthquakes and fires. The Advisory Committee is unique as it reports to the Secretary, providing expert, objective advice to CFM, that otherwise could not be procured through standard acquisition methods.

20e. Why is it necessary to close and/or partially closed committee meetings?

The committee meetings are open to the public, except during closed sessions when the Committee is conducting tours of VA other Veteran service facilities and administrative workgroup sessions. Tours of VA facilities are closed, to protect Veterans' privacy and personal information in accordance with 5 U.S.C. sec. 552b

(c)(6).

21. Remarks

The Committee reinforces VA's credibility, when dealing with outside parties, such as the Joint Committee on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations, etc. As of July 31, 2023, two members terms' expired. Therefore, the Committee has 8 members (6 Committee members and 2 Ex-officio members).

Designated Federal Officer

Donald L. Myers Designated Federal Officer

Committee Members	Start	End	Occupation	Member Designation
Brennan, Michael	11/01/2019		Executive Director, Office of Construction & Facilities Management	Ex Officio Member
Ellis, Allison	07/18/2019	08/31/2024	Manager and Senior Fire Protection Engineer, Koffel Associates, Inc.	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Gould, Nathan	09/02/2021	08/31/2025	ABSG Consulting Inc.	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Litvin, Ed	09/01/2018		Executive Director, Office of Healthcare Environment and Facilities Programs, Veterans Health Administration (VHA)	Ex Officio Member
Martin, James	09/14/2023	08/31/2025	University of Pittsburgh	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
McDonald, James	09/14/2023	08/31/2025	Simpson Gumpertz & Heger Inc.	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Ramirez, Julio	09/14/2023	08/31/2025	Purdue University	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member

Winkel,
Steven

09/02/2021 08/31/2025

The PREVIEW
GROUP, Inc.

Special
Government
Employee
(SGE)
Member

Number of Committee Members Listed: 8

Narrative Description

The Committee provides advice to the Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs on matters of structural safety in the construction and remodeling of VA facilities against natural and man made disasters. Six new recommendations were submitted during FY 2023 relating to a) training for damage assessments; b) consolidation of facility criticality designations into a central design manual; c) use of HAZUS for seismic inventory risk evaluation and prioritization; d) implementation of FEMA P-154 for seismic screening into the Facility Condition Assessment program; e) use of VA seismic/structural, fire and life safety, continuity of operations standards and additional quality assurance measures for leased projects; and f) extending the seismic high risk criteria to include buildings in Moderate Low and Low seismic zones that are evaluated to be at risk of collapse.

What are the most significant program outcomes associated with this committee?

Checked if
Applies

Improvements to health or safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Trust in government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Major policy changes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advance in scientific research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective grant making	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved service delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Increased customer satisfaction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Implementation of laws or regulatory requirements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Outcome Comments

The Committee provides structural safety advice to the VA in the area of new construction and in mitigating risks to existing structures from earthquake, fire, and other natural disasters.

What are the cost savings associated with this committee?

Checked if Applies

None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unable to Determine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Under \$100,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$100,000 - \$500,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost Savings Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Cost Savings Comments

NA

What is the approximate Number of recommendations produced by this committee for the life of the committee?

122

Number of Recommendations Comments

This is a total of recommendations for FY 2003 through FY 2023.

What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Fully implemented by the agency?

95%

% of Recommendations Fully Implemented Comments

116 out of 122 recommendations have been implemented.

What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Partially implemented by the agency?

5%

% of Recommendations Partially Implemented Comments

6 out of 122 recommendations are in progress.

Does the agency provide the committee with feedback regarding actions taken to implement recommendations or advice offered?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐

Agency Feedback Comments

The Department submits a formal response to each Committee recommendation, and Department officials brief the Committee on actions taken to implement recommendations. Published Annual Reports can be found online:

https://www.va.gov/ADVISORY/Advisory_Committee_on_Structural_Safety_of_Department_of_

What other actions has the agency taken as a result of the committee's advice or recommendation?

Checked if Applies

Reorganized Priorities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reallocated resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Issued new regulation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved grants or other payments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action Comments

NA

Is the Committee engaged in the review of applications for grants?

No

Grant Review Comments

NA

How is access provided to the information for the Committee's documentation?

Checked if Applies

Contact DFO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online Agency Web Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online Committee Web Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online GSA FACA Web Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Publications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Other



Access Comments

To access the Committee's website, click here:

https://www.va.gov/ADVISORY/Advisory_Committee_on_Structural_Safety_of_Department_of_