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**1. Report Finds Veterans Improperly Denied MST-related PTSD Claims:** VA’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) released a report on Tuesday that investigated denied disability claims for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) related to military sexual trauma (MST). The findings concluded that the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) processed approximately 12,000 claims annually over the past three years for PTSD related to MST. In FY2017, VBA denied about 5,500 of those claims. The OIG review team sampled 169 denied claims and discovered 82 were incorrectly processed, which indicates an overall adjudication error rate of 49 percent. The incorrectly processed denial error projections were mostly found to be due to evidence submitted, VA not requesting adequate evidence, veterans submitting claims not being contacted by VA’s MST coordinators, and insufficient medical opinions. “The Inspector General’s report is very troubling,” said VFW National Commander B.J. Lawrence in a [press statement](#). “The VA’s own statistics show that suicide rates among military sexual assault victims are a growing problem, yet here we have VBA — which is the key to all things VA — incorrectly processing almost a quarter of all claims. That’s failing our veterans.” Veterans who submitted claims for PTSD related to MST and feel their claims were improperly denied may [contact the VFW](#) for claims assistance. [Read the report](#).

**2. VFW Participates in Secretary of the Navy Retiree Council Meeting:** On Monday, VFW Director of National Security and Foreign Affairs John Towles joined the members of the Secretary of the Navy’s Retiree Council for a question and answer session at the Washington Navy Yard. Points of discussion focused on the VFW’s advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill and provided members with the opportunity to get updates on legislation concerning toxic exposure, the Survivor Benefit Plan and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, and transition services for members who are pending retirement. The council, which meets annually, is one element of the Department of the Navy Retired Activities Program and is composed of retired Navy and Marine Corps officers and enlisted personnel. It was established to address issues of significant importance to retired military personnel and their family members, and to facilitate interaction

between Department of Navy leadership, the Navy and Marine Corps, and stakeholders within the military community. [Learn more about the council.](#)

**3. New Security Clearance Guidelines Coming:** The Department of Defense will begin monitoring the financial statuses of individuals with security clearances on a continuous basis instead of periodic 5-10 year checkups. The change will help facilitate real-time accuracy of the individuals' financial situations. This move means that those with a security clearance will need to watch their credit reports and stay on top of their bills more stringently than they might have in the past. The new monitoring could affect service members who have clearances because if irregularities on credit reports surface, they could be deemed "non-deployable." It is always important to maintain a close watch of your finances, but for individuals with security clearances it could be much more important now. [Read a report](#) from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

**4. Applications Open for 2019 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship:** The application process for the 2019 class of VFW-SVA legislative fellows is now open. Ten VFW members who attend schools with an approved Student Veterans of America chapter will be selected for a semester-long program to advocate on policy issues faced by veterans, service members, and their families. The capstone of the program is participation in the 2019 VFW Legislative Conference. [Read more information or apply.](#)

**5. MIA Update:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency has announced five new identifications, and the burial date and location for one previously identified serviceman. Returning home with full military honors are:

-- **Army Air Forces Sgt. Alfonso O. Duran**, 22, of El Rito, N.M., whose remains were previously accounted for, will be buried Aug. 22 in Santa Fe, N.M. On Feb. 25, 1944, the final day of Operation Argument, Duran's aircraft came under attack by German fighters and anti-aircraft fire while he was on a bombing mission targeting Regensburg, Germany. Nine of the 10 crew members were able to bail out of the aircraft before it crashed, but were later captured. Duran's remains were never found, and he was later declared deceased. [Read about Duran.](#)

-- **Air Force Col. Richard A. Kibbey** was a member of Detachment 5, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron. On Feb. 6, 1967, Kibbey's rescue and recovery helicopter was hit by enemy ground fire, resulting in an internal explosion and crash. Kibbey was reported missing in action, but his status was later amended to deceased. Interment services are pending. [Read about Kibbey.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. Kenneth B. Williams** was a member of Heavy Mortar Company, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. In late November 1950, his unit was assembled with South Korean soldiers in the 31st Regimental Combat Team on the east side of the Chosin River, North Korea, when his unit was attacked by Chinese forces. Williams was among more than 1,000 members of the RCT killed or captured in enemy territory and was declared missing Dec. 2, 1950. Interment services are pending. [Read about Williams.](#)

-- **Army Pvt. William A. Boegli** was a member of Company L, 332nd Infantry Regiment, 81st Infantry Division. On Sept. 30, 1944, Boegli was killed while attempting to lead a group of litter bearers to evacuate wounded servicemen. His remains were not recovered following the war. Interment services are pending. [Read about Boegli.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. Morris R. Worrell** was a member of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment. Worrell was among those reported captured after the surrender of Corregidor Island

on May 6, 1942, and one of the thousands who were eventually moved to the Cabanatuan POW camp. More than 2,500 POWs perished in this camp during the remaining years of the war. Interment services are pending. [Read about Worrell.](#)

-- **Navy Machinist's Mate 1st Class Eugene K. Eberhardt** was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, on Dec. 7, 1941, when the ship sustained multiple torpedo hits and quickly capsized, resulting in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Eberhardt. Interment services are pending. [Read about Eberhardt.](#)

**To sign up new veterans' advocates, click here: <http://capwiz.com/vfw/mlm/signup.htm>.**

**As always, we want to hear your advocacy stories. To share your stories or photos with us, simply email them directly to [yfwac@vfw.org](mailto:yfwac@vfw.org).**