Employment Situation of Veterans 2009

Submitted with the Statement of

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Deputy Commissioner
Bureau of Labor Statistics

before the
Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity
of the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs

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Statement available online at
http://www.bls.gov/cps/demographics.htm#vets
Where do the data come from?

- The data are collected as part of the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households.

- The CPS is a joint program between the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Census Bureau.

- It is the source of civilian employment and unemployment data, including the national unemployment rate.

- Questions are included in the survey that identify veterans and their period of service (when they served).
Who are veterans?

- **Veterans** are men and women who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces and were civilians at the time of the survey. Members of the Reserve and National Guard are counted as veterans if they have ever been called to active duty.

- **Nonveterans** are men and women who have never served on active duty in the U.S. military.
Periods of Service

- Labor force statistics are available by these periods of service:

  - Gulf War era II = Sept. 2001 - present
  - Vietnam era = Aug. 1964 - April 1975
  - World War II = Dec. 1941 - Dec. 1946
  - Other service periods = All other time periods

“Other service periods” are the dates between war periods:
  - May 1975 - July 1990,
  - Jan. 1947 - June 1950,
  - Feb. 1955 - July 1964,
  - Nov. 1941 or earlier

NOTE: The CPS monthly survey does not identify where a veteran served.
Data on veterans are available monthly from the Current Population Survey (CPS)

- Veterans data are published monthly in the Employment Situation news release.

- Additional tables are available from BLS on topics such as:
  - Age, sex, race, and Hispanic ethnicity
  - Occupation and industry
  - Full or part-time status
  - Class of worker (private, government, self-employed, unpaid family worker)
  - Duration of unemployment
Additional data are available from the veterans supplement


- Co-sponsored by the Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

- Provides additional information about veterans such as presence and rating of service-connected disability, Reserve or National Guard status, and service in a combat or war zone.
Employment Situation of Veterans

Characteristics of veterans
Chart 1. Of the 22 million veterans, the largest group is from WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam era

- WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam-era veterans (51.3%)
- Gulf War-era II veterans (8.7%)
- Gulf War-era I veterans (13.1%)
- Other service periods (26.8%)


Chart 2. Most veterans are men

Percent of total

- **Women**
  - Veterans: 8%
  - WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam era: 3%
  - Gulf War-era II veterans: 18%
  - Nonveterans: 56%

- **Men**
  - Veterans: 92%
  - WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam era: 97%
  - Gulf War-era II veterans: 82%
  - Nonveterans: 44%

Chart 3. Overall, veterans are older than nonveterans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Veterans</th>
<th>Nonveterans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 4. Most Gulf War-era II veterans are under 35 years old

Chart 5. Among men, veterans age 18-24 are somewhat more likely than nonveterans to be employed

Employed as a percent of population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Male veterans</th>
<th>Male nonveterans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>83.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>83.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>67.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 6. Women of similar ages are employed at about the same rates

Employed as a percent of population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Female veterans</th>
<th>Female nonveterans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>68.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>56.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 7. WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam-era veterans tend to have lower employment rates, largely reflecting their age.

Employed as a percent of population

Chart 8. Employment varies little by combat status

Employed as a percent of population

- Combat veterans
- Noncombat veterans

Veterans, all service periods: 43.9% (Combat) vs. 51.4% (Noncombat)

Gulf War era II: 75.0% (Combat) vs. 75.0% (Noncombat)

Gulf War era I: 80.1% (Combat) vs. 83.2% (Noncombat)

WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam era: 29.1% (Combat) vs. 36.1% (Noncombat)

Other service periods: 51.4% (Combat) vs. 55.2% (Noncombat)

NOTE: Combat or war zone status was not reported for about 1 in 6 veterans.

Chart 9. Male veterans and female veterans have similar unemployment rates by period of service

NOTE: The unemployment rates of male and female Gulf War-era II veterans are similar. The unemployment rate for female Gulf War-era II veterans is based on a relatively small sample. Small samples have large standard errors.

Chart 10. Among veterans who served sometime since August 1990, there is little difference in the unemployment rates of those with or without a service-connected disability.

Chart 11. Among veterans who served sometime since August 1990, those with a service-connected disability are less likely to be employed than those without a service-connected disability.

Employed as a percent of population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service-connected disability status</th>
<th>Employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disabled, total</td>
<td>70.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 30 percent disabled</td>
<td>77.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 50 percent disabled</td>
<td>75.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 percent or higher disabled</td>
<td>55.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not disabled</td>
<td>81.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 12. 1 of 5 employed disabled veterans works for the Federal government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nonveterans</th>
<th>Nondisabled veterans</th>
<th>Disabled veterans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other workers</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>61.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and local government workers</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal government workers</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private nonagricultural wage and salary workers</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: “Other workers” includes persons employed in agriculture, the unincorporated self-employed, and unpaid family workers. Totals may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

Chart 13. Current or past members of the Reserve or National Guard have higher employment rates and lower unemployment rates than veterans who never were members of the Reserve or National Guard

Gulf War-era II veterans, August 2009

Employed as a percent of population

- Current or past member of the Reserve or National Guard: 77.2%
- Never a member of the Reserve or National Guard: 73.2%

Unemployment rate

- Current or past member of the Reserve or National Guard: 10.6%
- Never a member of the Reserve or National Guard: 13.8%

Further information is available at:

http://www.bls.gov/cps/demographics.htm#vets
or by calling (202) 691-6378