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## 2011 LEGISLATIVE REPORT MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS LINKVET LINE AND WEBSITE 1888-LINKVET (546-5838) WWW.MINNESOTAVETERAN.ORG

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#### **Legislative Charge**

#### Minnesota Session Laws 2010, Regular Session CHAPTER 333

Sec.8. Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 196.05, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 3. **Consumer satisfaction.** (a) The commissioner shall submit a memorandum each year to the governor and the chairs and ranking minority members of the house of representatives and senate standing committees with jurisdiction over the department's programs that provides the following information: (1) the number of calls made to each of the department's help lines by consumers and citizens regarding services provided or regulated by the department;

(2) the subject matter of the call;

(3) the number of service-related calls that were resolved;

- (4) the number that remain open; and
- (5) the number that were without merit.

(b) The commissioner shall publish the annual memorandum on the department's Web site each year no later than March 1.

#### Estimated Cost of Preparing this Report (as required by Minn. Stat. 3.197)

Staff time:	\$281.00
Copies:	\$9.00
TOTAL:	\$300.00

#### <u>Summary</u>

The Veterans Linkage Line (LinkVet) is a toll free, one stop customer service line and website for all Minnesota veterans and their families. The service connects Veterans and their families to important services and resources.

Calls are answered from Monday to Friday from 7:00 am to 9:00 pm, Saturday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and Sunday from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm. Trained Counselors will continue to provide service 24 hours a day, seven days a week(including holidays), for immediate crisis intervention and psychological counseling. Veterans can call LinkVet at 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838), International +1 (651) 556-0596 and TTY at (800) 627-3529, and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

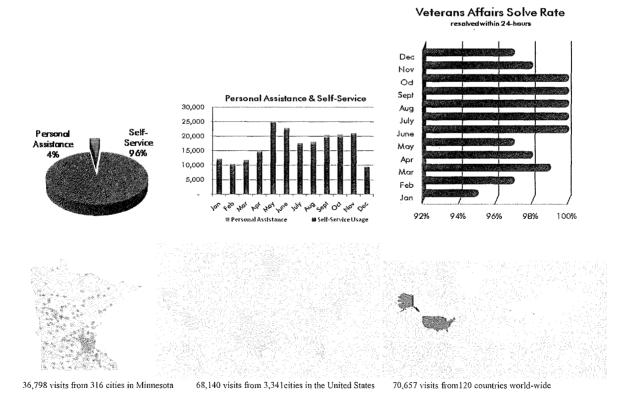
The website (<u>www.minnesotaveteran.org</u>) is a Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) format which allows users to enter questions or search topics based on their specific needs. Users are also able to create personalized accounts that will allow them to track topics and resources of interest. For example, if the user has questions about education benefits for Veterans, they can choose to be alerted anytime there is an update or a change related to that topic. Users also have the ability to chat online with staff and provide immediate feedback to help improve the site's usability.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

#### Executive Summary of Department Online Support: January 1 –December 28, 2010

#### Highpoints:

- Nation leading program provides information on Veterans' benefits, health care, education and reintegration.
- The phone line is managed by trained Minnesota Online staff during business hours.
- > 204,884 contacts in year
- > 1,981 returning visitors in September
- > 7,361 new visitors in November
- > 97-99% of questions to advisors were solved within 24 hours
- > 97% seeking personal assistance called to toll free number
- > Website visits from a unique IP address:
  - 70,657 visits from 120 countries world-wide
  - 68,140 visits from 3,341 cities in the United States
  - ✤ 36,798 visits from 316 cities in Minnesota



LinkVet www.minnesotaveteran.org	1.County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) 2. Minnesota Service C.O.R.E. (CORE) 3. Presumptive Illnesses Related to Agent Orange	53% Benefits 34% General Information 10% Claims & Outreach
Benefits www.mnveteranbenefits.org	<ol> <li>Determining My Benefits</li> <li>Country Veterans Service Officer (CVSO)</li> <li>Minnesota Service C.O.R.E. (CORE)</li> </ol>	57% Healthcare 16% Federal Benefits 13% State Benefits
Claims and Outreach www.mnveteranclaim.org	<ol> <li>County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO)</li> <li>Qualifying for Veterans Benefits</li> <li>Presumptive Illnesses Related to Agent Orange</li> </ol>	52% Claims 43% Outreach <5% Claims & Outreach
Higher Education MyMilitaryEducation.org	<ol> <li>Post 9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) Application &amp; Information</li> <li>Comprehensive List of Military Scholarships</li> <li>Check &amp;Verify USDVA Benefits Status thru W.A.V.E.</li> </ol>	56% Military Education Benefits/Finance 22% Career Information & Resources 8% Getting Ready for College
Veterans Homes www.MNVeteransHomes.org	<ol> <li>Veterans Homes Phone Directory</li> <li>Qualifying for Veterans Benefits</li> <li>Cost of Care at a Minnesota Veterans Home</li> </ol>	43% Minneapolis 27% Veterans Home General 13% Hastings

#### HOURS OF OPERATION:

TELEPHONE ASSISTANCE: 7:00 A.M. TO 9:00 P.M., CST MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY 10:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M., CST SATURDAY, AND 9:30 A.M. TO 3:30 P.M., CST SUNDAY

## SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE: ALL CALLERS ARE REFERRED AFTER HOURS TO 1-800-273-8255 OR WWW.SUICIDEPREVENTION LIFELINE.ORG



#### Summary of Claims and Outreach Division Online Support: January 1 –December 28, 2010

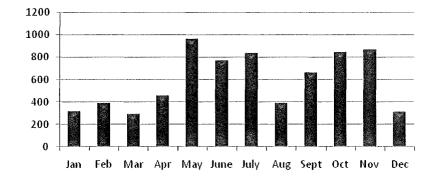
#### **Highpoints:**

- > 7,388 contacts in year
- > Month at a Glance: 280 new visitors and 28 returning visitors in November.
- > 82%seeking personal assistance called the toll free number.

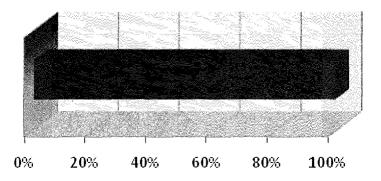




#### Self-Service Usage Claims and Outreach



#### Claims and Outreach 335 questions resolved within 24 hours



#### Contacts from Minnesota, across the USA and Worldwide



#### Personal Assistance

49% Claims
46% Outreach
3% Appeals
1% Services for Women Veterans
<1% Tribal Service</li>

#### **Top Answers viewed on Website**

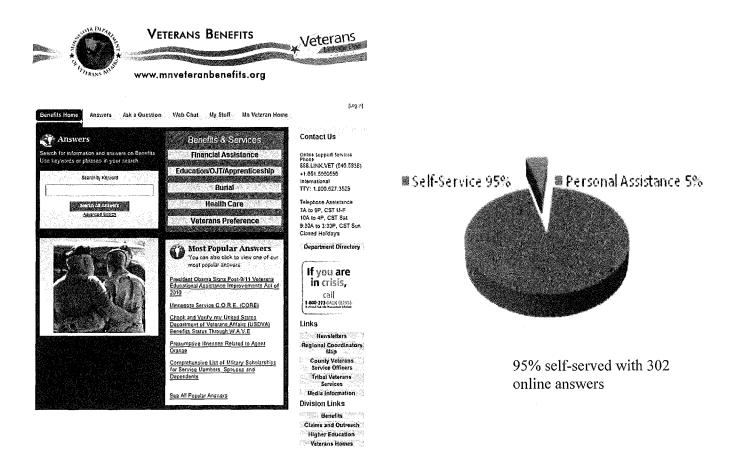
- 1. County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO)
- 2. Qualifying for Veterans Benefits
- 3. Presumptive Illnesses Related to Agent Orange
- 4. Minnesota Service C.O.R.E. (CORE)
- 5. Meet the Online Support Team
- 6. A to Z List of Resources Available to Veterans and Their Families
- 7. Copies of Military Personnel Records
- 8. Health Resources for Veterans, Service Members and their Families
- 9. Vietnam Navy and Coast Guard Ships Recently Identified as Having Been Exposed to Agent Orange
- 10. Service-Connected Disabilities

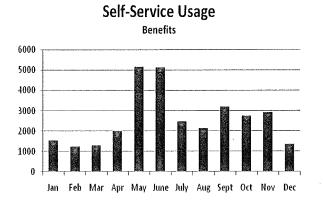


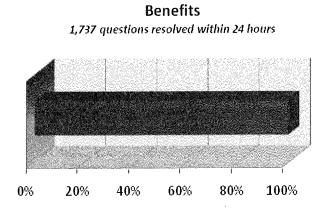
#### Summary of Veterans Benefits Division Online Support: January 1 –December 28, 2010

#### Highpoints:

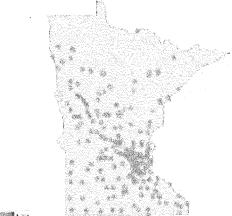
- > 32,605 contacts in year
- > Month at a Glance: 668 new visitors and 70 returning visitors in November.
- > 88% seeking personal assistance called the toll free number.





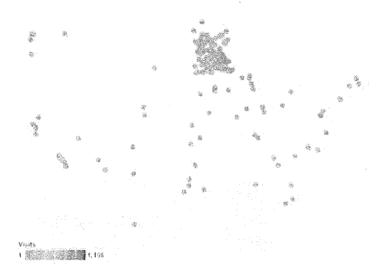


Contacts from Minnesota, across the USA and Worldwide

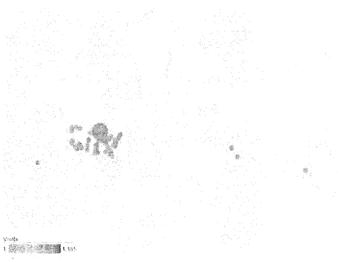


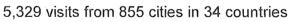
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State sent 10,803 visits from 241 cities









#### Personal Assistance

53% Healthcare
16% Federal Benefits
13% State Benefits
7% Financial Assistance
4% Burial Benefits
3% Veterans Preference
1% Education/OJT/Apprenticeship

#### Top Answers viewed on Website:

- 1. Determining My Benefits
- 2. County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO)
- 3. Minnesota Service C.O.R.E. (CORE)
- 4. Apply for Thank MN Troops (Minnesota Military Appreciation Fund)
- 5. Check and Verify my USDVA Benefit Status Through W.A.V.E
- 6. A to Z List of Resources Available to Veterans and Their Families
- 7. Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Financial & Educational Resources
- 8. Comprehensive List of Military Scholarships for Service Members,
- 9. Spouses and Dependents
- 10. Determining eligibility and claiming Market Value Exclusion
- 11. Overview of United States Department of Veterans Affairs Benefits
- 12. for Veterans -FACT SHEETS



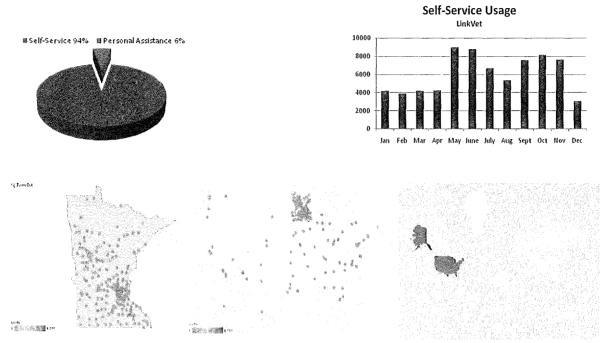
### LINKVET WEBSITE – GENERAL LINE

#### Summary of LinkVet Division Online Support: January 1 –December 28, 2010

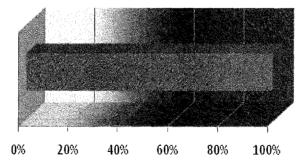
#### Highpoints:

- > 76,348 contacts in year
- > Month at a Glance: 2,788 new visitors and 831 returning visitors in November.
- > 87%seeking personal assistance called the toll free number.

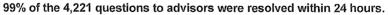




State sent 16,526 visits from 292 cities Country sent 22,989 visits from 2,210 cities 23,749 visits from 96 countries/territories







#### **Personal Assistance**

62% Benefits

- 29% General Information
- 6% Claims and Outreach
- 2% Education
- 1% Veterans Homes
- 1% Career Information and Resources
- <1% About Us

#### Top Answers viewed on Website

- 1. County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO)
- 2. Minnesota Service C.O.R.E. (CORE)
- 3. Presumptive Illnesses Related to Agent Orange
- 4. Comprehensive List of Military Scholarships for Service members, Spouses and Dependents
- 5. Check and Verify my USDVA Benefits Status Through W.A.V.E.
- 5. Vietnam Navy and Coast Guard Ships Recently Identified as Having Been Exposed to Agent Orange
- 6. Minnesota GI Bill
- 7. Finding Tribal Veterans Service Officers
- 8. Newsletters from the MDVA
- 9. Veterans Memorials, Monuments and Statues



#### Summary of Veterans Homes Online Support: January 1 – December 28, 2010

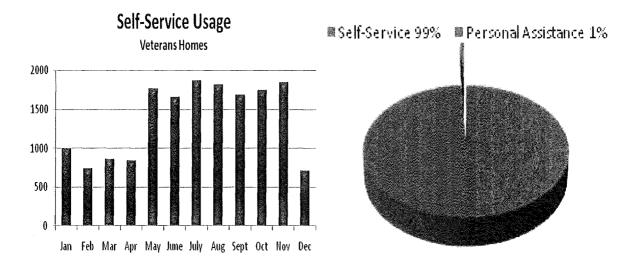
#### **Highpoints:**

- > 16,592 contacts in year
- > Month at a Glance: 467new visitors and 64 returning visitors in November.
- > Channel: 45%seeking personal assistance called the toll free number.

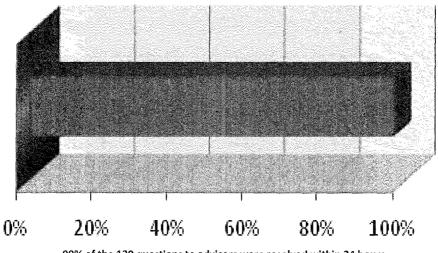


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Higher Education Veterans Homes



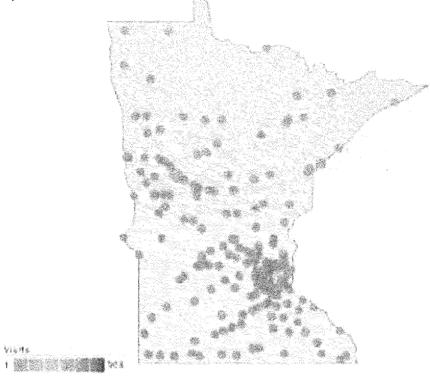
**Veterans Homes** 



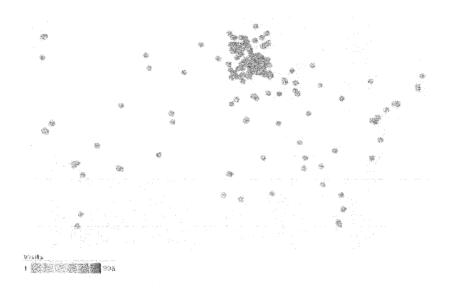


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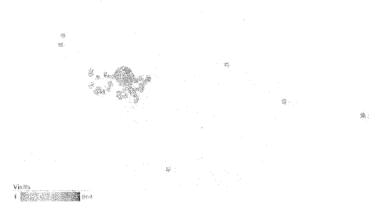
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Country sent 3,788 visits from 608 cities



3,850 visits from 658 cities in 30 countries

#### Personal Assistance

42% Minneapolis
27% Veterans Home General
11% Hastings
11% Silver Bay
5% Fergus Falls
4% Luverne

#### **Top Answers viewed on Website**

- 1. Veterans Homes Phone Directory -All homes and central office
- 2. Qualifying for Veterans Benefits
- 3. Cost of Care at a Minnesota Veterans Home
- 4. County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO)
- 5. Minnesota Veterans Homes -Minneapolis
- 6. Cost to the Resident at Veterans Homes
- 7. Finding Assisted Living for Veterans and Their Spouses
- 8. Services Minnesota Veterans Home Minneapolis
- 9. Photo Tour -Minnesota Veterans Home -Minneapolis
- 10. Asset Transfer Prior to Admission to a Veterans Home

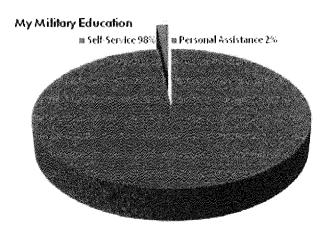


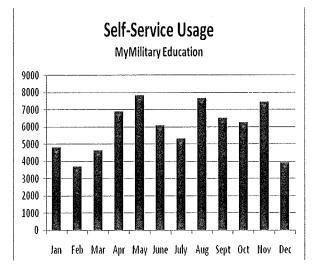
#### Summary of **My Military Education** Online Support: January 1, 2010–December 28, 2010

#### **Highpoints:**

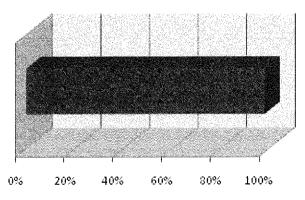
- > 71,951 contacts in year
- Month at a Glance: 7,361 new visitors and 858 returning visitors in November.
- > Channel: 65% seeking personal assistance called the toll free number.



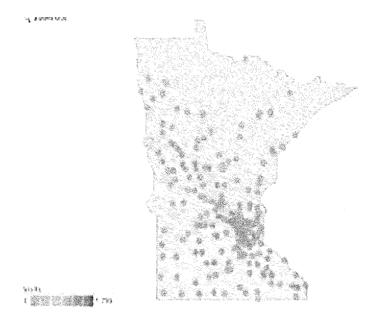




## My Military Education Solve Rate



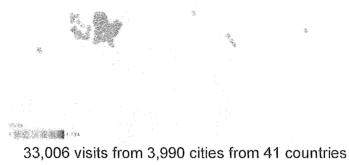
98% of the 1,220 questions to advisors were resolved within 24 hours



### State sent 10,803 visits from 241 cities



## Country sent 31,552 visits from 3,569 cities



#### Personal Assistance

- 56% Military Education Benefits and Finances
- 22% Career Information & Resources
- 8% Getting Ready for College
- <5% MNDVA Higher Education
- <5% Veteran' Program
- <5% Policies
- <5% Websites
- <5% Learning/Disability Services
- <5% Military Family Resources
- <5% Readjustment and Personal

#### **Top Answers Viewed on Website**

- 1. Post 9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) Application and information
- 2. Comprehensive List of Military Scholarships for Service members, Spouses and Dependents
- 3. Check and Verify my USDVA Benefits Status Through W.A.V.E.
- 4. Montgomery GI Bill Status: Withdrawing from or Failing a Class
- 5. Higher Education Veterans Programs Regional Coordinators Map
- 6. Obtaining Military Transcripts and Transfer Credits
- 7. Interactive Educational Benefits Flowchart
- 8. County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO)
- 9. Eligibility for the Montgomery GI Bill -Active Duty -Chapter 30
- 10. Minnesota Service C.O.R.E (CORE)

### **CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY**



Dear First Name,

The Veterans Linkage Line (LinkVet) is a toll free, one stop customer service line and website for all Minnesota Veterans and their families. The service connects Veterans and their families to important services and resources.

Have you used or had contact with LinkVet at 1.888.LINKVET (546-5838) or visited <u>www.MinnesotaVeteran.org</u>? If yes, please take a few moments to answer the following questions:

Please complete this survey by February 18th, 2011. The <u>Minnesota Department of</u> <u>Veterans Affairs</u> is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer. Please notify the <u>Webmaster</u> with any questions or technical problems. © 2011 Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System <u>Privacy Statement</u>

1) How often do you visit the www.MinnesotaVeteran.org (LinkVet) Web site?

- Very Often (52 or more times per year)
- ☐ Often (20-51 times per year)
- Sometimes (6-20 times per year)
- ✓ Very Seldom (1-5 times per year)

#### '392',1,1,2,'q\_392

2) Have you used the email and/or chat option at www.MinnesotaVeteran.org? If so, did you find that method of contact helpful/convenient?

└ Very Helpful/Convenient

Moderately Helpful/Convenient

Helpful/Convenient

└ Not Helpful/Convenient

Have not used email or chat options

'401',1,1,2,'q\_401

3) How satisfied are you with the information provided on the LinkVet Web site?

└ Very Satisfied

└ Moderately Satified

□ Satisfied

Moderately Dissatisfied

└ Very Dissatisfied

✓ Not Applicable

'393',1,1,2,'q\_393

4) How would you rate your satisfaction with the LinkVet staff professional knowledge and concern?

└ Very Satisfied

Moderately Satisfied

└ Moderately Dissatisfied

└ Very Dissatisfied

└ Not Applicable

'396',1,1,2,'q\_396

5) How accurate and complete was the information that you received from the LinkVet staff?

└ Very Satisfied

☐ Moderately Satisfied

└ Satisfied

└ Moderately Dissatisfied

Very Dissatisfied

Not Applicable

6) How would you rate your overall satisfaction with your experience(s) when information was requested from LinkVet?

✓ Very Satisfied

└ Moderately Satisfied

✓ Moderately Dissatisfied

└ Very Dissatisfied

└ Not Applicable

'400',1,1,2,'q\_40C

7) If we connected you with a resource via conference call, was connecting you (the customer) with a resource helpful?

└ Very Helpful

└ Moderately Helpful

✓ Helpful

└ Not Helpful

└ Not Applicable

'394',1,1,2,'q\_394

8) What can we do better? Please provide any suggestions/requests.



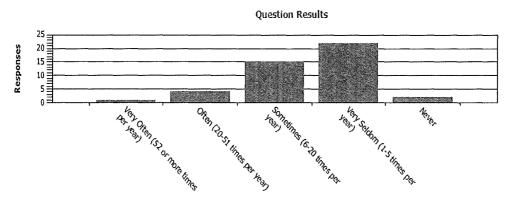
'402',1,4000,1,",'8

<u>S</u>ubmit

#### SURVEY RESULTS - RESENTLY SENT TO 2010 USERS

#### SURVEY DATA COLLECTED THROUGH 2-26-2011 SENT OUT TO UNIQUE IP ADDRESSES

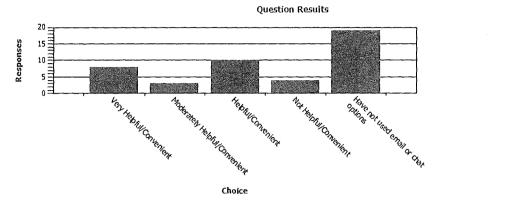
#### 1) How often do you visit the www.MinnesotaVeteran.org (LinkVet) Web site?





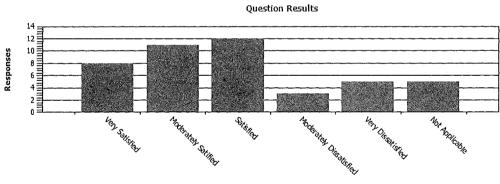
Response	# Responses
Very Often (52 or more times per year)	1
Often (20-51 times per year)	4
Sometimes (6-20 times per year)	15
Very Seldom (1-5 times per year)	22
Never	2
Total	44

#### 2) Have you used the email and/or chat option at www.MinnesotaVeteran.org? If so, did you find that method of contact helpful/convenient?



Response	# Responses	
Very Helpful/Convenient	8	
Moderately Helpful/Convenient Helpful/Convenient	3	
Not Helpful/Convenient	4	
Have not used email or chat options	19	
Total	44	

#### 3) How satisfied are you with the information provided on the LinkVet Web site?

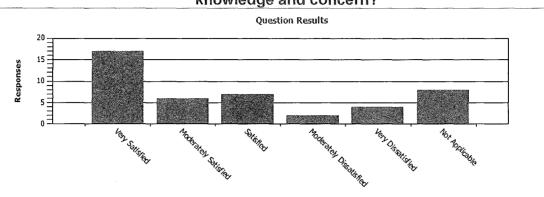


Choice

Response

# Responses

Very Satisfied	8
Moderately Satisfied	11
Satisfied	12
Moderately Dissatisfied	3
Very Dissatisfied	5
Not Applicable	5
Total	44



## 4) How would you rate your satisfaction with the LinkVet staff professional knowledge and concern?

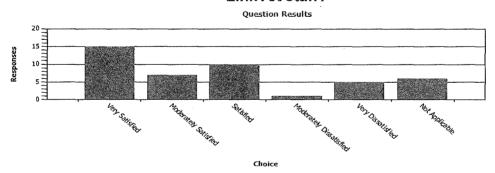


Response

#### # Responses

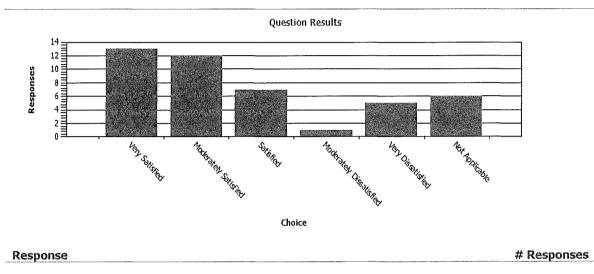
Very Satisfied	17
Moderately Satisfied	6
Satisfied	7
Moderately Dissatisfied	2
Very Dissatisfied	4
Not Applicable	8
Total	44

## 5) How accurate and complete was the information that you received from the LinkVet staff?



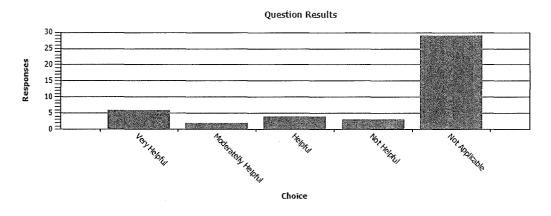
Response	# Responses	
Very Satisfied	15	
Moderately Satisfied	7	
Satisfied	10	
Moderately Dissatisfied	1	
Very Dissatisfied	5	
Not Applicable	6	
Total	44	

# 6) How would you rate your overall satisfaction with your experience(s) when information was requested from LinkVet?



Very Satisfied	13
Moderately Satisfied	12
Satisfied	7
Moderately Dissatisfied	1
Very Dissatisfied	5
Not Applicable	6
Total	

# 7) If we connected you with a resource via conference call, was connecting you (the customer) with a resource helpful?



Response	# Responses
Very Helpful	6
Moderately Helpful	2
Helpful	4
Not Helpful	.3
Not Applicable	29
Total	44

8) What can we do better? Please provide any suggestions/requests.



- At this time, I don't know of anything! It is just helpful to know this site is available to the vets!
- Continue to make it easy for our soldiers to connect to resources they're not aware of.
- Continue to provide top quality services and access to wonderful people, specifically Jennifer Arno. She rocks.
- Did not know about the website. I wished I knew more disabled veteran websites
- Doing well...
- Expand areas of current veteran's issues and resources. Establish the one stop shop for MN veteran's information and resources. Tell veterans how we assist our legislators to serve our community better.
- Great job they helped me find a website for employment and now I work for Delta Airlines thank you. Kurt
- Have not used it.
- I appreciate any and all of your site info. God Bless. Thank You, Paul W
- I can't think of anything right now. They answered my e-mail question within 24 hours.
- I don't think so.
- I FOUND THE PERSON TO BE VERY HELPFUL.
- I have been having a hard time finding information on the navy college fund that applies to the Montgomery GI bill, and whether or not the P911 would be a better option. Everyone I have spoken with has just said go to the website; however there is very limited information regarding the college fund. I would have liked to find more sources regarding this through link vet.
- I have not utilized you enough to make that assessment.
- I often find it hard to find answers to my questions.
- I would post a section of what benefits are available to VETs and if they have a Service connected Disability what benefits are available at different percentages. In EASY language...
- Information should be more detailed in terms of finding vital information easier
- Just keep doing what you are doing.

- Keep updating the information on the site
- Nothing. Service was good!
- Promote rural healthcare to Vets. We should be able to use our local hospitals.
- Provide good local contacts for USED mobility products/wheelchairs and scooters
- Thank you for making this service available
- Thanks for your work
- Viewed site for the first time, seems fine for now.
- Was disappointed that, though husband was ww11 vet, nothing of help applies to widows unless he was disabled! He is deceased cancer.
- When a veteran contacts this officer for help, outside of just giving them a referral, do a follow-up to see if they got any help
- You are doing fine there are a lot of veterans so you are doing a good job.
- You providing a valuable service and a good source of information.

#### Calls that were without Merit:

	Reference #	Summary	Date
1	100819- 000113	Non veteran called for MN State HR office, wanted to apply for Security Job. Found a number online and transferred the call.	8/19/2010
2	100914-	Non veteran trying to contact MN Health care/MA coverage/transferred to DHS	9/14/2010
4	000101 100916-	Incoming call from a fax machine	9/16/2010
5	000096 100930-	- Caller disconnected upon agent answering; reverse lookup showed British Columbia CA	9/30/2010
	000056		
6	101022- 000082	MN resident called about MN State covering 25% of flood damage. She was not a Veteran, nor was her husband. Referred her to her county office.	10/22/2010
7	101026- 000054	Individual (not veteran) calling about Minnesota Department of Unemployment Benefits	10/26/2010
8	101118- 000088	Non veteran requested an application for spousal support be mailed. Conference call to Hennepin County Government center information desk placed. Disconnected when caller was in contact with answering service.	11/18/2010
9	101123- 000099	Individual who said I'm definitely not in the right place sorry	11/23/2010
10	110105- 000013	Caller indicated he had dialed wrong number	1/5/2011
11	110112- 000094	Random question about out interest in shipping goods to a technology trade show in California	1/12/2011
12	110120- 000073	Caller hung up when greeted	1/20/2011
13	110214- 000058	Technology software vendor soliciting interest in products	2/14/2011

MN Department of Veterans Affairs Office: 20 West 12th Street St. Paul, MN 55155 651-296-2562

Prepared By: Kathleen Schwartz, Director of Veterans Benefits State of Minnesota – MN Department of Veterans Affairs <u>kathy.schwartz@state.mn.us</u> 651-757-1556

Alternate: Mike McElhiney, Legislative Director Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs <u>Mike.McElhiney@state.mn.us</u> 651-757-1530