**Facts and Figures**:

* The DAV (Disabled American Veterans) operates a transportation network of vans which provides transportation for veterans to the VA hospitals for medical appointments. This is part of the VA transportation program in Alabama and Mississippi. (Many veterans in the Mobile area use the VA facility in Biloxi, MS) The vans are driven by volunteers. In order for this network to run, we are mandated by our national organization to have Hospital Service Coordinators (HSCs) who help facilitate the coordination of the appointments of the veterans being transported so that they can be seen in time to receive a ride home on the van. The vans typically arrive at the VA facilities before 7:00am and leave around 3:00pm.
* The HSCs are part time employees of the DAV Department of Alabama. Without the HSCs, the DAV (National) would not allow us to run the van network.
* From July 2015 to June 2016, the DAV Department of Alabama transported 8150 veterans to VA facilities and traveled more than 293,845 miles doing it. Our volunteer van drivers logged more than 17,956 hours of volunteer time driving these veterans to their appointments.
* There are approximately 411,717 veterans in Alabama. More than 10% are female veterans (44,190).
* There are 19,243 DAV members in the state of Alabama. In addition, there are 1879 DAV Auxiliary members in Alabama.
* The DAV does not require a veteran to join our organization in order to receive assistance. We offer our services free with no regard to military rank, place of service or time in/of service.
* **The DAV Dept. of Alabama pays $128,001.03 for 6 Hospital Service Coordinators**. This includes employment tax. The workman’s compensation policy averages $630 per year. The DAV also allocates $2000/yr. for travel/administrative expenses to a Department Service Officer (a volunteer) who is in charge of the HSCs. We also pay $7000 for administrative cost to support our DAV National Service Officers (NSOs) to train our Chapter Service Officers (CSOs).
* **$25,131,165.00** – Revenue brought to the State of Alabama from **1699 new service connected claims** processed by the DAV Service Officer System.
* **$69,264,488.00** – Revenue brought to the State of Alabama from existing claims, including **1570** of **3852** veterans receiving increased benefits due to the DAV Service Officer System reviewing and assisting with claims.
* **$1,009,300.00** – Revenue brought to the State of Alabama from pension compensation, with **24** of **89** claims being new, processed by the DAV Service Officer System.
* **$5,838,278.00** – Educational Benefits paid.
* **$507,050.00** – DIC Benefits paid. (Dependency and Indemnity Compensation)
* **$102,648,917.61 – Revenue brought to the State of Alabama from the total of all DAV Service Functions. This is the economic impact the DAV Service Officer System has on the State of Alabama.**
* **This is a quality of life issue for veterans and could have influence on a BRAC decision.**
* Many states offer grants to Veterans’ Service Organizations (VSOs) as a method of directly assisting veterans and their families. The DAV is the only Congressionally-chartered VSO (since 1922). We are the only VSO allowed to have an office at VA medical facilities to assist veterans with their claims. The amount of claims processed annually by the DAV National Service Officers (NSOs) located at the VA Regional Offices here in Alabama surpasses the number of claims processed by all of Alabama’s County Veteran Service Officers.
* The VA medical facilities are not sufficiently manned to have the luxury of dedicating staff personnel for the responsibility of the transportation program. It rests fully with the DAV’s Hospital Service Coordinators.
* The DAV Department of Alabama is a volunteer service organization and does not receive federal funds. We rely on donations and fundraising to gain the money needed to help veterans in this state. The transportation program is only one of many ways that the DAV helps veterans. It’s important to keep it going. The economy has really hurt the amount of donations and fundraising efforts the DAV Department of Alabama has received in the last few years. Our resources are dwindling and we are not able to support the HSCs without some help. We are currently faced with the reality of having to cut the HSC program hours by at least 50% or possibly curtail the program for an undetermined period of time due to the lack of funding.

We need help!

Sources for this information:

Chad Richmond, DAV Dept. of Alabama Adjutant

Sam MacMaster, DAV Dept. of Alabama Treasurer

Deborah Walker, DAV Dept. of Alabama Director of Services

Michael Michelotti, DAV National Service Officer, Supervisor, District 5

Contact information for these people can be provided if you need further information.

Locations that our vans run out of:

Birmingham

Dothan

Enterprise

Foley

LaGrange, GA

Mobile

Opelika

Oxford

Sheffield

Valley