Open Government Plan Self Evaluation

NAME OF AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs

NAME OF EVALUATOR: Dr. Peter L. Levin, Senior Advisor to the Secretary and Chief Technology Officer

Formulating the Plan in the Open

Was *multidisciplinary collaboration* involved in formulating the plan?	G
Was *public consultation* involved in crafting the plan?	G pg. 23
Was the plan *published in an open format*, online, on time and on the open government page and with raw data?	G
Is there a plan for *continued public engagement* as part of the review and modification of the open government plan?	G

Transparency Strategic Action Plan

Does the plan contain a strategic action plan that *inventories agency high-value information* currently available for download?	G pgs. 10-13
Is there a plan to foster the *public's use of this information* to increase public knowledge and promote public scrutiny of agency services?	G pgs. 10-13
Does the action plan *identify high value information not yet available* and establish a reasonable timeline for publication online in open formats with specific target dates?	G pgs. 10-13
For agencies providing *public information in electronic format*: Is there a plan for timely publication of underlying data for public information maintained in electronic format?	G pgs. 10-13
Does the plan *identify key audiences for information and their needs*, and the agency endeavors to publish high-value information for each of those audiences in the most accessible forms and formats?	G pgs. 10-13
Is there a plan to demarcate *educational material* as free for re-use?	Y
Does the plan detail compliance with *transparency initiative guidance*, and where gaps exist, detailed steps the agency is taking and the timing to meet the requirements for each initiative:	
Data.gov	G pg .14
eRulemaking	G pg. 14
IT Dashboard	G pg. 15
Recovery.gov	G pg. 15
USAspending.gov	
Are there details of proposed actions (with clear milestones) to inform the public of significant actions and *business of the agency* (e.g. agency public meetings, briefings, press conferences, town halls)?	Y
Does the plan address existing *record management requirements* by providing:	
Website link	G pg. 16
Identifying and scheduling all electronic records	G pg. 16
Timely transfer of all permanently valuable records to the National Archives	G pg. 16
Does the plan address *FOIA* by providing:	
Website link?	G pg. 16
Staffing, organizational structure, and process for responding to FOIA requests?	
Assessment of capacity to analyze, coordinate and respond to requests in a timely manner?	G pg. 16
If there is a significant FOIA backlog, details on how the agency will reduce the backlog by 10% each year?	G pg. 16
Does the plan address *congressional requests* by providing a:	
Website link?	G pg. 16

Staffing, organizational structure, and process for responding to Congressional requests?	
Does the plan address declassification, if applicable by providing a:	NA
Website link?	
Where the public can learn about declassification programs, accessing declassified materials, and provide input about what types of information should be prioritized for declassification?	

Participation

Does the plan explain how the agency will improve participation, including steps the agency will take to revise its current practices to increase opportunities for public participation in and feedback on the agency's core mission activities (including proposed changes to internal management and administrative policies to improve participation)?	G pg. 20
Does the plan describe and provide links to websites for the public to engage in existing participatory processes?	G pg. 20
Are there proposals for new feedback mechanisms (including innovative tools and practices for public engagement)?	G pg. 21

Collaboration

Does the plan list steps the agency will take to revise its current practices to further collaboration:	
With other Federal and non-Federal government agencies? Including the use of technology platforms to this end?	G pgs. 22, 24 - 25
With the public? Including the use of technology platforms?	G pg. 24
With non-profit and private entities? Including technology platforms?	G pgs. 22, 24 - 25
Are there links to websites that describe existing collaboration efforts of the agency?	Y
Does the plan describe the Innovative methods (e.g. prizes and collaborations) to increase collaboration with the private sector, non-profit, and academic communities?	G pg. 27

Flagship Initiative

Does the plan include at least one specific flagship engagement?	G pg. 27
Does the description provide an overview of the initiative: how it addresses one or more of the three openness principles and how it aims to improve agency operations?	G pg. 27
Does it identify external partners for collaboration (if appropriate)?	G pg. 27
Is there a plan for public participation in contributing innovative ideas to the flagship?	G pg. 27
Does the description explain how the improvements to transparency, participation and/or collaboration will be measured?	Y
Does the flagship include a description of sustainability and room for improvement?	Y

COMMENTS:

Criteria Marked Yellow:

Is there a plan to demarcate *educational material* as free for re-use?

The Open Government Plan process illuminated the need for an advanced consolidated data infrastructure at VA. This recognition has lead to high level and senior leaders at VA forming a working group to tackle the questions: where is our data, who owns it and how are we going to package and distribute the data in a transparent manner. The result of the working group will be a plan that will, in part, demarcate education materials and data for free re-use.

Proposed actions (with clear milestones) to inform the public of significant actions and *business of the agency* (e.g. agency public meetings, briefings, press conferences, town halls)?

Our Open Government plan lacks the actions and milestones used to inform the public of our business actions in an open and transparent way. The solutions to the missing actions and milestones will be included in the next draft of our plan.

Are there links to websites that describe existing collaboration efforts of the agency?

Our team will add the websites that highlight the collaboration efforts of the VA in our next draft of the plan.

Does the description explain how the improvements to transparency, participation and/or collaboration will be measured? (Flagship Initiative)

VA's Flagship Initiative section does not explicitly state how improvements of transparency, participation and/or collaboration will be measured by our Innovation Competition. These measures will be developed included in the next draft of our plan.

Does the flagship include a description of sustainability and room for improvement?

Sustainability was not addressed because our Innovation Competitions themselves are finite; however, we will include lessons learned and areas for improvement with our Innovation Competitions when the plan is released.