

**THE JUSTICE-INVOLVED VETERANS NETWORK  
(JIVN)  
WORKING GROUP MEETING**

**THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CORRECTIONS**

**Program #16J5002  
June 23, 2016**

**Fahy G. Mullaney, Consultant**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The National Institute of Corrections over the last three-plus decades established and sustained a broad array of networks, which are designed to bring together people from a particular discipline within the larger criminal justice and corrections arenas. These networks have proven an effective means for professionals to share information, germinate ideas, provide a repository for information and educate stakeholders.

The central aim of this planning session was to engage the participants in writing a charter for the network. This charter would then serve as the “constitution,” containing such sections as the Vision, Mission, Membership Criteria and the like.

The National Institute of Corrections chose to establish this network as a cross-divisional one involving the Jails, Prisons and Community Services divisions within NIC. Stephen Amos, Chief of the Jails Division serves as the Lead for all veterans initiatives at NIC.

## **II. THE PARTICIPANTS**

Participants were identified and invited to “confer” with NIC regarding the formation of this network. They represent a wide spectrum of professional positions and all share a history with and commitment to working with justice –involved veterans and with the issues/structures which aid or impede their return to full health and productive participation in society.

The following persons were present in the offices of NIC for the meeting, except for two persons who were present via phone as noted in the list.

Elizabeth Burek, Rochester, NY  
Cindy Booth, Salem, ORF  
Gary Bell, Forsyth, GA  
Dane Collins, Columbus, GA  
Christopher Hendriks, Prince George, VA  
John DeMarco, Rochester, NY  
\*Joel Rosenthal, Veterans Admin.  
Nataki MacMurray, D.C.  
Glenn Watson, Jails Div., NIC  
Joseph Tony Stines, Prisons Div., NIC

Blair Myhand, Apex, NC  
Teri Prayer, Tumwater, WA  
John Darcy, Albany, NY  
Louis Quinones, San Antonio, TX  
Paulette Julien, Orlando, FL  
Bernie Edelman, Silver Spring, MD  
\*Jessica Blue-Howells, Veterans Admin.  
Stephen Amos, Jails Div., NIC  
Greg Crawford, Comm. Serv. Div., NIC  
Jim Cosby, Director, NIC  
Fahy Mullaney, Consultant/Facilitator

Note: \* Conferral Participant via telephone.

The passion, commitment and knowledge of the criminal justice system that fuels their investment in this work are evident in the list below. When asked “Why do you invest in this

work, invest more of yourself than your job description would require?" they gave the following responses.

- "Veterans are worthy of this effort."
- "It's the right thing to do."
- "It was done for me."
- "They put their lives on the line for us...we can do this in return."
- "We owe it to them."
- "A moral imperative."
- "We are in the people business."
- "We know what works."
- "I have a personal connection."
- "This helps save lives."
- "Got to be a better way to use resources."
- "It could have been me."
- "Redemption...focused."
- "When they are successful, we all are."

### **III. THE FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS**

The following statements were developed by the participants.

#### **The Vision for the Network**

*Our Justice-Involved Veterans Network has:  
Identified processes and best practices;  
Created public awareness on justice-involve issues;  
Thereby  
Improving the lives of justice-involved veterans*

#### **The Mission as a Network**

*We are a network of community, local, state, and federal partners  
Identifying and developing innovative and holistic approaches  
That assist justice-involved veterans.*

#### **The Membership Criteria for this Network**

Consideration should be given to:

- a. Veterans: those that are currently justice-involved or peers of those who are, such as those in a veterans association.
- b. State and Federal Administrators, Executives from Law Enforcement, Community Supervision Agencies, Courts, Jails, and Prisons.
- c. Other key stakeholders, e.g. BJA and other federal partners and associations.

Criteria for selection should include:

- a. Those with demonstrated knowledge and experience.
- b. Those who hold the position of knowledge unique to this issue.
- c. Those representing an association or agency who hold a position of authority within same.
- d. Those committed to taking information back to their association or discipline.
- e. Those committed to attend and make this network a priority.
- f. Those who will contribute to the “deliverables” that are generated at and between meetings.

#### **IV. THE OPERATIONAL DECISIONS**

Beyond creating the foundational statements, the participants developed a list of possible targets within the vast arena of “justice-involved veterans.” Then they set these in priority order. The six were chosen as top priority targets. These are viewed as “suggestive” not “determinative” for the future work of the Justice-Involved Veterans Network.

##### **A “First Draft” of High Priority Targets**

- a. Housing
- b. Medication-assisted therapies
- c. Veteran benefits clarification of information (What is suspended at incarceration, what not? How does a dishonorable discharge impact benefits? Need to do some myth busting.)
- d. Arm key players with the info from “c” above and point them to the tools and resources to ensure that veterans receive the benefits for which they are eligible.
- e. Widen availability by giving more vets access to veterans courts.
- f. Survey instrument for justice-involved veterans.

##### **KEY STRATEGIES FOR THE NETWORK**

In the course of the session the participants developed some fifteen ideas for action strategies. They then clustered these into three major strategy themes. Below this consultant has stated the “essence” of each of those clusters and listed it as a “Key Strategy.” The other ideas in each of the clusters have been included as possible goals, which when achieved, would mark progress on the larger strategy. Every idea offered has been included.

Key Strategy A - Advocate for and enable a data-informed approach.

Goals within this strategy:

- Improve data system –VRSS.
- Allow input, e.g. jail, VC, prison, law enforcement, probation, etc.
- Work with BJS, ASCA, ACA, and AJA to establish measurement and statistical analysis

Strategy B – Identify and promote crucial operating features of excellence.

Goals within this strategy

- Identify standards, guidelines, policies, promising and best practices, evidence-based practices.

- Design streamlined policies to ensure services and benefits are delivered to justice-involved veterans.
- Promote ways to unify resources; e.g. via community partners, information sharing, in re-entry housing, etc.
- Design a “first responder” prototype to identify justice-involved veterans

Strategy C – Encourage communication, coordination and commitment

Goals within this strategy:

- Disseminate information on the success of veterans courts.
- Inform law-makers and drive decisions at federal, state and local levels.
- Develop a multi-faceted approach to include webcasts, conferences, white papers across all disciplines.
- Promote and exhibit key values: coordination, collaboration, unity, and commitment from all stakeholders....start to finish.

**The Next Steps for the Network**

To ensure that momentum is sustained, the participants identified the actions that needed to be taken over the course of the next 5-6 months.

<u>WHAT ACTION?</u>	<u>WHO WILL DO IT?</u>	<u>BY WHEN?</u>
1. Prepare a report of this meeting and its products	Fahy Mullaney	June 30
2. Report of meeting is disseminated to participants	NIC	July 5
3. Hold dialogue with federal partners about who might join	NIC	
4. Set up online forum with all participants in this session	NIC	July 30
5. Participants report to their assoc, agency, etc.	Each Member	
6. Letter sent to each participant acknowledging their involvement	NIC	
7. Additional exchange of information among participants	(See #4 above)	
8. Hold next meeting of the network	NIC	Fall, 2016

# **THE CHARTER FOR THE JUSTICE-INVOLVED VETERANS NETWORK**

## **THE VISION**

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