Training Managers/Training Coordinator
National Conference Call Minutes

September 22, 2015

2 – 3:40 p.m. Eastern Time

Agenda items:

- Jacqueline Simpson and Rashaan Thomas – NWQ
- Lauren Sylvia – VBMS Release 9.1 Functionality Training Plan
- Jason Lewis – WARTAC Overview and TMS Procedures for Training Managers
- Darrian Ward – EDT's Virtual Supervisors Training (VST)
- Lamoyd Figures – VR&E New Counselor Training
- Training Manager Announcements

Presentations:

Jacqueline Simpson and Rashaan Thomas

Ms. Thomas presented information on the upcoming release and training on the National Work Queue (NWQ). You can contact the NWQ team by sending an inquiry to your Change Management Agent (CMA) or visit the NWQ VA Pulse site at https://www.vapulse.net/groups/national-work-queue You may also ask questions in the transformation chat room, and RO leadership may submit inquires to our corporate mailbox at VAVBAWAS/CO/NWQ

- NWQ created a slide deck which you may use at your station for visual management. Options for distribution include presentation on television at your RO, a slide show as a pop-up on the computer, or printing the slides and hanging them throughout your station.
- NWQ will roll-out to eight regional offices in October 2015, followed by the remainder of the nation in November 2015.
- Did you know the deferral process will now be available at all phases of the claim process?
    - Currently the deferral process only covers the RFD phase. In the future it will cover all claim phases once we roll out NWQ.
- Did you know VBA will provide training to employees and supervisors prior to the implementation of the NWQ?

Question: Where can we find the slides? Will they be uploaded on the TM SharePoint?
Response: They were sent out last week to the CMAs and Directors, and have been uploaded on the NWQ VA Pulse site. We do not have access to the TM SharePoint, however, please feel free to upload them.

Question: When will the training materials be posted? Will the training be online?
Response: Training will be provided in conjunction with VBMS and OFO. Invites have started to go out. The training will all be online.

Question: Do we have to coordinate this training?
Response: There are two emails coming out regarding training – one for workload management training at the supervisor level and the other for training on the new deferral process.

Question: Will the training for the employees count toward the Compensation Service National Training Curriculum?
Response: Crystal Robinson-Garth will look into this and provide a response on the TM SharePoint.

Question: Is it the intent for the TM or the CM to facilitate this training?
Response: The forthcoming emails will provide very clear instructions on who will be facilitating and who the intended audience is for both trainings.

Question: What was the title of the email?
Response: Regional Office National Work Queue Visual Management (sent on 9/16/15).

Lauren Sylvia

Ms. Sylvia presented updates on the training plan in support of VBMS Release 9.1 and the NWQ.

- VBMS R9.1 Superuser Delta Training
  - Tuesday October 6, 2015
    - 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. – North Atlantic and Southeast districts
    - 2-4 p.m. – Midwest, Continental, and Pacific districts
- Workload Management Training
  - Wednesday October 7, 2015
    - 2 Sessions, time TBD
- Several links were provided for the VBMS Intranet site for training materials to support the upcoming training sessions. These resources are highly recommended to the field in preparation for the training and use on the job.

Question: Are any of the old VBMS training classes still available for new employees?
Response: That training is out of date. VBMS does provide user guides, job aids and FAQ sheets on the VBMS Intranet site as a reference for new employees. Challenge training also provides VBMS training to new employees.

Question: Will the training be updated?
Response: We are not sure at this time. Updates in training are dependent on future funding.

Question: So we should no longer be assigning new employees the VBMS training?
Response: Correct, the only curriculum currently maintained in VBMS is for Superusers.

Jason Lewis

Mr. Lewis provided an overview of the Warrior Training Advancement Course (WARTAC) Challenge Program and provided a list of TM responsibilities once a WARTAC graduate is hired at their RO.

- Compensation Service notifies the TM that the WARTAC graduate's TMS account is now in their local domain.
- The TM edits the employee's TMS profile in Profile Maintenance to ensure all information is accurate.
- The TM maintains the employee's TMS account and verifies the PAID database feed does not create a second account. If the user has two TMS accounts, the TM merges them.
- The TM places the employee into the 'WARTAC Graduate Hires' TMS Class (VBA-387).
    - This action will automatically assign the VSR one-time mandated and FY16 VSR mandated curricula. Employees will then be centrally tracked as trainee VSRs and added to NTC classes when their trainee status ends.

Question: I am running into problems with WARTAC graduates being marked inactive overnight. Should we not add them to our own domains until they are officially on the payroll?
Response: The accounts should stay active in a continuous flow. The Comp Service TMS administrator will change the graduate's domain in TMS once they are hired at an RO. At that time the RO Training Manager edits the file that has already been placed in their domain. If you come across an account that is inactive, please email Jason so he can investigate.

Question: How are we informed that we have a WARTAC graduate?
Response: Once the graduate interviews with the RO and accepts an offer of employment through HR, the WARTAC program staff will notify you.

Question: What is the post graduate success rate been thus far? Also, are there follow-on criteria relative to conducting 2nd level reviews of their work before releasing them to work independently?
Response: To date there are very few graduates in place. We are working on implementing a tracking system via ASPEN data as it is important to the program to know how they perform over time. We do not dictate any follow on criteria specific to WARTAC graduates. The RO should follow normal procedures for mentoring and releasing graduates to work independently.

Question: Do you put them in a VSR class or Challenge class, or just the VBA-387?
Response: WARTAC graduates need only be placed in class VBA-387.

Darrian Ward

Mr. Ward spoke about the new Virtual Supervisors Training (VST).

- VST is a 22-hour web-based training designed for first time supervisors who were not able to attend the Supervisor and Management Training (SMT) course in residence, due to the cancelation of FY15 classes in support of the national surge.
- This training does not replace the New Supervisor Soft Skills Training (NSSST).
- Future development is aimed at incorporating VST and NSSST as part of the SMT resident program.
- The course ID for assigning VST is VBA-582.

Lamoyd Figures

Mr. Figures provided a brief update on VR&E New Counselor Training (NCT).

- On September 2nd, VR&E sent an email via OFO to all districts regarding NCT and VRC Foundational training updates.
- VR&E officers will contact TMs with the names of newly hired VRCs. In turn TMs will submit those names to the new VR&E corporate mailbox, the address of which is located in the email sent by OFO.
- Training is scheduled for November 2-6, 2015.
- Please submit names of trainees to the VR&E mailbox by October 23rd.

Announcements:

Crystal Robinson-Garth

Ms. Robinson-Garth had some announcements regarding NTC for Compensation Service.

- As mentioned in the VSCM bulletin this year we will be releasing Comp Service NTC information in a new manual, M21-3, which is expected to be released prior to October 1, 2015.
- FY16 training hours will consist of 10 hours of Comp Service mandated and 70 hours of station-determined training.
- FY15 mandated training hours were reviewed, and in support of the agency goals, the mandated training for VSR will be 9.5 hours and RVSR 12 hours[1] that have already been released. If you have employees that have not yet completed the mandated training for FY15, please make sure they do so in the near future.
- Although consistency studies are required, those hours will not count toward the mandated hours for FY15.
- Skills Certification update:
  - Currently awaiting the contract award. Once it has been awarded, we will post the Skills Cert schedule.

Question: So there will there no longer be a Fast Letter, it will now be part of the manual?
Response: That is correct. By direction of the USB, we will not be releasing anymore Fast Letters, which resulted in the creation of M21-3.

Question: Will the report templates be updated showing the reduced hours for FY15?
Response: Yes, Camber is working on those modifications.

Question: For FY16, will it be 70 hours of anything from the VBA Learning Catalog like we did before?
Response: We encourage you to work with your quality review supervisor to determine what your station's needs are for the 70 hours of station-determined training.

Question: When someone misses a consistency study, can we have those follow-up training sessions activated so mandated training can be completed?

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[1] The 11.25 hours of RVSR FY15 mandated training originally noted during the call was corrected to 12 hours, and verified by Crystal Robinson-Garth after the call.

Response: We are currently working on getting those training sessions activated. We will notify you once they are available.

Question: Does the training topic have to have a TMS number, or can it be an external event?
Response: You will have to follow the same guidelines in making sure the training is Comp Service approved. If you have something you want to present and receive NTC credit for, please submit it to our mailbox for review and we will make that determination.

Question: Are there plans to update the training materials and assessments?
Response: Absolutely, this is a work in progress. Please keep in mind we are a small staff, but we are focused on meeting those needs. If you have updated training at the local level, we encourage you to submit that for review so we can get that out to all stations.

Question: With an emphasis on employee development, will professional development courses be included as station-selected training?
Response: It is important to know that Compensation Service training is technical training that is needed to perform that specific job. We encourage you to work with your employees on professional development, however, that would fall under EDT. It would not count toward the 80 hours of technical training required by Comp Service.

Question: Is there any more talk about competency-based training?
Response: Yes, it is still being developed, and we will provide you with an update once we have it.

Question: Just to be sure, the VSRs are only being required to have 9.5 hours and the RVSR/DROs 12 hours[1], and we are not concerned about the 20 hours required at the beginning of the year?
Response: Yes, those will be the mandated hours for FY15.

Question: Will there be a Coach Skills Certification test?
Response: Please refer to the OFO email sent to the district offices on 9/11/15.

Question: When will the FY16 Challenge schedule be released?
Response: It has already been released. OFO sent it out to the district offices. We will make sure we get that posted on the Comp Service training page.

Question: Will we be required to submit the full year's-worth of training topics at one time?
Response: You will be required to submit a training plan as in the past.

Question: Can the assessment tests be suspended until the training is updated? It is difficult to change training and then test on old material.
Response: We are updating assessments as training is updated. If you are updating training locally, please submit that for review so we can update the assessment based on those new materials.

Question: Once the consistency study is complete, can it be put back up for the rest of the year to make sure all staff has the opportunity to complete the study or take the refresher training?
Response: The Quality Review team within Comp Service takes the lead with the consistency studies. Crystal will follow up with them and try to get an answer.

Question: Can TPSS modules be used for review only?
Response: Could not answer at this time. Crystal will take this back as an action item.

Robert Reiher

- Please join VA Pulse and participate in the VBA TM group at www.vapulse.net
- Please reach out for help as needed to Kyle or Robert.

Ariadna Crawford

Ms. Crawford gave an update on training manger projects that are currently in progress.

- Position Description (PD)
  - Currently in Classification System. Once that is complete, EDT, OFO, and the Union will work together toward implementation.
- Competencies for the Training Managers
  - An IPT has convened and is working on validating competencies for training managers.
  - By the end of October, EDT will have a program of instruction for the TMs to assist with their training and job performance. This will be especially useful for new TMs.
- 2016 Training Manager Symposium
  - Currently in budgeting.
  - **Kathy Smith-Sasse** – The goal will be to make this symposium more interactive (i.e. hands on computer/internet access, practical experience).
  - Please email Kathy with suggestions for location, including contact information, by the end of the week.

Closing Remarks:

For additional TM support in any area, please feel free to contact Ariadna, Christy, or a fellow TM, and remember to check the TMRC and TM SharePoint regularly.

The next TM/TC National Conference Call is October 27, 2015
2 – 3 p.m. Eastern Time