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**Veterans  
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# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VA ACCEPTING BIDS ON PROTOCOL FOR STUDY OF WOMEN VIETNAM VETERANS

The Veterans Administration has issued the request for proposal (RFP) to prospective bidders for development of a protocol that will be used to conduct a study of possible long-term health effects among women who served in the military in Vietnam.

Most studies of health problems among Vietnam veterans have relied on information about men since a relatively small number of women served in Vietnam. This meant that for statistical purposes women veterans could not be identified with exposure to specific environmental hazards. The VA study proposes to examine the entire Vietnam experience -- not specific incidents -- and its relationship to the health of women veterans.

In the RFP, VA is asking for a review of the scientific literature published to date and a report on any gender-specific health problems associated with trauma and combat experiences, phenoxy herbicides (including Agent Orange), chemicals, medications and environmental hazards.

The contractor also will be required to develop a questionnaire and methods and procedures for identifying and tracing an adequate number of women veterans for the study and conduct a pilot test to evaluate these proposals.

Prior to submitting the final products to VA, the contractor will be expected to convene a panel of scientists and recognized experts to review the proposed study design and protocol.

The largest group of women military personnel in Vietnam was the Army Nurse Corps, followed by the Women's Army Corps, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps. Because there is no central file of women military personnel who served in Vietnam, VA has compiled a preliminary roster of women Vietnam veterans in collaboration with the U.S. Army and Joint Services Environmental Support Group. The roster will be made available to the contractor, as well as the protocols of a number of health studies of male Vietnam Era veterans.

The study was mandated by Public Law 99-272, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985, which was enacted April 7, 1986.

Responses to the RFP must be received by VA no later than August 28, 1986. The protocol must be completed within nine months from the date the contract is awarded.

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August 13, 1986

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