

Veterans Data Validation & Rationalization Act (VDVRA)

Section 1. Findings & Purpose

(a) Findings. Congress finds that:

1. Critical VA decisions regarding access to care, performance, staffing, and funding rely on reports and datasets that are frequently unvalidated, inconsistently defined, and duplicative.
2. Prior oversight has repeatedly identified data quality and governance weaknesses that impair transparency and accountability.
3. Absent a centralized inventory and validation program, VA leadership cannot reliably distinguish accurate metrics from misleading outputs, undermining trust and harming veterans and staff.

(b) Purpose. The purposes of this Act are to—

1. establish a centralized, time-bound initiative to inventory and validate VA reports and data assets;
2. certify the accuracy, completeness, timeliness, and reproducibility of high-impact reports;
3. assign clear ownership and stewardship for each data asset;
4. implement transparent, recurring reporting to Congress and the public; and
5. transition validated practices into permanent VA data governance.

Section 2. Definitions

For the purposes of this Act:

1. **Data asset** means any dataset, database, table, extract, data mart, warehouse, or structured file maintained or used by VA for analysis, reporting, or decision-making.
 2. **Report** means any recurring analytical output (e.g., SSRS, Power BI, Tableau, Excel, PDF) used to monitor or evaluate performance, operations, quality, access, finance, compliance, or clinical outcomes.
 3. **Source system** means any operational system of record from which data are originated or first captured.
 4. **Data owner** means the VA executive or program office with business accountability for a data asset or report, including its authorized use and policy interpretation.
 5. **Data steward** means the designated individual responsible for day-to-day data quality, metadata, documentation, and change control for a data asset or report.
 6. **Validation** means documented evaluation of a data asset or report against defined criteria (accuracy, completeness, timeliness, consistency, integrity, documentation, and reproducibility), resulting in a score and certification status.
 7. **Data lineage** means documentation of the end-to-end flow of data from source system through transformations to final report output.
 8. **Enterprise report** means a report distributed beyond a single facility or VISN and relied upon by VA Central Office or multiple program offices for oversight or performance assessment.
 9. **Critical report** means any report used for congressional reporting, public reporting, executive performance evaluation, funding decisions, or veteran access to care decisions.
 10. **Catalog** means a searchable, authoritative inventory of data assets and reports, including required metadata specified in this Act.
 11. **Certification** means a formal designation that a report meets or exceeds the validation thresholds established in Section 5.
 12. **Recertification** means periodic re-validation required under Section 5(f).
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Section 3. Establishment of the Data Validation Task Force

(a) Establishment. Not later than 60 days after enactment, the Secretary shall establish a **Data Validation Task Force** (“Task Force”) housed within and chaired by the VA Chief Data Officer (CDO).

(b) Composition. The Task Force shall include:

1. Chair: CDO (or designee GS-15).
2. Members: not fewer than—
 - (A) three GS-14/15 analytics leads from distinct program offices;
 - (B) three OIT data engineering/DBA representatives;
 - (C) three field representatives (e.g., facility/VISN analysts) with demonstrated reporting experience;
 - (D) one representative each from Quality/Patient Safety, Finance, and Access/Scheduling.
3. Advisors (non-voting): Office of Inspector General and Government Accountability Office liaisons for coordination (no operational access to deliberative materials beyond existing authorities).

(c) Independence and Authorities. The Task Force shall have authority to—

1. obtain timely access to metadata, code, documentation, and sample data necessary for validation, subject to privacy and security laws;
2. require program offices to designate data owners and stewards;
3. set standards, issue validation guidance, and approve certification decisions; and
4. elevate non-compliance to the Deputy Secretary.

(d) Duration. The Task Force shall operate for three years from establishment, unless extended by the Secretary, and shall execute the transition plan required in Section 8.

Section 4. Mandatory Inventory

(a) Scope. The Task Force shall compile an enterprise inventory of:

1. all **enterprise and critical reports**;
2. all **data assets** (including SQL tables, marts, and warehouses) supporting such reports; and
3. associated **source systems** and **lineage**.

(b) Initial Deliverable. Within 180 days of establishment, the Task Force shall publish to the Catalog an initial inventory covering at least—

1. 100 percent of critical reports; and
2. the top 25 enterprise reports by usage or impact, as identified by the CDO.

(c) Required Metadata. For each item, the Catalog shall record at minimum:

1. title, unique identifier, and current version;
2. owning office and accountable **data owner**;
3. designated **data steward** and contact;
4. business purpose and decisions supported;
5. source systems and refresh cadence;
6. transformation logic location (e.g., code repo link) and data lineage map;
7. security/privacy constraints;
8. usage metrics (audience, frequency);
9. validation status, score, date, and next recertification; and
10. redundancy/overlap notes (if any).

(d) Updates. The Catalog shall be updated within 30 days of any material change to ownership, logic, or usage.

(e) Non-Compliance. Program offices failing to provide required information within prescribed timelines shall be listed in the quarterly report to the Deputy Secretary, with corrective actions and due dates.

Section 5. Validation Program

(a) Criteria. The Task Force shall validate reports and data assets using standardized criteria and weights totaling 100 points:

1. **Accuracy (30)** — values reflect true underlying records when re-computed from source; sampling error tolerances defined by the Task Force.
2. **Completeness (15)** — required records and fields are present for the defined population and period.
3. **Timeliness (10)** — refresh cadence meets decision needs; latency documented and acceptable.
4. **Consistency (10)** — results are stable across environments and over time given identical inputs.
5. **Integrity (10)** — lineage and transformations are controlled; code versioned; controls prevent unauthorized changes.
6. **Reproducibility (15)** — an independent analyst can replicate outputs from documented instructions and inputs.
7. **Documentation & Definitions (10)** — clear metric definitions, data dictionary, and user guidance exist and are up to date.

(b) Scoring & Status.

- **Certified (Green):** ≥ 85 points and no individual criterion < 70 .
- **Provisionally Certified (Yellow):** 70–84 points, remediation plan approved within 60 days.
- **Not Certified (Red):** < 70 points or material defects; report must display disclaimer language until remediated.

(c) Sampling & Audit. Validation shall include:

1. code review of transformations/queries;
2. source-to-target record checks on risk-based samples;
3. cross-report consistency checks for overlapping metrics.

(d) Change Control. Material changes to a Certified report's logic, definitions, or source inputs require re-validation prior to release, or display of a provisional status badge.

(e) Prioritization. The first-year validation queue shall include all **critical reports** and the **top 25 enterprise reports**; subsequent years shall expand by risk and usage.

(f) Recertification. Certified reports shall be re-validated at least **annually**, or sooner if triggered by material change, defect, or source system upgrade.

(g) User Feedback. The Task Force shall maintain a mechanism for end users to submit suspected defects; validated defects shall trigger remediation timelines and appear in the quarterly dashboard.

Section 6. Transparency

(a) Quarterly Dashboard to Congress. Not later than 120 days after establishment, and quarterly thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs a dashboard including—

1. counts of inventoried reports and data assets by status;
2. validation scores and certification statuses for critical and enterprise reports;
3. remediation backlogs and timelines;
4. non-compliance notices and resolutions; and
5. material changes since prior quarter.

(b) Public Summary. A public-facing version of the dashboard shall be posted on VA's website each quarter, excluding sensitive or protected information, and shall display at minimum: titles, purposes, certification status (Green/Yellow/Red), last validation date, and next recertification due date.

Section 7. Staffing & Funding

(a) Staffing. The Task Force shall be staffed at a level sufficient to meet the timelines of this Act, including at minimum:

1. **1 GS-15 Director** (Task Force Executive Director);
2. **4 GS-14 Leads** (Validation Lead, Inventory & Catalog Lead, Data Engineering Lead, Field Integration Lead);
3. **8–12 GS-13/14 Analysts/Engineers** (validation, lineage, QA, automation); and
4. **Detail opportunities** (120–180 days) for facility/VISN analysts to support validation sprints, credited toward professional development.

(b) Funding. There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for three fiscal years to execute inventory, validation, catalog licensing or development, training, and reporting. The Secretary may reprogram funds consistent with law to meet the requirements of this Act.

(c) Training. The CDO shall provide standardized training and playbooks for data owners and stewards, including metric definition templates and validation procedures.

Section 8. Sunset and Sustainment

(a) Transition Plan. Not later than 24 months after establishment, the Task Force shall submit a transition plan to the Secretary detailing—

1. migration of ongoing responsibilities to permanent governance under the CDO;
2. maintenance of the Catalog and dashboard;
3. annual recertification workflows; and
4. integration with enterprise change control.

(b) Sunset. The Task Force shall sunset 36 months after establishment upon certification by the Deputy Secretary that—

1. all critical reports and the top 25 enterprise reports are Certified or Provisionally Certified with active remediation;
2. the Catalog is operational and updated; and
3. permanent governance roles (owners, stewards, review boards) are in place.

(c) Continuity. All certifications, remediation plans, and open validation actions shall continue under permanent governance without lapse.