



HEALTH AFFAIRS

TRICARE Management Activity  
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs)



# Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program

## Annual Report Fiscal Year 1999

The Office of the Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP) is pleased to publish its Fiscal Year 1999 (FY99) Annual Report. In FY99, the CAP office focused on disseminating information about its services throughout the Department of Defense (DoD). Formal presentations, CAP information packages, newsletters, videos, and media articles were provided, and 2,807 requests for accommodations were processed during the fiscal year.

DoD established CAP in 1990 to improve accessibility for people with disabilities throughout DoD. CAP provides assistive technology and other accommodations to eliminate a wide variety of barriers for people with disabilities who use DoD facilities or who participate in DoD programs. CAP also funds interpreters, readers, and personal assistants when employees require their services for long-term training sessions (two days or more).

Thank you for expressing interest in CAP. If you have any specific questions related to the functions of CAP, please feel free to contact me at (703) 681-3976 (Voice/TTY).

Dinah F. B. Cohen,  
Director  
Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program

Attachment:  
As stated

## MISSION

The Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP) office serves as the primary Department of Defense (DoD) program office responsible for providing computer and electronic accommodations to individuals with disabilities in the DoD civilian workforce. It is CAP's mission to: provide assistive technology and accommodations to ensure people with disabilities have equal access to the information environment and opportunities in DoD. CAP assists DoD activities in complying with Federal Laws, which require office automation and telecommunications systems to be accessible to persons with disabilities. Also, the CAP office helps DoD components to fully integrate assistive equipment requirements with DoD's information resources management processes of planning, programming, budgeting and acquisitions.

CAP serves the civilian work force within the DoD components, which includes the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and activities supported administratively by OSD, the Military Departments, Defense Agencies, the Inspector General (DoD), the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Unified and Specified Commands, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, the National Guard Bureau, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, the Office of the Civilian Health and Medical Programs of the Uniformed Services, and the DoD Dependent Schools.

## GOALS

The goals of CAP are to:

- Assist DoD components in providing assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.
- Support the DoD goal of increasing representation of employees with targeted disabilities to 2 percent of the civilian workforce.
- Assist DoD to comply with PL 99-506, The Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- Assist DoD to comply with PL 100-542, The Telecommunications Accessibility Enhancement Act of 1988.
- Assist DoD to comply with other Federal Public Laws that support access for people with disabilities in Federal government.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

### **Sponsorship**

CAP is an initiative of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) (OUSD(P&R)). It is a joint venture under the leadership of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Management and Policy) and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) (ASD(HA)). The Executive Agent for CAP is located within the office of the Executive Director, TRICARE Management Activity (TMA), a field activity under the direction of the ASD(HA).

OUSD(P&R) provides the CAP office with program guidance and assists in establishing a DoD environment that supports the hiring, placement and advancement of persons with disabilities. TMA is responsible for the execution of program goals and objectives. Execution includes procuring computer and electronic assistive equipment, developing and executing an acquisition strategy that maximizes resource utilization, reporting on accommodations provided and program successes, and coordinating with OUSD(P&R) and component coordinators in the military departments to ensure effective program execution.

### **Component Coordinators**

A Component Coordinator is designated in each activity to serve as the action officer to implement policy for computer and telecommunications support of persons with disabilities within the activity. A Component Coordinator is responsible for disseminating information within his/her activity and for coordinating accommodation requests for employees.

### **DoD Personnel**

The responsibilities of individual DoD personnel include making needs assessments that document their accommodation requirements and any preferred solutions, and coordinating with their Component Coordinators and the CAP office to clarify requirements and achieve feasible solutions.

### **Background**

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, requires the Department of Defense (DoD) to accommodate the disabilities of its employees and to make its programs and activities accessible not only to employees, but also to other people with disabilities including military retirees, military family members, and members of the public.

President Clinton's administration has placed strong emphasis on implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and on making the Federal government a model of equity. The Congress recently amended the Rehabilitation Act to make ADA employment standards apply to Federal employment. On March 13, 1998, the President signed Executive Order 13088, "Increasing the Employment of Adults with Disabilities." This Executive Order reinforces the Administration's commitment to the employment of disabled individuals. The

CAP office strongly supports these objectives by providing assistive equipment and other accommodations, as required by law.

CAP procures accommodations to increase accessibility for persons with disabilities throughout DoD in accordance with Federal regulations. To obtain accommodations from CAP, DoD employees with disabilities and DoD managers submit requests to the CAP office. After the request is reviewed for completeness and compatibility with any existing systems, an accommodation is procured for the requester.

### **FY99 Accomplishments**

The CAP office filled 2,807 requests for accommodations in Fiscal Year 1999 (FY99), a 9% increase over the previous year. CAP developed and expanded accommodation related projects. The following list summarizes current projects, level of effort and accommodation totals for FY99.

#### CAP Technology Evaluation Center

On August 14, 1995, the Honorable William Perry, Secretary of Defense, hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the opening of the new Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program Technology Evaluation Center (CAPTEC) in Room 2A259 of the Pentagon. Since its opening, CAPTEC has become a vital component of the CAP program. The CAPTEC has a wide variety of assistive technology available for demonstration and evaluation. Employees and supervisors who are searching for appropriate accommodations can visit CAPTEC and gain hands on experience with various equipment options. In support of our goals promoting CAP to DoD and federal communities and educating managers on new technology, CAPTEC sponsored the following highly publicized demonstrations:

- National Disability Employment Awareness Month, 18th Annual Awards Ceremony Open House: Demonstrations of CAPTEC assistive technology
- Network Solutions for Accessible Telecommunication Devices: Representatives from NXI Communications, Inc. displayed the network teletypewriter (TTY) system. Other communication solutions such as Video Teleconferencing (VTC) and assistive listening devices were demonstrated.
- Creating a Healthy Work Environment: Display of alternative access devices, including a voice recognition system, ergonomic keyboards, alternative mouse devices, wrist rests, and supports. Ergonomic information from the Job Accommodations Network (JAN) and the US Army Center for Health Promotions and Preventative Medicine were on display.
- Tactile Electronics Day: Assistive technology for individuals who are blind or have low vision were on display, including the SuperBraille 80, a laptop computer with a Braille terminal.
- Technology and the Aging Work Force: Demonstration of assistive technology including Zoomtext software, large button telephone and hand held magnifiers. Representatives from American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) brought information handouts.
- Back to School: Representatives from the National Military Family Association brought handouts. Technology for children with hearing, visual, dexterity and cognitive disabilities were demonstrated.

Since October 1, 1998, approximately 2,100 individuals visited the Technology Evaluation Center in the Pentagon.

CAPTEC personnel also participated in exhibits at DoD and federal government conferences and events. The following is a list of CAPTEC demonstrations and exhibits:

- Air Force Disabilities Services Show, Washington DC
- Interagency Disability Educational Awareness Showcase (IDEAS), Washington, DC
- Leadership, Enrichment and Disability, U.S. Geological Survey, Reston, VA
- Closing the Gap, Minneapolis, MN
- Department of Defense Ergonomics Working Group, Washington, DC
- Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc. Expo '98, Washington, DC
- United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons, Washington, DC
- Eleventh Annual DoD Forum on Disability, Bethesda, MD
- Perspectives on Employment of People with Disabilities, Bethesda, MD
- TRICARE Conference, Washington, DC
- Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Conference, Atlanta, GA
- Symposium on Employee Labor Relations (SOELR) Conference, Hershey, PA
- National Training Conference on Employment of Federal Employees Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, Bethesda, MD
- California State University, Northridge Conference: "Technology and Persons with Disabilities", Los Angeles, CA
- Installation Unity Day Program, New Cumberland, PA
- Fed Web, Washington, DC
- Women's Leadership Conference, San Francisco, CA and San Antonio, TX
- RESNA, Long Beach, CA
- Excellence in Government, Washington, DC
- Jett Con, Washington, DC
- Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), Atlanta, GA
- Department of Defense Commanders Conference, Crystal City, VA
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Force Health Protection Conference, Atlanta, GA
- TRICARE Region 2 Conference, Chesapeake, VA

## **Employment Initiatives**

### Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP)

The Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities (WRP), co-sponsored by the DoD and the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (PCEPD) provides summer employment for college students with disabilities with Federal agencies as well as the private sector. CAP provides assistive technology and services to students who participate in the WRP throughout the Federal government.

In FY99, three hundred and twenty-five summer students were placed throughout the Federal government and private sectors. Six summer students were placed in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) and TRICARE Management Activity (TMA), including one in the CAP office. As a result of WRP, one of those six summer interns received a temporary position with a DoD contractor after completing the summer internship.

In FY99, CAP provided 125 accommodations for the summer interns throughout the Federal government. Accommodations included sign language interpreting services, personal assistant services, and assistive technologies.

### Healthy Work Practices Program

As work-related injuries continue to disable employees and decrease productivity, CAP has aligned with DoD and Federal programs to offer prevention and accommodation services. Via education workshops, information dissemination, and accommodations for employees with dexterity disabilities, CAP's proactive approach to disability management offers employers assistance in addressing this growing health concern. By teaming with Worker's Compensation officials, CAP assists employees in their return-to-work process and filled 294 requests for accommodation. Furthermore, CAP participates in the Flexiplace program, which allows employees to work part or all the day at home or at another offsite location. CAP can assist DoD managers in implementing Flexiplace through providing workstations and assistive equipment for Flexiplace participants with disabilities to use at their home work sites. Sixty-eight accommodations were provided to Flexiplace participants.

### **Program Access Initiatives**

#### Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs)

In a DoD Directive supporting the Patient's Bill of Rights, the Secretary of Defense, William S. Cohen, clearly states that it is everyone's role to ensure equal treatment for all individuals in the MHS. In FY99, CAP assisted in meeting communication accessibility requirements within the Military Health System (MHS). CAP purchased equipment for employees and beneficiaries with various disabilities who were employees, visitors and patients at Military Treatment Facilities.

To expand and strengthen the scope of the CAP/MHS partnership, a working group made up of representatives from the Military Surgeon Generals offices, TRICARE Public Relations, and the Exceptional Family Member Program met with CAP staff on five separate occasions to provide an effective means of marketing CAP services for the MHS.

#### Exceptional Family Members Program

CAP renewed its commitment to the Exceptional Family Members Program (EFMP) in FY99. As a result, the number of accommodations provided to the EFMP has more than doubled

since FY98. CAP staff was able to identify EFMP coordinators for various services, meet with them and provide CAP information in order to market our services to their program. CAP purchased equipment for both enrolled members and employees of EFMP with various disabilities.

CAP staff prepared and mailed approximately 150 CAP information folders including an introduction letter signed by the CAP Director, welcome letter, one page information sheet outlining equipment and services available to EFMP members and employees, CAP folder and CAP video to EFMP coordinators. CAP also invited EFMP coordinators to a demonstration day at CAPTEC with a "Back to School" theme that highlighted assistive technology for children and employees with various disabilities.

### DoD Education Activity (DoDEA)

CAP renewed its commitment to the DoD Education Activity (DoDEA) in FY99. As a result, the number of accommodations provided to DoDEA activities has almost doubled the accommodations to dependent schools in FY99. Together, CAP staff and DoDEA Special Education Coordinators developed guidelines to ensure that students attending DoDEA receive appropriate accommodations. CAP purchased 137 accommodations for both students and employees in DoDEA with various disabilities.

CAP staff updated the DoDEA one page information sheet outlining equipment and services available to DoDEA students and employees with disabilities and sent the CAP video to DoDEA personnel in 11 different overseas offices including: Pacific Office, European Area Office, Korean District, Turkey District, Panama District, Japan District, Werzburg District, Henssen District, UK District, Benelux District, and Daserslauter District.

CAP staff gave presentations at several DoDEA teacher in-service meetings and prepared a CAP information folder including a one-page information sheet outlining equipment and services available to DoDEA students and employees with disabilities. CAP also conducted a demonstration day at CAPTEC with a "Back to School" theme that highlighted assistive technology for students and employees with cognitive disabilities.

### Training Centers

As FY99 focused great attention on program accessibility, CAP ensured all program training facilities recognized the importance of accessibility. Training facilities increased access by using assistive devices on specific workstations.

Another CAP initiative is the procurement of videotape captioning equipment. This initiative allows DoD activities with audio-visual capabilities to caption their videotapes in-house at a reduced cost. CAP covers the cost of providing captioning services to DoD organizations that do not have in-house captioning capabilities. Through this, CAP assists DoD compliance with public laws requiring federal agencies to provide access to information



resources, including training videotapes. CAP spent approximately \$16,500 on video captioning services.

Since training dramatically increases opportunity for employee retention and promotion, CAP will increase its visibility in this arena in FY00.

### **CAP Acquisitions Process**

The revised CAP accommodations ordering process, developed through the December 1996 Operation Review, continues to expedite delivery of equipment and services to DoD employees with disabilities. The revision of the ordering process was further recognized this year by Vice President Gore with the Hammer Award. The CAP Office implemented the Customer Notification Letter and the Customer Satisfaction Survey both of which provides CAP customers with an increased role in the ordering process. As a result, the CAP Office is more aware of the concerns of their customers and the overall satisfaction rate of CAP customers has increased.

The development and implementation of the CAP Database Tracking System, a networked Microsoft Access Database has dramatically impacted the process cycle time and overall customer satisfaction. The ability for the CAP Office to track orders and generate program reports for all collected data is pre-eminent in disability accommodations. The availability of this data allows CAP to form information to improve services provided to beneficiaries of the CAP initiatives.

Another major factor in the improved CAP request process is the use of the U.S. Government I.M.P.A.C. Visa credit card to procure accommodations. Two CAP Program Analysts have access to credit cards with a \$25,000 maximum per item, providing greater flexibility to procure high cost equipment and services. Ninety-seven percent of all CAP acquisitions are made via credit cards.

In addition to providing computer devices, the CAP office assisted DoD activities by providing the funds for sign language interpreting services for long-term training (two days or more). The CAP used its agency credit card to purchase most of the requested interpreter services, resulting in a quicker turnaround in service acquisitions. Currently, over 48 sign language interpreting agencies across the United States accept government VISA credit cards as a method to acquire sign language interpreting services. In FY99, CAP provided interpreter services for DoD employees, expending \$781,885. This is a 34% increase over FY98. CAP also provides computer-aided notetaking for hard of hearing DoD employees who do not use sign language as the primary mode of communications. The amount for this service this year was \$78,989, a 20% increase. CAP continues to research avenues that would provide better and quicker services.

### **Command Information Activities**

The CAP command information strategy has been instrumental in increasing the number of requests received by the CAP office. As CAP is still a relatively new initiative, continuing to inform members of the DoD and disabled communities about CAP remains a top priority this year.

The CAP office staff conducted 65 presentations during this year for activities in the Military Departments, Defense Agencies, federal organizations, and non-government organizations. Through these presentations, the CAP reached about 7,000 people with an interest in the recruitment, advancement, and management of employees with disabilities. The following chart indicates the distribution of these presentations across the participating organizations.

<u>Component</u>	<u>Number Presentations</u>	<u>Number Participants</u>
Army	10	753
Navy	6	415
Air Force	3	225
Defense Agencies	18	2,090
Federal Organizations	14	1,909
Non-government	14	1,655

CAP distributed four issues of the CAP News Bulletin in FY99. The mailing list for the newsletter contains the names of more than 8,500 interested parties.

The CAP also developed a new video that highlights CAP services for employees and program accessibility. The updated video also acknowledges CAP's stakeholders and on-going accomplishments. The CAP video will be distributed to DoD Human Resources and EEO offices.

The CAP received the "Hammer Award" from Vice President Gore on December 14, 1998. The Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) developed a DoD press release. An article in the *Federal Times* as well as *OSD Personnel Hi-Lites* also highlighted the Award and CAP.

In Fiscal Year 1996, CAP developed a World Wide Web (WWW) site. In FY99, the web site has allowed DoD employees, supervisors and other interested individuals to review the nature of the program, download a CAP Request Form, locate a recent CAP News Bulletin, and link to other disability information resources. This Fiscal Year the WWW continues to serve as a DoD highway for information about the disabled community. With continual growth, the Internet is now a mainstream option for CAP to deliver electronic News Bulletins, market CAPTEC events, link with federal technology transfer resources, and research new assistive technologies. The CAP website, [www.tricare.osd.mil/cap](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/cap), is advertised on all CAP materials.

## **Accommodations**

As stated, CAP filled 2,807 requests for accommodations since October 1998. CAP assists employees with disabilities in DoD at all grade levels and occupation series.

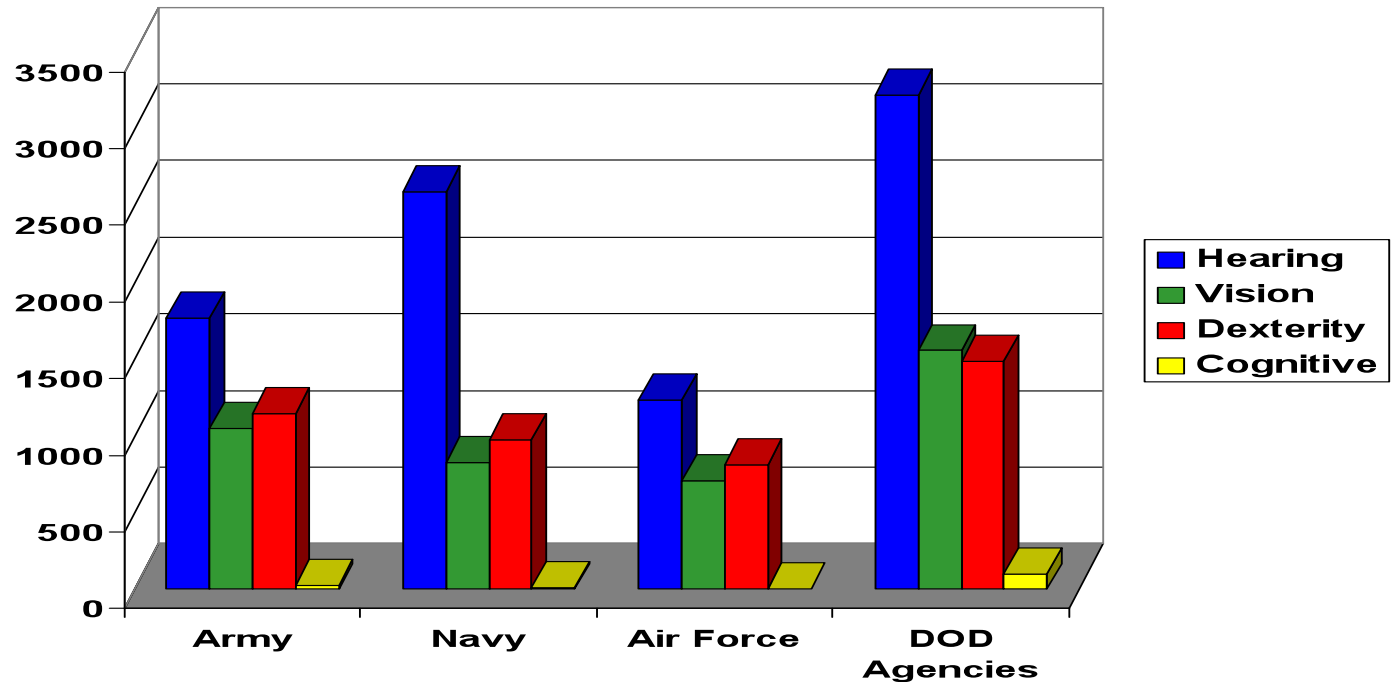
The specific numbers of accommodations provided in FY99 are as follows:

	<u>Individual</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Total</u>
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	1,028	71	<b>1,099</b>
Blind/Visually Impaired	471	12	<b>483</b>
Dexterity Impaired	1,083	16	<b>1,099</b>
Cognitive	110	5	<b>115</b>
Other	7	4	<b>11</b>
Total	2,699	108	<b>2,807</b>

The number of individual and group accommodations provided in FY99, categorized by DoD component, are:

	<u>Individual</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Total</u>
Army	570	38	<b>608</b>
Navy	462	10	<b>472</b>
Air Force	348	3	<b>351</b>
Defense Agencies	1251	57	<b>1302</b>
Non-DoD Agencies (WRP)	68	6	<b>74</b>
Total	2699	108	<b>2807</b>

**Accommodations Profile by Service  
Fiscal Year 1990–1999**



### Accommodations by Pay Grade FY 1999

For Beneficiaries		Yes				
Grade	Hearing	Vision	Dexterity	Cognitive	CAP/Other	Total
none	129	61	103	92	4	389
GS-01	0	0	1	0	0	1
GS-02	3	0	4	0	0	7
GS-03	45	16	12	0	0	73
GS-04	114	45	69	2	0	230
GS-05	136	42	129	1	0	308
GS-06	57	38	87	0	0	182
GS-07	106	13	97	0	0	216
GS-08	21	1	7	0	0	29
GS-09	84	32	99	0	0	215
GS-10	17	4	8	0	0	29
GS-11	92	91	170	1	0	354
GS-12	96	81	159	13	1	350
GS-13	105	30	81	0	1	217
GS-14	20	8	39	1	0	68
GS-15	3	1	18	0	1	23
SES	0	8	0	0	0	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>1029</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>1083</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2699</b>

### Fiscal Year 2000 Operational Goals

- Continue to provide assistive technology and interpreter, reader, and personal assistant services to DoD employees with disabilities.
- Provide accommodations to DoD programs including DoD military treatment facilities, dependent schools, and Exceptional Family Members Programs.
- Continue to provide assistive technology and accommodations for disabled students placed in the Workforce Recruitment Program.
- Continue to improve the request/procurement process for assistive technology.
- Provide assistive and computer equipment to support employees in the DoD Flexiplace Program.
- Coordinate with DoD managers to ensure accommodation requirements are incorporated in system development.
- Develop and conduct workshops regarding acquisition planning for assistive technology to improve accessibility.
- Continue to provide technical assistance and assistive equipment to DoD training centers to meet accessibility requirements.
- Disseminate CAP brochures, CAP videos, posters and newsletters.
- Provide training and information on developing an accessible website.
- Promote the CAP web site throughout DoD.
- Provide accommodations for employees on Workers' Compensation.
- Continue to provide demonstrations and evaluations at CAPTEC.