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**Michael Walcoff**

**VA QUIETLY SHUFFLES TOP SPOTS AT VETERANS' BENEFITS ADMIN.**

**Michael Walcoff moves up to acting head of VBA while Michael Cardarelli takes over as acting number two.**

*by Larry Scott, VA Watchdog dot Org*

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On January 4, 2010 the VA made some rosters changes official at the Veterans' Benefits Administration (VBA) ... with no official announcement.

Michael Walcoff ([recently seen on 60 MINUTES](#)) has moved up from #2 at the VBA to acting #1. This was not unexpected. More on Walcoff here ... <http://www.yourvabenefits.org/sessearch.php?q=walcoff&op=and>

What is a surprise is that Michael Cardarelli was named acting #2 at VBA. Cardarelli had previously been VA's #2 Chief of Staff and was way off the radar for this new position.

In theory, these two positions are just what the titles say they are ... acting.

But, practically and politically, these men were put here for a reason and it is not unreasonable to assume that they will get the nod for the permanent positions.

Walcoff's and Cardarelli's official VA bios appear below.

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**Michael Walcoff**

**Acting Under Secretary for Benefits**

[http://www1.va.gov/opa/bios/bio\\_walcoff.asp](http://www1.va.gov/opa/bios/bio_walcoff.asp)

**Michael Walcoff was appointed Acting Under Secretary for Benefits in the Department of Veterans Affairs on Jan. 4, 2010.**

**As Acting Under Secretary for Benefits, he leads the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) in the delivery of a wide range of integrated programs of non-medical benefits and services authorized by law to veterans and their dependents and survivors.**

**Through a nationwide network of 57 regional offices, special processing centers, and VBA Headquarters, he directs the administration of VA's disability compensation, pension, education, home loan guaranty, vocational rehabilitation and employment, and life insurance programs. The funding levels for these benefit entitlement programs exceed \$47 billion annually, approximately half of VA's total budget.**

**Prior to his appointment as Acting Under Secretary, Mr. Walcoff served as VA's Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits since January 2008.; Previously, Mr. Walcoff served as the VA's Associate Deputy Under Secretary for Field Operations, supervising VBA's 57 regional offices with over 13,000 employees.**

**Mr. Walcoff began his career as a veterans claims examiner at the Philadelphia Regional Office and Insurance Center in 1974. During his career, he has served as Director of the VBA regional offices in Seattle, Wash., and Huntington, W.Va., as well as Deputy Area Director of VBA's Western Area.**

**Mr. Walcoff received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from American University in Washington, D.C., and his Juris Doctor degree from Temple University School of Law in Philadelphia, Pa. He is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar.**

**Mr. Walcoff received the Senior Executive Service Presidential Rank Award of Meritorious Executive in 2001 and the Distinguished Executive Award in 2005. He and his wife live in Fairfax, Va.**

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**Michael Cardarelli**

**Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits**

**[http://www1.va.gov/opa/bios/bio\\_cardarelli.asp](http://www1.va.gov/opa/bios/bio_cardarelli.asp)**

**Michael Cardarelli was appointed Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits to the Department of Veterans Affairs on Jan. 4, 2010. In this position, he serves as second in command in the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), which administers benefits programs for veterans, including education, home loan guaranty, compensation, pension, vocational rehabilitation and employment and life insurance. These benefit programs pay out over \$47 billion to veterans and their beneficiaries annually.**

**Prior to his appointment, he served as VA's Deputy Chief of Staff since**

May 26, 2009. In that role, Mr. Cardarelli worked closely with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Chief of Staff in managing day-to-day operations of the federal government's second-largest Cabinet department, with some 286,000 employees serving veterans at VA medical centers, clinics, benefits offices and national cemeteries throughout the country.

Prior to joining the VA, Mr. Cardarelli served as the Director of Medical and Health Affairs in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower. He also served as the principal adviser to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for all matters pertaining to medical and health related activities. In addition, he was directly responsible for providing oversight, review and analysis of all Army programs and policies concerning health care, medical force readiness, medical personnel management, wounded warrior treatment, and physical disability evaluation.

Mr. Cardarelli, the son of a career Army non-commissioned officer, was commissioned in the Infantry following graduation from the U.S. Military Academy. Throughout his military career, he served in a variety of command and staff positions in the 82nd Airborne Division, the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and the 25th Infantry Division. He also served as a strategist in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and on the Army Staff and as a National Security Fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, Stanford University in California. In addition, he served as a Legislative Fellow to Virginia Senator Charles Robb. Other assignments include Executive Officer to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower; Military Aide to the Commander in Chief, United States Pacific Command; and Executive Officer to the Commanding General, United States Army Pacific Command.

Mr. Cardarelli holds a Bachelor degree from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and Master's degrees from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and from the Graduate School of Business at Stanford University. He is a graduate of the Advanced Management Program at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania.

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