**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Department of Defense Announces Guidance for Upgrading Discharge Requests**

The Department of Defense announced today that it has issued supplemental guidance to Military Department Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records (BCM/NR) when considering petitions regarding discharge upgrade requests by veterans claiming Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

“This is our responsibility and the right thing to do for veterans,” said Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel.

 “This new guidance reflects our commitment to those who served our country during times of war many decades ago.”

Recent attention has been focused upon the petitions of Vietnam veterans to BCM/NR for the purposes of upgrading their discharges based on claims of previously unrecognized PTSD. In these cases, PTSD was not recognized as a diagnosis at the time of service and, in many cases, diagnoses were not made until decades after service was completed.

This supplemental guidance was issued to help review boards ensure fair and consistent results across the military services and ease the application process for veterans who are seeking redress. It is not intended to interfere with, or impede the boards' statutory independence to correct errors or remove injustices through the correction of military records.

BCM/NRs fully and carefully consider each petition brought by every veteran. This includes a comprehensive review of all materials and evidence provided by the petitioner.

For more information, the department’s supplemental guidance can be found at http://www.defense.gov/news/OSD009883-14.pdf.