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# PRESS RELEASE

## State of Credentialing for Service Members and Veterans

*Challenges and opportunities for transitioning service members to secure civilian employment by earning certifications and licenses were the topics of discussion at a recent credentialing roundtable in Washington, DC. At this invitation-only gathering, ETA International was asked to describe the advantages and disadvantages of accredited versus non-accredited certification bodies.*

**Greencastle, May 24, 2016:** [ETA International](http://www.eta-i.org) was recently invited to a credentialing roundtable at the American Legion headquarters in Washington, DC. Over 62 individuals representing every branch of the military, accreditation boards, certification organizations and industry were in attendance at this high level, invitation-only gathering.

Topics under discussion were based on work in energy, construction, transportation and manufacturing. The Department of Labor, Veterans Division Assistant Secretary Michael Michaud and the Department of Defense Readiness Director Frank DiGiovanni spoke about efforts to secure civilian employment to transitioning service members and certifications and licenses that can help to secure employment.

Each branch of the military was given a chance to describe their current efforts with the Military COOL (Credentialing Opportunities On-Line) sites. A big point of conversation focused on ways that the various branches of the military approve payment for credentialing. Also discussed were ways to ensure quality of certifications. This led to an active barrage of ideas regarding accreditation as referenced by the recent National Defense Authorization Act where Quality Assurance for Certification programs is covered. A great deal of dissension was evident about the release of this new legislation. Accreditation bodies were given the floor and the advantages followed by disadvantages of this act were debated.

Certification organizations had a chance to describe the benefits of why they had chosen to become accredited or if they were not accredited, why they had decided against accreditation. A very small percentage of certification bodies in attendance had been able to take on the burden that becoming accredited includes. Ten certification bodies were in attendance, some representing unions and some not. Besides ETA, other groups represented as certifiers were NCCER, NICET, NIMS, MSSC, CIC, ABIH, BPI, SAME, IEnMP, NCCCO, and CMCI.

There was also much concern that requiring accreditation of certification bodies would begin to leave out a number of highly sought after and used licenses and certification for the military in the areas of CDL, FAA A&P and Merchant Marines.

One accreditation body that accredits the certification process rather than each individual certification, resulting in a much lower fee, is the International Certification Accreditation Council (ICAC).

Many areas were discussed that could help service members use their military training to gain industry certification then use it to secure a civilian job, which was the heart of what the meeting hoped to achieve.



**About ETA** - Since 1978, ETA has delivered over 200,000 professional certifications. ETA certifications are widely recognized and frequently used in worker job selection, hiring processes, pay increases, advancements, and often required as companies bid on contracts. ETA's certifications are personal and travel with the individual, regardless of employment or status change and measure competencies of persons, not products or vendors. All ETA certifications are accredited through the International Certification Accreditation Council (ICAC) and align with the ISO-17024 standard. [www.eta-i.org](http://www.eta-i.org)

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