



**Australian Peacekeepers & Peacemaker Veterans Association
APPVA STH QLD Inc.
eNews**

Issue #5 - November 2010

"Looking after our own"

Web: www.peacekeepers.asn.au
107 Excelsior Drive, Morayfield QLD 4506

FROM THE EDITOR

G'day, and welcome to this edition of the APPVA South Queensland Branch News, an electronic newsletter for APPVA Sth Qld Branch members.

Members are reminded of the **APPVA Sth Qld End of Year Function and BBQ on Sunday 28 November 2010 at the Greenbank RSL Club Rooms**. A number of fundraising raffles will be conducted during the afternoon, and this is an excellent time to meet fellow members and former comrades.

On the 20 November 2010 a Welcome Home Parade will be conducted in Brisbane to mark the conclusion of the 7th Brigade (7 Bde) contribution to operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and East-Timor in 2010. Further details in events.



The **Australian Peacekeepers Memorial Project** is seeking ongoing support from veterans and the business community to ensure the completion for opening on the 65th Anniversary of Australian Peacekeeping on the 12 September 2012.

Further Government support is being sought to ensure project is completed.

The APPVA Sth Qld is an active supporter of the project and a number of fundraising and support activities are planned for the future.
www.peacekeepingmemorial.org.au

THE AUSTRALIAN Government has rejected the pleas of war veterans to recognise the existence of Gulf War Syndrome, despite being recognised in both the United Kingdom and the United States, an investigation by the Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA). See details and an earlier US VA decision in this issue.

All the best, and hope to see you at the end of year function and welcome home parade

Glenn Warnes

APPVA Sth Qld eNews

gjwarnes@tpg.com.au

"Keeping our members informed"



"In the Service of Peace"



FROM THE PRESIDENT

From time to time, it is appropriate to take stock of what the Association has achieved and what it hopes to achieve. Of course, our achievements depend not only on the actions of our leadership but also on the interest of our members in making the APPVA a relevant and caring ex-Service group.

At the end of October, I attended the Annual General Meeting and conference of the APPVA National Committee of Management. Unfortunately, the event was poorly attended and future conferences need to be better planned and staged if worthwhile results are to be achieved.

Whilst the National Committee of Management has published an “Action Plan” for the next twelve months, many of the items on the plan are ongoing activities that have been in train for some time. Of immediate relevance the APPVA South Queensland, and other APPVA groups, was the decision to write a National Constitution and By-Laws which would provide the administrative framework for a truly national organization. At present there is a Constitution of the National Executive and the Committee of Management and each “Branch” has a separate Constitution; but, although the National Executive is an incorporated body, the APPVA as a whole has not been incorporated and has no Constitution.

The Presidents of APPVA ACT and Sth Qld have been given the task of developing a Constitution. When developed it will be distributed for comment before being formally endorsed.

Another activity will be development of recommendations for the administrative structure of the National Association. The current organization, as applied to the National Executive and Committee of Management, is totally inappropriate and fails to provide democratic representation of member’s views and needs.

At the South Queensland level, poor attendance and support and our general meetings, commemorative activities and social functions is of concern. Unless we have the support of our

membership the APPVA South Queensland cannot be effective. In order to act on behalf of our members, we need to know the issues and problems that affect them and their families. We cannot always depend on others to do our job for us. I do not believe that there are no pockets of need still existing in the ex-Service community. We have to know what these needs are, and where they are, so that we may initiate appropriate action.

As we move into 2011, we must increase our activities to ensure that the APPVA grows and develops. I urge you to support our activities and encourage others to join in. We need to provide a good showing at our commemorative activities especially the Brisbane ANZAC Day Parade, UN Peacekeepers Day ceremony in Anzac Square and our own Australian Peacekeepers Day ceremony at Windaroo.

Australia has a proud record in Peacekeeping and Peacemaking operations. Our organization must be in the forefront of not only maintaining public awareness and interest in that record; but, also of maintaining pressure on Government to ensure that our veterans are adequately looked after and are not forgotten.

Let us make 2011 a special year of achievement for the APPVA. The word failure should not be in our vocabulary.

John Burgess

SECRETARY REPORT

Well, Well, Well, That’s three holes in the ground and the year is fast closing on us.

Welcome one and all to the final edition for the year. It has been a busy time since our last meeting in Sept which actually was linked to the previous meeting in July due to poor attendance at the Sept meeting (sadly not enough members to have a quorum).



APPVA Sth Qld Inc. E-NEWS – November 2010 “Looking After Our Own”

As outlined in the branch news below us APPVA SQ as a group have been very busy attending and holding our own functions over the last few months. A very successful day at Windaroo on the 14 Sept saw the Annual Memorial Service to Peacekeeping and was a great day thanks to the rain holding off.

I ask that where possible you attend the bi monthly meetings held at the Greenbank RSL Advocate rooms (behind the club). The calendar has all the dates for next years meetings locked in. If you need another copy then let me know and I will send you one. It is important that we have numbers at these meetings to allow us to function as a group. As a committee we are planning activities and attendances at events behind the scenes but need your approval to conduct them. We can only get that if you vote on our use of your funds to conduct these events. Our last official meeting is on the 28th Nov (only minor point to discuss over a steak) which will also be our EOY BBQ and we have some great Raffle prizes to win. Cheap tickets, social atmosphere, Wet weather friendly and good company, what more could you ask. I will be sending a separate flyer out but ask that you respond with numbers attending as we do not want to waste food on the day or not have enough which would be worse.

Hope to see more of you at the events coming up in 2011 but especially the Coming Home parade on the 20 Nov. The local boys will march to mark the conclusion of the 7th Brigade (7 Bde) contribution

to operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and East-Timor in 2010. They have taken a battering on this tour and really need as much physical and mental support from the Veteran community as we can muster. Info on day is below.

BRANCH NEWS

Recent events

Veterans and their families attended the UN Day Memorial Service at Canungra on the 23 November 2010 hosted by the Military Brotherhood MC.

Mitch Edwick from the APPVA SQ attended as did other veterans groups including the Patriots, the Military Brotherhood and the Brethren.

The service was moving, and the Operatic Tenor was very good.

This year they got members of the attendees to place an Aussie Flag for every UN tour that we as a nation had participated into blue buckets of sand at the front of the memorial as it was called out.

A light luncheon concluded the event. A wreath was laid on behalf of the APPVA SQLD at the service.





APPVA Sth Qld Inc. E-NEWS – November 2010 “Looking After Our Own”

COMING EVENTS

 **Thursday 11 November 2010 – 11.00am**
Remembrance Day – Various services



10.00 20 November 2010 - A Welcome Home Parade will be conducted in Brisbane to mark the conclusion of the 7th Brigade (7 Bde) contribution to operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and East-Timor in 2010.

The parade will march across Victoria Bridge, then left wheel onto North Quay and right wheel onto Adelaide Street. The parade will continue to march along Adelaide Street conducting eyes left to the Reviewing Officer in the vicinity of Brisbane City Hall, with another eyes left at the Brisbane City Shrine of Remembrance in ANZAC Square.

The Welcome Home Parade is an opportunity to reinforce the importance of the mission, acknowledge the sacrifice of the members and their families and conveying the best wishes of the ADF, Government and the citizens of Brisbane.

The APPVA plans to have its Banner flying to show our support and members are encouraged to rally around to show their support. Location will be advised closer to the date due but expected to be along Adelaide Street.

END OF YEAR BBQ

12.00pm Sunday 28 November 2010 – Greenbank RSL Club Rooms (at the rear of the Services Club).
AGM and end of year function. APPVA Members

and family are invited to the annual end of year BBQ Lunch and social gathering.

A number of fundraising raffles will be conducted during the afternoon, and this is an excellent time to meet fellow members and former comrades.

The afternoon is also an excellent time to let the committee know what YOU, the member, want the APPVA STH QLD to achieve for YOU and your fellow veterans in the future.



WELFARE & PENSIONS NEWS

Any members welfare support or pension advice please contact Glenn on 0410 132 711 or welfareappvasq@gmail.com **Support services are also available for veterans through the VVCS.**



Diggers' mental scars will remain long after Afghanistan war is over

- Mark Dodd: The Australian
- October 28, 2010 12:00AM

Afghan war veterans will need long-term care, argued one MP in the parliamentary debate.

THE war in Afghanistan will be a long one, and the



Defence Force must be prepared for an increasing number of Diggers returning home with psychological disorders, a senior government minister has warned.

Speaking during the parliamentary debate on Afghanistan, Assistant Treasurer Bill Shorten, the former parliamentary secretary for disabilities, said he was very concerned about the hidden toll on soldiers returning from the conflict.

While most returning Australian Defence Force servicemen and women would cope with the transition to normal life after working in a war zone, a minority would not, Mr Shorten said.

"We can pinpoint when the Afghan war started but not when it will finish," he said. "I think it is incumbent upon us in this place, at this time, to look over the parapet to an often-overlooked feature about Afghanistan.

"What will happen to our returned service personnel over the next two or three decades?

"There is much high-blown rhetoric about support for our troops. The troops believe it.

"If the reality does not match the rhetoric, trouble will follow." Expert medical opinion indicated "at least 3 per cent" of returned service personnel from Afghanistan would suffer psychological problems.

While funerals for Diggers killed in action received appropriate attention, soldiers returning from war with wounds required special care, and that included those suffering from post traumatic stress disorder.

"So far, 156 of our best and bravest have been physically wounded in Afghanistan.

"This figure doesn't include psychological wounds," Mr Shorten said. "We need to look after them. And we need to look after their family.

"On a daily unrelenting basis, the trauma, pain and adjustment for family and friends of an IED (roadside bomb) amputee is huge," he added.

West Australian Greens senator Scott Ludlam said non-military aid to Afghanistan would be more effective than military intervention. The NATO-led coalition in Afghanistan, of which Australia was a

member, was a "provocation for recruitment to insurgent forces," he said during the debate.

But to withdraw from Afghanistan now would consign its people to the fate of a murderous Taliban and ensure the sacrifice of 21 Diggers was in vain, said the opposition tourism spokesman, Bob Baldwin.

Labour backbench MP Janelle Saffin said her constituents appeared to be evenly split on a continuing engagement in Afghanistan, but the wellbeing of ordinary Afghan people had to be put ahead of any other consideration.

VETERANS NEWS



INTERFET Medal

The new determination clarifies the operational overlap that occurred between the commencement of Operation TANAGER and the cessation of INTERFET in relation to medallic entitlement to the INTERFET Medal.

The basic eligibility requirement for the INTERFET Medal is 30 days service in the prescribed area during the period 16 Sep 99 – 10 Apr 00.

<http://www.defence.gov.au/medals/>

Veterans up in arms over Gulf War snub

BY MICHAEL INMAN – The Canberra Times

31 Oct, 2010 09:00 AM

THE AUSTRALIAN Government has rejected the pleas of war veterans to recognise the existence of Gulf War Syndrome, thwarting the hopes of hundreds for extra medical aid and compensation.

Despite being recognised in both the United Kingdom and the United States, an investigation



by the Repatriation Medical Authority, the results of which were announced in the authority's annual report, found the syndrome was not an injury or disease as defined by Veterans' Entitlements Act.

Veterans' groups said yesterday they were devastated by the ruling and felt abandoned by the country they had risked their lives to protect.

Former soldier Bruce Relph said, "I'm disappointed that countries in the northern hemisphere have recognised GWS but our Government won't it's unfair and unjust."

But the Department of Veterans' Affairs said Australians who served in the 1990-91 conflict already had access to compensation and medical care, despite being denied recognition for the syndrome.

More than 1800 Australians served in the 1990-91 conflict, with hundreds estimated to be afflicted with the syndrome.

Exposure to sarin nerve agent and organophosphate pesticides, and medications, such as pyridostigmine bromide pills, issued to personnel as protection against disease and nerve gas attacks, have been linked to the disease.

Symptoms include fatigue, loss of muscle control, headaches, dizziness, memory problems, muscle and joint pain, indigestion, skin problems, immune system problems, and birth defects.

The wide-ranging symptoms are problematic for veterans as they must prove their illness is related to operational service to access full veterans' entitlements, the Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans' Association says.

Former Association president Paul Copeland described the decision as a "slap in the face".

"There should be no reason why Australia ... would not accept sound scientific-medical evidence that has been accepted by the USA and UK," Mr Copeland said.

"This is a decision that goes against international reasoning and does not protect, nor provide for Australian Defence Force personnel who were

exposed to the environmental risks associated with their deployment to the Gulf conflict."

Mr Relph was one of 75 Australians to serve in northern Iraq in 1991 defending and delivering aid to Kurds fleeing their homes in the aftermath of the war as part of Operation Provide Comfort.

Mr Relph has suffered post-traumatic stress disorder, stomach problems, and other health conditions since the deployment.

While he is eligible for a full military pension, many of his mates are not.

"It's really hard to get any type of pension out of them these days and a lot of my contingents are having trouble," Mr Relph said.

"It's what the Government does, anything to save a buck, but then they start giving money away for the insulation scheme which they then stuff up.

"How have we missed this? It's a travesty."

Despite the rejection, Veterans Affairs said compensation and health care does flow to veterans of the Gulf War for recognised conditions resulting from service in the Gulf.

"DVA has already accepted more than 800 claims relating to Gulf War service," it said.

"Even though the RMA has previously determined that Gulf War Syndrome is not a disease, claims have been accepted for a range of other conditions, such as contact dermatitis or a migraine condition linked to Gulf service.

"In addition, further research on Gulf War veterans is being undertaken by Monash University."

It is expected to be completed by July 2013.

"The Government will consider what, if any, further support is required for Gulf War veterans based on the research findings."

The APPVA is seeking redress of the RMA decision.



The US Veterans Affairs is currently looking at formerly rejected claims. See article below.

US reconsiders Gulf War syndrome claims

Kimberly Hefling

February 27, 2010 AP

The US Veterans Affairs Department says it will look again at the rejected claims of veterans who say their Gulf War service caused a mysterious illness, the first step toward potentially compensating them nearly two decades after the war ended.

VA Secretary Eric Shinseki says the decision is part of a "fresh, bold look" his department is taking to help veterans who have 'Gulf War illness'. The VA says it plans to improve training for medical staff who work with Gulf War vets, to make sure they do not tell vets their symptoms are imaginary.

"I'm hoping they'll be enthused by the fact that this ... challenges all the assumptions that have been there for 20 years," Shinseki told AP.

The changes reflect a significant shift in how the VA may ultimately care for about 700,000 veterans who served in the Gulf War. They also could improve the way the department handles war-related illnesses suffered by future veterans, because Shinseki said he wants standards in place that don't leave veterans waiting decades for answers to what ails them.

The decision comes four months after Shinseki opened the door for about 200,000 Vietnam veterans to receive service-related compensation for three illnesses stemming from exposure to the Agent Orange herbicide.

About 175,000 to 210,000 Gulf War veterans have come down with a pattern of symptoms ranging from mild to severe that include rashes, headaches, memory problems, joint and muscle pain, sleep issues and gastrointestinal problems, according to a 2008 congressionally mandated committee that based the estimate on earlier studies.

But what exactly caused the symptoms has long been unanswered. Independent scientists have pointed to pesticide and pyridostigmine bromide pills, given to protect troops from nerve agents, as

probable culprits. The 2008 report noted that since 1994, \$340 million has been spent on government research into the illness, but little has focused on treatments.

Steve Robertson, legislative director of the American Legion, a veterans' group, and a Gulf War veteran himself who has struggled with his own health issues such as joint problems and chronic fatigue, said on Friday the decision is welcome news.

"I can assure that there are Gulf War veterans who have been fighting this issue since 1991-92," Robertson said. "The ones I've talked to are very, very upset that they've had to fight this battle."

Shinseki has publicly wondered why there are still so many unanswered questions about Gulf War illness, as stricken veterans' conditions have only worsened with age.

A law enacted in 1994 allows the VA to pay compensation to Gulf War veterans with certain chronic disabilities from illnesses the VA could not diagnose. More than 3400 Gulf War vets have qualified for benefits under this category.

The VA does not have an estimate of veterans who may be affected, but it could be in the thousands.

Of those who deployed in the Gulf War, 300,000 submitted claims. About 14 per cent were rejected, while the rest received compensation for at least one condition.





APPVA Sth Qld Inc. E-NEWS – November 2010 “Looking After Our Own”

APPVA STH QLD BRANCH CONTACT DETAILS



State President

John Burgess

President APPVA Sth Qld Branch Inc.

21 Chestnut Drive

Murrumba Downs QLD 4503

PH: 07 3285 4752

Email: gldpres@peacekeepers.asn.au

Kashmir@futureweb.com.au

State Secretary

Robert Sumpton

APPVA Sth Qld Branch Inc.

107 Excelsior Drive

Morayfield QLD 4506

PH: 0417 057 388

Email: gldsec@peacekeepers.asn.au

APPVA Sth Qld Welfare & Pension Support

Glenn Warnes

PH: 0410 132 711

Email: welfareappvasq@gmail.com

