



**AUSTRALIAN PEACEKEEPER & PEACEMAKER
VETERANS' ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE**

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Member of:

*The Australian Veteran & Defence
Service Council (AVADSC)*

*The National Younger Veteran
Consultative Forum*

*The New Military Compensation ESO
Working Group*

Listed Ex-Service Organisation with the Department of Veterans' Affairs ESO Directory

Wednesday, 16 June 2004

The Chairman,

Dr Neil Johnson,
The Ex-Service Organisation Working Group,
The Military Compensation Scheme,
Department of Veterans' Affairs,
P.O. Box 21,
WODEN, ACT, 2606

**Subject: Final Meeting – Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association
Final Letter.**

Dear Dr Johnson,

Firstly, please accept my apology for being unable to attend the final meeting of the ESOWG for the MRCA on 17th of June 2004. I have not been well lately, and was unfortunately unable to secure a representative to attend this final meeting.

The APPVA would like to convey our thoughts of the process of the past 12 months, and perhaps provide you and the committee with some feedback of how the New MRCA will affect our membership base.

1. It is unfortunate that the APPVA was not involved in the initial stages of the ESOWG. The MRCA was to be written for the veteran of today and tomorrow, regardless where they served. We hope that the past thought that we were not considered as “*REAL VETERANS*” has now subsided within the Department and that the APPVA is noted by the Department and other ESOs as a Peak National ESO, with positive representation of our member's and constituency base needs and issues.
2. The APPVA still holds reservations of the 3-tiered system of calculating Disability Pensions for the particular service rendered. We also hold reservations of Age and Gender Based calculations. We find this discriminative, and the ADF members are certainly not happy with this outcome. It is unfortunate that some ESOs took it upon themselves to place War Service on a pedestal, without consideration of the

“Looking After Our Own”

dynamics of today's military service. We believe in the "Keep it Simple Stupid", or "KISS", which unfortunately in this case, has complicated an otherwise workable Act. We won the fight with the Senate Legislative Hearing for equitable compensation for our Widows, however other forces against us (Some ESOs), otherwise foiled our pleas for the same equity in Disability Pensions. It should be noted that this Act was not written for Vietnam Veterans, but for veterans of today and tomorrow. It would have been favourable to see a modern military compensation system, with some dynamic consideration.

3. The Special Rate Disability Pension (SRDP) is a very contentious issue within the ADF, and there are many within the ADF who are extremely disappointed with the outcome of having to sacrifice 60 cents in their superannuation dollar for this pension. Indeed, many view contributing to COMSUPER as a waste of time and money, given the potential penalty that will be placed onto them, should they ever be unable to work due to their service related injuries or illness. It simply goes against the philosophy of Non-Economic Loss. The catch-cry of "Double Dipping" is certainly wearing very thin with our members and serving members of the ADF.
4. The use of the Statement of Principles (SOPs), presents a potential problem from the 1st of July onward. Currently, there is a six-year backlog of conditions being handled by the RMA. The SCRA, or MCRS, was able to determine conditions without utilising the SOP, and were in many cases accepted versus attempts to have the conditions recognised in the VEA SOP, when a member had dual eligibility. We believe that there will be a problem with the use of SOPs, particularly as they are outdated and are not consistent with conditions attained in today's service. This includes Contra-indications of vaccinations and Malarial Prophylaxis regimens. The APPVA only hopes that the six-year delay is expedited so that **no** veteran is disadvantaged.
5. Having stated our disappointment with some ESOs for their relentless quest of War Service being recognised and specially treated, we, on the other hand thank those ESOs that participated in the ESO WG, and believe that there are ESOs that do have the interests of our veterans to heart. This is reassuring to the APPVA and we look forward to participating with the representative ESOs in further ESO WG.

Please forward this onto all participants. From the perspective of working with the Department on this Working Group, I wish to say on behalf of the members of the APPVA, thank you for allowing us to have an input and we look forward to future DVA sponsored forums.

Yours Respectfully,



P.A. Copeland,

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National President