

# Statement of Principles

concerning

## **CAISSON DISEASE**

**ICD CODE: 993.3**

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986  
subsection 196B(3)

1. Being of the view that, on the sound medical-scientific evidence available to the Repatriation Medical Authority, it is more probable than not that **caisson disease** and **death from caisson disease** can be related to eligible war service (other than operational service) rendered by veterans and defence service (other than hazardous service) rendered by members of the Forces, the Repatriation Medical Authority determines, under subsection 196B(3) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (the Act), that the factors that must exist before it can be said that, on the balance of probabilities, **caisson disease** or **death from caisson disease** is connected with the circumstances of that service, are:
  - (a) being exposed to an abrupt reduction in the pressure of the air surrounding the person, immediately before the clinical onset of caisson disease; or
  - (b) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for the caisson disease.
2. Subject to clause 3 (below) at least one of the factors set out in paragraphs **1(a) to 1(b)** must be related to any service rendered by a person.
3. The factor set out in paragraph **1(b)** applies only where:

- (a) the person's **caisson disease** was contracted before a period, or part of a period, of service to which the factor is related; and
- (b) the relationship suggested between the **caisson disease** and the particular service of a person is a relationship set out in paragraph 8(1)(e), 9(1)(e), or 70(5)(d) of the Act.

4. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:

**“caisson disease”** means a condition caused by the formation of nitrogen bubbles in the blood or body tissue due to an abrupt reduction in the pressure of the air surrounding the person, attracting ICD code 993.3;

**“ICD code”** means a number assigned to a particular kind of injury or disease in the tenth edition of the *International Classification of Diseases* 9th Revision, effective date of 1 October 1993, copyrighted by the US Commission on Professional and Hospital Activities, and having the Library of Congress number 77-94472.

Dated this *Thirteenth* day of *April* 1995

The Common Seal of the )  
 Repatriation Medical Authority )  
 was affixed to this instrument )  
 in the presence of: )

KEN DONALD  
 CHAIRMAN