

REVOKED

Statement of Principles

concerning

OSTEOARTHRISIS

ICD CODE: 715

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986
subsection 196B(2)

1. Being of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **osteoarthritis and death from osteoarthritis** can be related to operational service rendered by veterans, peacekeeping service rendered by members of Peacekeeping forces and hazardous service rendered by members of the Forces, the Repatriation Medical Authority determines, under subsection 196B(2) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*, that the factors that must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting **osteoarthritis or death from osteoarthritis** with the circumstances of that service, are:
 - (a) having been a prisoner of war; or
 - (b) contracting significant inflammatory joint disease in the relevant joint before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
 - (c) suffering an intra-articular fracture of the relevant joint before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
 - (d) having a malalignment of the relevant joint before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
 - (e) being obese for at least 10 years before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis in either knee joint; or
 - (f) suffering a depositional joint disease in the relevant joint before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or

- (g) suffering a trauma to the relevant joint which has resulted in permanent ligamentous instability before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
 - (h) suffering a trauma to the relevant joint which has resulted in permanent ligamentous instability before the clinical worsening of osteoarthritis.
2. Subject to clause 3 (below) at least one of the factors set out in paragraphs **1(a) to 1(h)** must be related to any service rendered by a person.
3. The factor set out in paragraph **1(h)** applies only where:
- (a) the person's **osteoarthritis** was contracted prior to a period, or part of a period, of service to which the factor is related; and
 - (b) the relationship suggested between the **osteoarthritis** and the particular service of a person is a relationship set out in paragraph 8(1)(e), 9(1)(e), 70(5)(d), or 70(5A)(d) of the Act.
4. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:

“depositional joint disease” means gout, pseudogout, haemochromatosis, Wilson's disease or ochronosis;

“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;

“inflammatory joint disease” means a disease affecting a joint or joints where there is swelling, inflammation and pain that persisted for at least five days;

“intra-articular fracture” means a fracture involving the articular surface of a joint;

“malalignment” means the displacement out of line resulting as the effect of underlying muscle weakness, deformity of other joints, joint dysplasia or disparate leg length;

“obesity” means having a Body Mass Index (BMI) greater than 30, where:

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{W}{H^2}$$

and where:

W is the person's weight in kilograms; and

