

Statement of Principles
concerning
ANIMAL ENVENOMATION

ICD CODE: 989.5

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986
subsection 196B(2)

1. Being of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **animal envenomation** and **death from animal envenomation** 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* (the Act), that the factors that must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting **animal envenomation** or **death from animal envenomation** with the circumstances of that service, are:
 - (a) being bitten, stung, or injured by a venomous animal immediately before the clinical onset of animal envenomation; or
 - (b) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for the animal envenomation.
2. Subject to clause 3 (below) at least one of the factors set out in paragraphs **1(a) and 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 **animal envenomation** occurred before a period, or part of a period, of service to which the factor is related; and
 - (b) the relationship suggested between the **animal envenomation** 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:

“animal envenomation” means experiencing the poisonous effects of animal venom, which is a poison or toxic substance elaborated in specialised animal glands and delivered to the victim by a specialised delivery apparatus, and which in relatively small amounts has chemical action that may cause damage to structure or disturbance of function, either by the direct effect of that venom or due to indirect effects such as hypersensitivity reaction, attracting ICD code 989.5;

“venomous animal” means a member of the subkingdom Metazoa, being an organism that relies on preformed food, with a cellular structure bound by flexible membranes and usually characterised by mobility and bilateral symmetry, and which contains specific glands for the production of venom, connected to a specialised apparatus for delivering that venom by such means as bites, stings or injection. Such organisms include:

- (a) venomous snakes and lizards;
- (b) venomous spiders;
- (c) scorpions;
- (d) hymenopterous insects (hornets, wasps and bees);
- (e) venomous centipedes and millipedes;
- (f) ticks and other venomous arthropods;
- (g) venomous marine animals (including shellfish, jellyfish, venomous fish),

and excludes animals with toxins distributed within their bodily tissues that cause toxic effects or death after ingestion;

“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 *Twentyfifth* day of *May* 1995

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

KEN DONALD
CHAIRMAN