

Determination
of
Statement of Principles
concerning
ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

ICD CODES: 427.31

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986

1. This Statement of Principles is determined by the Repatriation Medical Authority under subsection **196B(2)** of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (the Act).

Kind of injury, disease or death

2. (a) This Statement of Principles is about **atrial fibrillation** and **death from atrial fibrillation**.

(b) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, "**atrial fibrillation**" means an intermittent or sustained arrhythmia arising in the atria of the heart causing an irregularly occurring irregular ventricular response, attracting ICD code 427.31.

Note: (this note does not form part of the instrument) Dysrhythmias of this type precipitated by acute metabolic or toxic agents will be included within Statements of Principles relating to cardiac dysrhythmias, attracting ICD code 427.

Basis for determining the factors

3. The Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **atrial fibrillation** can be related to relevant service rendered by veterans, members of Peacekeeping Forces, or members of the Forces.

Factors that must be related to service

4. Subject to clause 6, the factors set out in at least one of the paragraphs in clause 5 must be related to any relevant service rendered by the person.

Factors

5. The factors that must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting **atrial fibrillation** or **death from atrial fibrillation** with the circumstances of a person's relevant service are:
 - (a) suffering from cardiac disease at the time of the clinical onset of atrial fibrillation; or
 - (b) suffering from thyrotoxicosis at the time of the clinical onset of atrial fibrillation; or
 - (c) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for atrial fibrillation.

Factors that apply only to material contribution or aggravation

6. Paragraph 5(c) applies only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, atrial fibrillation where the person's atrial fibrillation was suffered or contracted before or during (but not arising out of) the person's relevant service; paragraph 8(1)(e), 9(1)(e), 70(5)(d) or 70(5A)(d) of the Act refers.

Other definitions

7. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:

“cardiac disease” means any disease affecting the function and structure of the epicardium, myocardium or endocardium including myocardial infarction, cardiomyopathy from any cause, cardiac valvular lesions or acute trauma to the myocardium;

“ICD code” means a number assigned to a particular kind of injury or disease in the Australian Version of The International Classification of Diseases, 9th revision, Clinical Modification (ICD-9-CM), effective date of 1 July 1995, copyrighted by the National Coding Centre, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney, NSW, and having ISBN 0 642 22235 5;

“relevant service” means:

- (a) operational service; or
- (b) peacekeeping service; or
- (c) hazardous service;

“thyrotoxicosis” means a condition caused by excessive quantities of thyroid hormones, whether the excess results from overproduction by the thyroid gland (as in Graves' disease), originates outside the thyroid, or is due to loss of storage function and leakage from the gland, attracting the ICD code 242.

Dated this *Sixteenth* day of *January* 1996

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

KEN DONALD
CHAIRMAN