

Revocation and Determination

of

Statement of Principles concerning

OTITIC BAROTRAUMA

ICD 10-AM-CODE: T70.0

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986

1. The Repatriation Medical Authority under subsection **196B(3)** of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (the Act):
 - (a) revokes Instrument No.18 of 1996; and
 - (b) determines in its place the following Statement of Principles.

Kind of injury, disease or death

2. (a) This Statement of Principles is about **otitic barotrauma** and **death from otitic barotrauma**.
 - (b) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, "**otitic barotrauma**" means damage to the middle or inner ear arising from inequalities in the barometric pressure on each side of the tympanic membrane, attracting ICD-10-AM code T70.0.

Basis for determining the factors

3. On the sound medical-scientific evidence available, the Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that it is more probable than not that **otitic barotrauma and death from otitic barotrauma** can be related to relevant service rendered by veterans or members of the Forces.

Factors that must be related to service

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

Factors

5. The factors that must exist before it can be said that, on the balance of probabilities, **otitic barotrauma** or **death from otitic barotrauma** is connected with the circumstances of a person's relevant service are:
 - (a) being exposed to an abrupt change in the barometric pressure surrounding the person at the time of the clinical onset of otitic barotrauma; or
 - (b) being exposed to an abrupt change in the barometric pressure surrounding the person at the time of the clinical worsening of otitic barotrauma; or
 - (c) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for otitic barotrauma.

Factors that apply only to material contribution or aggravation

6. Paragraphs **5(b) to 5(c)** apply only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, otitic barotrauma where the person's otitic barotrauma was suffered or contracted before or during (but not arising out of) the person's relevant service; paragraph 8(1)(e), 9(1)(e) or 70(5)(d) of the Act refers.

Inclusion of Statements of Principles

7. In this Statement of Principles if a relevant factor applies and that factor includes an injury or disease in respect of which there is a Statement of Principles then the factors in that last mentioned Statement of Principles apply in accordance with the terms of that Statement of Principles.

Other definitions

8. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:

“being exposed to an abrupt change in the barometric pressure” means directly experiencing a sudden rise or fall in air or water pressure during rapid altitude change in an aircraft or whilst underwater diving;

“death from otitic barotrauma” in relation to a person includes death from a terminal event or condition that was contributed to by the person's otitic barotrauma;

“ICD-10-AM code” means a number assigned to a particular kind of injury or disease in The International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th revision, Australian Modification (ICD-10-AM), Second Edition, effective date of 1 July 2000, copyrighted by the National Centre for Classification in Health, Sydney, NSW, and having ISBN 1 86487 271 3;

“relevant service” means:

- (a) eligible war service (other than operational service); or
- (b) defence service (other than hazardous service);

“terminal event” means the proximate or ultimate cause of death and includes:

- (a) pneumonia;
- (b) respiratory failure;
- (c) cardiac arrest;
- (d) circulatory failure; or
- (e) cessation of brain function.

Application

- 9. This Instrument applies to all matters to which section 120B of the Act applies.

Dated this **Twenty-fourth** day of
May 2001

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

KEN DONALD
CHAIRMAN