



Australian Government  
Repatriation Medical Authority

## Statement of Principles concerning

# GRAVES' DISEASE

## No. 34 of 2013

for the purposes of the

*Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*  
and

*Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004*

### Title

1. This Instrument may be cited as Statement of Principles concerning Graves' disease No. 34 of 2013.

### Determination

2. This Statement of Principles is determined by the Repatriation Medical Authority under subsection **196B(3)** of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (the VEA).

### Kind of injury, disease or death

3. (a) This Statement of Principles is about **Graves' disease** and **death from Graves' disease**.  
(b) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, "**Graves' disease**" means a chronic autoimmune disease of the thyroid gland, in which thyroid autoantibodies (thyroid-stimulating immunoglobulins) activate the thyroid stimulating hormone receptor, causing thyroid hyperplasia and stimulating excessive thyroid hormone synthesis and secretion. Typical presenting features include a diffuse goitre, hyperthyroidism, a characteristic ophthalmopathy and, less commonly, a characteristic dermopathy. This definition excludes acute thyroiditis, subacute thyroiditis, Hashimoto's thyroiditis, postpartum thyroiditis, non-autoimmune chronic thyroiditis and secondary hyperthyroidism.  
(c) Graves' disease attracts ICD-10-AM code E05.0.

- (d) In the application of this Statement of Principles, the definition of "**Graves' disease**" is that given at paragraph 3(b) above.

**Basis for determining the factors**

4. On the sound medical-scientific evidence available, the Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that it is more probable than not that **Graves' disease** and **death from Graves' disease** can be related to relevant service rendered by veterans or members of the Forces under the VEA, or members under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (the MRCA).

**Factors that must be related to service**

5. Subject to clause 7, at least one of the factors set out in clause 6 must be related to the relevant service rendered by the person.

**Factors**

6. The factor that must exist before it can be said that, on the balance of probabilities, **Graves' disease** or **death from Graves' disease** is connected with the circumstances of a person's relevant service is:
- (a) having iodine excess from consuming foods, dietary supplements or medications with a high content of iodine, within the three months before the clinical onset of Graves' disease; or
  - (b) being treated with a drug or a drug from a class of drugs from the specified list for a continuous period of at least six weeks, within the one year before the clinical onset of Graves' disease; or
  - (c) undergoing a course of therapeutic radiation for cancer, where the thyroid gland was in the field of radiation, within the ten years before the clinical onset of Graves' disease; or
  - (d) having received a cumulative equivalent dose of at least 20 sieverts of ionising radiation to the thyroid gland, within the ten years before the clinical onset of Graves' disease; or
  - (e) receiving radioactive iodine (<sup>131</sup>I) for the treatment of multinodular goitre within the ten years before the clinical onset of Graves' disease; or
  - (f) smoking at least five pack-years of cigarettes, or the equivalent thereof in other tobacco products, before the clinical onset of Graves' disease, and where smoking has ceased, the clinical onset of Graves' disease has occurred within five years of cessation; or
  - (g) having iodine excess from consuming foods, dietary supplements or medications with a high content of iodine, within the three months before the clinical worsening of Graves' disease; or
  - (h) being treated with a drug or a drug from a class of drugs from the specified list for a continuous period of at least six weeks, within the one year before the clinical worsening of Graves' disease; or
  - (i) being treated with amiodarone for a continuous period of at least six weeks, within the one year before the clinical worsening of Graves' disease; or

- (j) undergoing a course of therapeutic radiation for cancer, where the thyroid gland was in the field of radiation, within the ten years before the clinical worsening of Graves' disease; or
- (k) having received a cumulative equivalent dose of at least 20 sieverts of ionising radiation to the thyroid gland, within the ten years before the clinical worsening of Graves' disease; or
- (l) receiving radioactive iodine (<sup>131</sup>I) for the treatment of multinodular goitre within the ten years before the clinical worsening of Graves' disease; or
- (m) smoking at least five pack-years of cigarettes, or the equivalent thereof in other tobacco products, before the clinical worsening of Graves' disease, and where smoking has ceased, the clinical worsening of Graves' disease has occurred within five years of cessation; or
- (n) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for Graves' disease.

#### **Factors that apply only to material contribution or aggravation**

7. Paragraphs **6(g) to 6(n)** apply only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, Graves' disease where the person's Graves' disease was suffered or contracted before or during (but not arising out of) the person's relevant service.

#### **Inclusion of Statements of Principles**

8. 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 as in force from time to time.

#### **Other definitions**

9. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:

**"a drug or a drug from a class of drugs from the specified list"** means:

- (a) alemtuzumab (Campath-1H);
- (b) highly active antiretroviral therapy; or
- (c) interferon alpha;

**"cumulative equivalent dose"** means the total dose of ionising radiation received by the particular organ or tissue. The formula used to calculate the cumulative equivalent dose allows doses from multiple types of ionising radiation to be combined, by accounting for their differing biological effect. The unit of equivalent dose is the sievert. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, the calculation of cumulative equivalent dose excludes doses received from normal background radiation, but includes therapeutic radiation, diagnostic radiation, cosmic radiation at high altitude, radiation from occupation-related sources and radiation from nuclear explosions or accidents;

**"death from Graves' disease"** in relation to a person includes death from a terminal event or condition that was contributed to by the person's Graves' disease;

