



Australian Government
Repatriation Medical Authority

Statement of Principles
concerning
CHILBLAINS
(Balance of Probabilities)
(No. 30 of 2018)

The Repatriation Medical Authority determines the following Statement of Principles under subsection 196B(3) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*.

Dated 2 March 2018

The Common Seal of the
Repatriation Medical Authority
was affixed to this instrument
at the direction of:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Saunders'.

Professor Nicholas Saunders AO
Chairperson

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1 Name

This is the Statement of Principles concerning *chilblains (Balance of Probabilities)* (No. 30 of 2018).

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on 2 April 2018.

3 Authority

This instrument is made under subsection 196B(3) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*.

4 Revocation

The Statement of Principles concerning chilblains No. 10 of 2009 made under subsection 196B(3) of the VEA is revoked.

5 Application

This instrument applies to a claim to which section 120B of the VEA or section 339 of the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* applies.

6 Definitions

The terms defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary have the meaning given when used in this instrument.

7 Kind of injury, disease or death to which this Statement of Principles relates

- (1) This Statement of Principles is about chilblains and death from chilblains.

Meaning of chilblains

- (2) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, chilblains:
- (a) means painful, localised erythema and inflammatory swelling from the reaction of the small blood vessels in the skin to exposure to non-freezing cold; and
 - (b) excludes non-freezing cold injury, frostnip and frostbite.

Note 1: Chilblains are also known as pernios or pernio.

Note 2: Chilblains manifest as erythematous to violaceous macules, papules, plaques or nodules in sites of cold exposure. Symptoms of pruritus, pain or burning often accompany the skin lesions, and complications of blistering, ulceration or secondary infection may occur. The most common sites for involvement are the fingers and toes, but other sites such as the legs, hands, nose, face and ears may also be affected.

- (3) While chilblains attracts ICD-10-AM code T69.1, in applying this Statement of Principles the meaning of chilblains is that given in subsection (2).
- (4) For subsection (3), a reference to an ICD-10-AM code is a reference to the code assigned to a particular kind of injury or disease in *The International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision, Australian Modification (ICD-10-AM)*, Tenth Edition, effective date of 1 July 2017, copyrighted by the Independent Hospital Pricing Authority, ISBN 978-1-76007-296-4.

Death from chilblains

- (5) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, chilblains, in relation to a person, includes death from a terminal event or condition that was contributed to by the person's chilblains.

Note: *terminal event* is defined in the Schedule 1 – Dictionary.

8 Basis for determining the factors

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

Note: *MRCA*, *relevant service* and *VEA* are defined in the Schedule 1 – Dictionary.

9 Factors that must exist

At least one of the following factors must exist before it can be said that, on the balance of probabilities, chilblains or death from chilblains is connected with the circumstances of a person's relevant service:

- (1) exposing the affected part of the body to non-freezing temperatures below ten degrees Celsius within the 24 hours before the clinical onset of chilblains;
- (2) having a disease from the specified list of diseases at the time of the clinical onset of chilblains;

Note: *specified list of diseases* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (3) having a body mass index (BMI) of less than 21 at the time of the clinical onset of chilblains;

Note: *BMI* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (4) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for chilblains.

10 Relationship to service

- (1) The existence in a person of any factor referred to in section 9, must be related to the relevant service rendered by the person.

- (2) The factor set out in subsection 9(4) applies only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, chilblains where the person's chilblains was suffered or contracted before or during (but did not arise out of) the person's relevant service.

11 Factors referring to an injury or disease covered by another Statement of Principles

In this Statement of Principles:

- (1) if a factor referred to in section 9 applies in relation to a person; and
- (2) that factor refers to an injury or disease in respect of which a Statement of Principles has been determined under subsection 196B(3) of the VEA;

then the factors in that Statement of Principles apply in accordance with the terms of that Statement of Principles as in force from time to time.

Schedule 1 - Dictionary

Note: See Section 6

1 Definitions

In this instrument:

BMI means W/H^2 where:

W is the person's weight in kilograms; and

H is the person's height in metres.

chilblains—see subsection 7(2).

MRCA means the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004.

relevant service means:

- (a) eligible war service (other than operational service) under the VEA;
- (b) defence service (other than hazardous service and British nuclear test defence service) under the VEA; or
- (c) peacetime service under the MRCA.

Note: **MRCA** and **VEA** are also defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

specified list of diseases means:

- (a) anorexia nervosa;
- (b) antiphospholipid syndrome;
- (c) Behçet disease;
- (d) chronic myelomonocytic leukaemia;
- (e) cold agglutinin disorder;
- (f) cryofibrinogenaemia;
- (g) cryoglobulinaemia;
- (h) discoid lupus erythematosus;
- (i) dysproteinaemia;
- (j) macroglobulinaemia;
- (k) monoclonal gammopathy;
- (l) myelodysplastic syndrome;
- (m) Raynaud disease;
- (n) rheumatoid arthritis;
- (o) Sjögren syndrome; or
- (p) systemic lupus erythematosus.

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

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

VEA means the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986.