



**Australian Government**  
**Repatriation Medical Authority**

**Statement of Principles**  
**concerning**  
**THROMBOANGIITIS OBLITERANS**  
**(Reasonable Hypothesis)**  
**(No. 45 of 2026)**

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The Repatriation Medical Authority determines the following Statement of Principles under subsection 196B(2) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*.

Dated 24 April 2026

Professor Terence Campbell AM  
Chairperson  
by and on behalf of  
The Repatriation Medical Authority

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**1 Name**

This is the Statement of Principles concerning *thromboangiitis obliterans* (*Reasonable Hypothesis*) (No. 45 of 2026).

**2 Commencement**

This instrument commences on **25 May 2026**.

**3 Authority**

This instrument is made under subsection 196B(2) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*.

**4 Repeal**

The Statement of Principles concerning thromboangiitis obliterans (*Reasonable Hypothesis*) (No. 28 of 2017) (Federal Register of Legislation No. F2017L00462) made under subsection 196B(2) of the VEA is repealed.

**5 Application**

This instrument applies to a claim to which section 120A of the VEA or section 338 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 thromboangiitis obliterans and death from thromboangiitis obliterans.

*Meaning of thromboangiitis obliterans*

- (2) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, thromboangiitis obliterans:
- (a) means a nonatherosclerotic, segmental, inflammatory, occlusive vascular disease affecting the small and medium-sized arteries and veins.

Note: **thromboangiitis obliterans** is also known as Buerger's disease.

- (3) While thromboangiitis obliterans attracts ICD-10-AM code 173.1, in applying this Statement of Principles the meaning of thromboangiitis obliterans 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 thromboangiitis obliterans*

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

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

## 8 Basis for determining the factors

The Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that thromboangiitis obliterans and death from thromboangiitis obliterans can be related to relevant service rendered by veterans, members of Peacekeeping Forces, 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 as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting thromboangiitis obliterans or death from thromboangiitis obliterans with the circumstances of a person's relevant service:

- (1) smoking at least 3 pack-years of cigarettes, or the equivalent thereof in other tobacco products, within the 6 years before the clinical onset;

Note: *one pack-year* of cigarettes, or the equivalent thereof in other tobacco products is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (2) the oral use of smokeless tobacco on more days than not, for at least 3 years within the 6 years before the clinical onset;

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

- (3) the use of nicotine replacement therapy on more days than not, for at least 3 years within the 6 years before clinical onset;

- (4) smoking at least one quarter a pack-year of cigarettes or the equivalent thereof in other tobacco products, within the one year before the clinical worsening of thromboangiitis obliterans;

Note: *one pack-year* of cigarettes, or the equivalent thereof in other tobacco products is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (5) the oral use of smokeless tobacco on more days than not, for at least 3 months within the one year before clinical worsening;
- (6) the use of nicotine replacement therapy on more days than not, for at least 3 months within the 2 years before clinical worsening;
- (7) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for thromboangiitis obliterans before clinical worsening.

#### **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 clinical worsening aspect of factors set out in section 9 apply only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, thromboangiitis obliterans where the person's thromboangiitis obliterans 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(2) 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:

**MRCA** means the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004*.

**one pack-year** means the amount of tobacco consumed in smoking 20 cigarettes per day for a period of 1 year, or an equivalent amount of tobacco products.

Note 1: An equivalent amount of tobacco products is 7,300 grams of smoking tobacco by weight, either in cigarettes, pipe tobacco or cigars, or a combination of same. For pipe tobacco, cigars or combinations of multiple tobacco types, 1 gram of tobacco is considered to be equal to one cigarette.

Note 2: Pack-years are calculated by dividing the number of cigarettes smoked per day by 20 and multiplying this number by the number of years the person has smoked. For example, smoking 10 cigarettes per day for 10 years is equal to 5 pack-years, and smoking 40 cigarettes per day for 10 years is equal to 20 pack-year

**relevant service** means:

- (a) operational service under the VEA;
- (b) peacekeeping service under the VEA;
- (c) hazardous service under the VEA;
- (d) British nuclear test defence service under the VEA;
- (e) warlike service under the MRCA; or
- (f) non-warlike service under the MRCA.

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

**smokeless tobacco** means tobacco products without combustion or pyrolysis at the time of use, including chewing tobacco and tobacco snuff.

**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.

**thromboangiitis obliterans**—see subsection 7(2).

**VEA** means the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*.