



Australian Government
Repatriation Medical Authority

Statement of Principles
concerning
GULF WAR ILLNESS
(Reasonable Hypothesis)
(No. 47 of 2026)

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

Dated 16 June 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 *Gulf War Illness (Reasonable Hypothesis)* (No. 47 of 2026).

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on **23 June 2026**.

3 Authority

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

4 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.

5 Definitions

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

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

- (1) This Statement of Principles is about Gulf War Illness and death from Gulf War Illness.

Meaning of Gulf War Illness

- (2) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, Gulf War Illness:
- means multiple medically unexplained symptoms seen in military personnel that meets the following diagnostic criteria (derived from the Kansas definition):
- (a) the symptoms have persisted for at least 6 consecutive months;
 - (b) the symptoms are not better explained by another medical condition including but not limited to moderate to severe traumatic brain injury, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, chronic multisymptom illness, somatic symptom disorder or posttraumatic stress disorder; and
 - (c) having concurrently at least one symptom of moderate or severe severity or at least two symptoms of mild severity in at least 3 of the 6 following symptom domains:
 - I. Fatigue and sleep symptom domain;
 - i. Fatigue; or
 - ii. Feeling unwell after exercise or exertion; or

- iii. Problems falling or staying asleep; or
 - iv. Not feeling rested after sleep;
- II. Pain symptom domain;
 - i. Pain in joints; or
 - ii. Pain in muscles; or
 - iii. Body pain where you hurt all over;
- III. Neurological/Cognitive/Mood symptom domain;
 - i. Problems remembering recent information; or
 - ii. Feeling irritable or having angry outbursts; or
 - iii. Numbness or tingling in extremities; or
 - iv. Headaches; or
 - v. Eyes very sensitive to light; or
 - vi. Trouble finding words when speaking; or
 - vii. Feeling down or depressed; or
 - viii. Difficulty concentrating; or
 - ix. Night sweats; or
 - x. Feeling dizzy, lightheaded or faint; or
 - xi. Low tolerance for heat or cold; or
 - xii. Symptoms in response to smells or chemicals; or
 - xiii. Blurred or double vision; or
 - xiv. Tremors or shaking; or
- IV. Gastrointestinal symptom domain;
 - i. Diarrhoea; or
 - ii. Nausea or upset stomach; or
 - iii. Abdominal pain or cramping; or
- V. Respiratory symptom domain;
 - i. Difficulty breathing; or
 - ii. Frequent coughing without a cold; or
 - iii. Wheezing in chest; or
- VI. Skin symptom domain.
 - i. Skin rash; or
 - ii. Other skin problems.

*Death from **Gulf War Illness***

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

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

7 Basis for determining the factors

The Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that Gulf War Illness and death from Gulf War Illness 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.

8 Factors that must exist

The following factor must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting Gulf War Illness or death from Gulf War Illness with the circumstances of a person's relevant service:

- (1) having deployed to the Gulf War Theatre of Operations at any time during the period 2 August 1990 to 21 September 1991 before clinical onset, and where this deployment has occurred in the 10 years immediately preceding clinical onset;

Note: *Gulf War Theatre of Operations* is defined in the Schedule 1 – Dictionary.

9 Relationship to service

The existence in a person of the factor referred to in section 8, must be related to the relevant service rendered by the person.

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

In this Statement of Principles:

- (1) if the factor referred to in section 8 applies in relation to a person; and
- (2) the 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 factor in that Statement of Principles applies in accordance with the terms of that Statement of Principles as in force from time to time.

Schedule 1 - Dictionary

Note: See Section 5

1 Definitions

In this instrument:

Gulf War Illness—see subsection 6(2).

Gulf War Theatre of Operations means a geographic area that encompasses: Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the Island of Cyprus; and the sea areas contained within the Gulf of Suez, the Gulf of Aqaba, the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Gulf of Oman, the Suez Canal and Mediterranean Sea east of 030 degrees E.

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

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 also defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

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*.