



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

# **Statement of Principles concerning CHILBLAINS (Reasonable Hypothesis) (No. 66 of 2026)**

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The Repatriation Medical Authority determines the following Statement of Principles under section 370CB of the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004*.

Dated 4 September 2026

Dr Anthony Lynham AO  
Chairperson  
by and on behalf of  
The Repatriation Medical Authority

## Contents

|                                      |                                                                                           |          |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1                                    | Name .....                                                                                | 3        |
| 2                                    | Commencement .....                                                                        | 3        |
| 3                                    | Authority .....                                                                           | 3        |
| 4                                    | Repeal .....                                                                              | 3        |
| 5                                    | Application.....                                                                          | 3        |
| 6                                    | Definitions.....                                                                          | 3        |
| 7                                    | Kind of injury, disease or death to which this Statement of Principles relates .....      | 3        |
| 8                                    | Basis for determining the factors .....                                                   | 4        |
| 9                                    | Factors that must exist.....                                                              | 4        |
| 10                                   | Relationship to service .....                                                             | 4        |
| 11                                   | Factors referring to an injury or disease covered by another Statement of Principles..... | 5        |
| <b>Schedule 1 - Dictionary .....</b> |                                                                                           | <b>6</b> |
| 1                                    | Definitions.....                                                                          | 6        |

**1 Name**

This is the Statement of Principles concerning *chilblains (Reasonable Hypothesis)* (No. 66 of 2026).

**2 Commencement**

This instrument commences on 5 October 2026.

**3 Authority**

This instrument is made under section 370CB of the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004*.

**4 Repeal**

The Statement of Principles concerning chilblains (Reasonable Hypothesis) (No. 29 of 2018) (Federal Register of Legislation No. F2018L00198) made under section 370CB of the MRCA is repealed.

**5 Application**

This instrument applies to a claim to which 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 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 cold; and
- (b) excludes frostnip and frostbite.

**Note 1:** Chilblains are also known as perniosis or perniosis.

**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**

The Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that chilblains and death from chilblains can be related to relevant service under the MRCA.

Note: *MRCA* and *relevant service* 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 chilblains or death from chilblains with the circumstances of a person's relevant service:

- (1) exposing the affected part of the body to temperatures below 10 degrees Celsius, for more than 8 hours, within the 24 hours before the clinical onset;
- (2) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for chilblains 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 factors set out in subsection 9 apply 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 section 370CB of the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004*;

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:

***chilblains***—see subsection 7(2).

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

***relevant service*** means:

- (a) warlike service;
- (b) non warlike service;
- (c) British nuclear test defence service;
- (d) hazardous service.

***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.