

Daddy's Poem

Her hair was up in a pony tail,
her favourite dress tied with a bow.
Today was Daddy's Day at school,
and she couldn't wait to go.

But her mummy tried to tell her,
that she probably should stay home.
Why the kids might not understand,
if she went to school alone.

But she was not afraid;
she knew just what to say.
What to tell her classmates
of why he wasn't there today..

But still her mother worried,
for her to face this day alone.
And that was why once again,
she tried to keep her daughter home.

But the little girl went to school
eager to tell them all.
About a dad she never sees
a dad who never calls.

There were daddies along the back wall,
for everyone to meet.

Children squirming impatiently,
anxious in their seats

One by one the teacher called
a student from the class.
To introduce their daddy,
as seconds slowly passed.

At last the teacher called her name,
every child turned to stare.
Each of them was searching,
a man who wasn't there.

'Where's her daddy at?'
She heard a boy call out.

'She probably doesn't have one,'
another student dared to shout.

And from somewhere near the back,
she heard a daddy say,
'Looks like another deadbeat dad,
too busy to waste his day.'

The words did not offend her,
as she smiled up at her Mum.
And looked back at her teacher,
who told her to go on.

And with hands behind her back,
slowly she began to speak.
And out from the mouth of a child,
came words incredibly unique.

'My Daddy couldn't be here,
because he lives so far away.
But I know he wishes he could be,
since this is such a special day.

And though you cannot meet him,
I wanted you to know.

All about my daddy,
and how much he loves me so.

He loved to tell me stories
he taught me to ride my bike.
He surprised me with pink roses,
and taught me to fly a kite.

We used to share fudge sundaes,
and ice cream in a cone.
And though you cannot see him,
I'm not standing here alone.

'Cause my daddy's always with me,
even though we are apart
I know because he told me,
he'll forever be in my heart'

With that, her little hand reached up,
and lay across her chest.
Feeling her own heartbeat,
beneath her favourite dress.

And from somewhere in the crowd of dads,
her mother stood in tears.
Proudly watching her daughter,
who was wise beyond her years.

For she stood up for the love
of a man not in her life.
Doing what was best for her,
doing what was right.

And when she dropped her hand back down,
staring straight into the crowd.
She finished with a voice so soft,
but its message clear and loud.

'I love my daddy very much,
he's my shining star.
And if he could, he'd be here,
but heaven's just too far.

You see he is a soldier
And died just this past year
When a roadside bomb hit his convoy
and taught brave men to fear.

But sometimes when I close my eyes,
it's like he never went away.'
And then she closed her eyes,
and saw him there that day.

(Continued on Page 31)



The Role Of RAEME Is To :-

*" Provide Maintenance Engineering , Materiel Maintenance ,
Modifications , and Recovery Support to the Army."*

The Horse's Mouth

The Newsletter of the RAEME Association of WA (Inc.)

Autumn 2009

This newsletter is the official journal of the **ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION OF WA (INC.)**. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month, except for January, at 7.00pm, Bayswater Hotel, 78-80 Railway Parade, Bayswater, in the Function Room. Membership or other enquiries may be made to any of the committee members. A list is printed on Page 2 of this journal.

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The RAEME Association of WA (Inc.)
PO Box 186, Bayswater, WA 6933

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DEADLINE

All contributions for the next edition of THE HORSE'S MOUTH must be with the editor no later than the 22nd of MAY 2009.

DISCLAIMER

Thoughts expressed in articles in THE HORSE'S MOUTH are those held by the writer/contributors and not necessarily those of the Association.



Defence Childcare Soon To Be Secured

The Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, the Hon. Warren Snowdon MP, today welcomed news that the sale and transfer process for the ABC2 Group Child Care Centres is progressing well.

While contracts for the sale of the first 65 centres have started being exchanged, the receiver has requested that the Australian Government seek a one-off continuation of their appointment for six weeks because of the number and complexity of offers received, as well as the large number of stakeholders involved.

Today Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard confirmed that subject to the approval of the Supreme Court of NSW to the continued receivership, the Government will continue to fund losses during this period, up to 15 May 2009, drawing from unused funds from the previous \$58 million commitment. No additional funding will be required.

Minister Snowdon further assured Defence families that arrangements to secure a single new provider for the 21 Defence owned and leased centres would be in place in the very near future.

"I am confident that arrangements with a new provider will soon be in place," Mr Snowdon said.

"Within the next fortnight, I expect to be able to write to Defence Families that use Defence Childcare Centres to advise them of the arrangements with the new provider."

Defence intends to novate the existing management contract for the 21 Defence owned and leased centres under the current terms and conditions to keep the child care centres under a national management model.

Defence will continue to monitor a further 20 centres where Defence has priority access arrangements in place. Today's announcement by the Deputy Prime Minister means ongoing support to ensure stability to Australian Defence Force families using these centres.

Allotment Lump Payment
CFN - SGT \$1.00 \$26.00
WO2 - CAPT \$1.50 \$39.00
MAJ + \$2.00 \$52.00

Methods of Contributions:

1. Allotment from pay (for serving ARA members) Allotment is the Preferred Method

Allotment to be made to RAEME Corps Fund Non-BSB Allottee number 460 via your pay rep/clerk.

2. Annual lump-sum payment - made out to RAEME Corps funds Payment forward to: SO2 Corps - RAEME, HOC Cell, Latchford Bks, BANDIANA, Vic, 3694

3. Direct deposit / funds transfer to RAEME Corps Funds DEFCREDIT account

DEFCREDIT
BSB: 803205

Account Name: RAEME Corps Fund
Membership Number: 11832
Account Number: 20509705

Each contributor to Corps Subscriptions will receive a uniquely numbered Corps Membership Medallion. The membership medallion is designed on the St Eligius (Corps Patron Saint) coin.

Regardless of which method of contribution is chosen it is requested that this subscription form be completed and forward to SO2 Corps RAEME to ensure we have your correct contact details to enable us to send you your Corps Medallion.

Forward nomination form to:

MAJ G.M. Anderson
SO2 Heritage - RAEME
Latchford Barracks,
BANDIANA, Vic, 3688

Email:

graham.anderson@defence.gov.au
Fax: (02) 6055 2436
Ph: (02) 6055 4308

Some other useful links to advertise:

<http://www.raeme.org.au/> This links to all association websites

<http://www.defence.gov.au/army/STAYARMY/RAEME.asp>

http://www.defence.gov.au/army/AWMA_mus/RAEME_Products.asp

<http://www.raemesa.com/Corps/Instructions.html>

Statistics on Army Street Machine ARMYGEDDON:

<http://www.defence.gov.au/defencemagazine/editions/200609/groups/army.htm>

“Tank” Pontifex

Congratulations to Warrant Officer Class 1 Robert “Tank” Pontifex CSM for the award of the OAM in the 2009 Australia Day Honours.

Tank, was the ASM at SASR Workshop and now has taken his expertise to Queensland.

He was awarded the OAM for his meritorious service in the field of Materiel Maintenance.

WELL DONE, Tank! You thoroughly deserve recognition for the work you have put in for the Corps.

Warning Order for Horses Mouth

Please invite all RAEME Brethren: On Fri 24 April (ANZAC Eve) a RAEME Vigil to be held at King’s Park - Details to follow - POC WO2 Grant Stinson grant.stinson@defence.gov.au Wk Ph: 08) 9269 4594 or Mob: 0417 280 052

Fallen RAEME Soldiers being commemorated are listed on website:

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~thegardensfamily/Photos/HonourAve/index.htm>

Cpl William A SWAN of the 2/10 Ordnance Workshop who died as a POW in North Borneo on the 1st of February 1945 aged 42 years. His plaque is at tree 296 in Lovekin Drive;

Call Centres

He also works for Optus, TPG, ANZ, NAB, Telstra etc etc....

Mujibar was trying to get a job in India

The Personnel Manager said, ‘Mujibar, you have passed all the tests, except one. Unless you pass it, you cannot qualify for this job.’

Mujibar said, ‘I am ready.’

The manager said, ‘Make a sentence using the words Yellow, Pink and Green.’

Mujibar thought for a few minutes and said, ‘Mister manager, I am ready’

The manager said, ‘Go ahead.’

Mujibar said, ‘The telephone goes green, green, and I pink it up, and say, Yellow, this is Mujibar.’

Mujibar now works at a call centre.

Jim’s Life in the US

Jim is an expert when it comes to things about his own country.

Cemetery Escort Duty - in honor of Ivan Stinnett

I just wanted to get the day over with and go down to Smokey’s. Sneaking a look at my watch I saw the time 1655. Five minutes to go before the cemetery gates are closed for the day. Full dress was hot in the August sun. Oklahoma summertime was as bad as ever—the heat and humidity at the same level—both too high.

I saw the car pull into the drive ‘69 or ‘70 model Cadillac Deville looked factory-new. It pulled into the parking lot at a snail’s pace. An old woman got out so slow I thought she was paralyzed3B she had a cane and a sheaf of flowers—about four or five bunches as best I could tell.

I couldn’t help myself. The thought came unwanted and left a slightly bitter taste: ‘She’s going to spend an hour and for this old soldier my hip hurts like hell and I’m ready to get out of here right now!’ But for this day my duty was to assist anyone coming in.

Kevin would lock the ‘In’ gate and if I could hurry the old biddy along we might make it to Smokey’s in time.

I broke post attention. My hip made gritty noises when I took the first step and the pain went up a notch. I must have made a real military sight: middle-aged man with a small pot gut and half a limp in marine full-dress uniform which had lost its razor crease about thirty minutes after I began the watch at the cemetery.

I stopped in front of her halfway up the walk. She looked up at me with an old woman’s squint.

‘Ma’am, may I assist you in any way?’

She took long enough to answer.

‘Yes son. Can you carry these flowers? I seem to be moving a tad slow these days.’

‘My pleasure ma’am.’ Well it wasn’t too much of a lie.

She looked again. ‘Marine where were you stationed?’

water the plants, empty the bins, answer the phone, read a book, and get the post. A man will dress up for weddings and funerals.

NATURAL

Men wake up as good-looking as they went to bed. Women somehow deteriorate during the night.

OFFSPRING

Ah, children. A woman knows all about her children. She knows about dentist appointments and romances, best friends, favourite foods, secret fears and hopes and dreams. A man is vaguely aware of some short people living in the house.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

A married man should forget his mistakes. There's no use in two people remembering the same thing.

Poor Husband!!!

A husband and wife are shopping in their local Wal-Mart. The husband picks up a case of Budweiser and puts it in their cart.

'What do you think you're doing,' asks the wife.

'They're on sale, only \$10 for 24 cans,' he replies.

'Put them back, we can't afford them,' demands the wife, and so they carry on shopping.

A few aisles further, the woman picks up a \$20 jar of face cream and puts it in the basket.

'What do you think you're doing?,' asks the husband.

'It's my face cream. It makes me look beautiful,' replies the wife.

Her husband retorts: 'So does 24 cans of Budweiser and its half the price.'

On the PA system: 'Cleanup needed on aisle 25, we have a husband down!'

Nine Words Women Use

(1) **Fine:** This is the word women use to end an argument when they are right and you need to shut up.

(2) **Five Minutes:** If she is getting dressed, this means a half an hour. Five minutes is only five minutes if you have just been given five more minutes to watch the game before helping around the house.

(3) **Nothing:** This is the calm before the storm. This means something, and you should be on your toes. Arguments that begin with nothing usually end in fine.

(4) **Go Ahead:** This is a dare, not permission. Don't Do It!

(5) **Loud Sigh:** This is actually a word, but is a non-verbal statement often misunderstood by men. A loud sigh means she thinks you are an idiot and wonders why she is wasting her time standing here and arguing with you about nothing. (Refer back to # 3 for the meaning of nothing.)

(6) **That's Okay:** This is one of the most dangerous statements a woman can make to a man. That's okay means she wants to think long and hard before deciding how and when you will pay for your mistake.

(7) **Thanks:** A woman is thanking you, do not question, or faint. Just say you're welcome. (I want to add in a clause here - This is true, unless she says 'Thanks a lot' - that is PURE sarcasm and she is not thanking you at all. DO NOT say 'you're welcome'. that will bring on a 'whatever').

(8) **Whatever:** Is a woman's way of saying GO TO HELL!

(9) **Don't worry about it, I got it:** Another dangerous statement, meaning this is something that a woman has told a man to do several times, but is now doing it herself. This will later result in a man asking 'What's wrong?' For the woman's response refer to # 3.

The Gay Flight Attendant

My flight was being served by an obviously gay flight attendant, who seemed to put everyone in a good mood as he served us food and drinks.

Cfn Denzil H JONES of the 73 Light Aid Detachment who died as a POW in Sandakan, North Borneo on the 13th of July 1945 aged 42. His plaque is at tree 57W in Marri Way; and

Cfn Charles R McKENNA of the 86 Light Aid Detachment who died as a POW in Sandakan, North Borneo on the 1st of February 1945 aged 34. His plaque is at tree 63W in Marri Way.

War dead records now on DVD

By Cpl Andrew Hetherington

DETAILS of more than 88,000 Army personnel who died on active service have been collated onto a DVD.

Australia's Army War Dead 1885- 1972 contains the service details of soldiers killed between 1882-1972, covering nine theatres of war from Sudan to Vietnam. Jim Rouse, operations officer at Central Army Records Office (CARO) in Melbourne, said the DVD was an initiative of the Victorian Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, which approached CARO in 2002.

"Initially, the project was to capture only those Victorians who died on operational service," Mr Rouse said.

"The project was quickly expanded to capture all Australians who died while serving with the Australian Army, whether on operational duty or otherwise.

"However, for privacy reasons the DVD which has been released to the public details only those who died on operational duty, up to and including the Vietnam War."

To assist with the massive collation task, three Army agencies provided specialist support.

"CARO provided the raw data refer

ences, mainly in book or file form. Five personnel in the Records Cell of CARO managed the loan of the reference material and provided subject matter expertise, assisting with the translation and interpretation of military jargon and abbreviations," Mr Rouse said.

"Army HQ approved the project and the use of the rising sun logo and the Army History Unit provided a brief on the nine operations which the DVD covers."

The project took more than seven years to complete, with the task of inputting the data being left up to 70 Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages volunteers.

The DVD can be purchased online for \$250 at <https://online.justice.vic.gov.au/bdrn/family-history-shop?action=getProductDetails&categoryCode=CDROM&productCode=VH23>

VALE Brian Scott

It is with great sadness that I have to announce the passing of Brian Scott.

He passed away peacefully in his sleep early Wednesday morning on the 21st January. His funeral was held on Friday the 23rd.

Brian was a second intake apprentice and one of the characters of our Corp. I remember spending many enjoyable times with him.

Val, his wife is on the Sunshine Coast. She is understandably grief stricken with the loss of her long time partner and friend.

Any messages on condolence can be sent to me: iha53477@bigpond.net.au and I will make sure they are passed on.

Brian, rest in peace.

Jim Hislop has also added the

following.

Hi All,

Brian Scott a second intake electrical apprentice passed away in Qld on Thu/ Fri. Brian is a first cousin and I was notified by my sister in WA.

Rest in peace old mate

Regards Jim

Ian (Ernie) Hartshorn

Alcohol Rehabilitation Program Working For Defence

The Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, the Hon. Warren Snowdon MP, has seen the work of Defence's own alcohol rehabilitation program during a visit to Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Richmond today.

The Alcohol Rehabilitation and Education Program (AREP) is a four-week course which seeks to rehabilitate members who have been identified as having an alcohol dependency.

"AREP forms a part of the Australian Defence Force's (ADF) Mental Health Strategy, offering our Defence members a supportive, caring environment that focuses on the goal of alcohol abstinence in both the short and long term," Mr Snowdon said.

"It provides in-patient and out-patient rehabilitation for alcohol dependent Navy, Army and Air Force personnel.

"The program demonstrates Defence's proactive stand on helping members with alcohol dependency, and returning them as effective members of the Defence workforce."

Developed at RAAF Base Richmond in 1980, AREP was moved in to a dedicated facility in November 1997. In-patient courses typically take up to 12 members through at a time and offer them residential facilities while they receive treatment.

"Trained counsellors and a dedicated facility at AREP give members the best qualitative care while they are in residence," Mr Snowdon said.

During his visit, Mr Snowdon also visited other units at RAAF Base Richmond, which was formed in June of 1925 and remains the oldest operational Air Force base in Australia.

"Personnel serving at RAAF Base Richmond are some of the most operationally active in Defence, and the base is home to our fleet of C-130 Hercules transport aircraft, which have been a vital part of our Defence airlift capability since the original C-130As were delivered in 1958."

Defence Force Mental Health Care And Transition Review Report

The Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, the Hon. Warren Snowdon MP, and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon. Alan Griffin MP, today welcomed Professor David Dunt's independent Review of Mental Health Care in the ADF and Transition through Discharge report.

"The Government is committed to providing the very best mental health support to Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and those transitioning to the ex-service community," Mr Snowdon said.

"While Defence has well-established mental health programs and services, the Government was concerned that access to, and delivery of, this support has been patchy, with some extra challenges facing those transitioning out of the ADF.

"Professor Dunt's report is timely as the ADF's operational tempo over the last few years has placed a significant demand on mental health program delivery, and the services required to support younger veterans," Mr Griffin said.

"That is why Professor David Dunt was commissioned to conduct an independent review of the effectiveness of ADF mental health care and the support that's available from military service through to the Department of Veterans' Affairs."

whole idea was a gas, and The Cardiologists didn't have the heart to say no.

In the end, the Proctologists left the decision up to some assholes in Canberra.

Life According to Perry

Here is the latest offering from our own home spun Philosopher Perry.

Medicare

The phone rings and the lady of the house answers,

"Hello."

"Mrs Sanders, please."

"Speaking."

"Mrs. Sanders, this is Doctor Jones at Saint Agnes Laboratory. When your doctor sent your husband's biopsy to the lab yesterday, a biopsy from another Mr. Sanders arrived as well, and we are now uncertain which one is your husband's. Frankly the results are either bad or terrible."

"What do you mean?" Mrs. Sanders asks nervously.

"Well, one of the specimens tested positive for Alzheimer's and the other one tested positive for AIDS."

"We can't tell which is your husband's."

"That's dreadful! Can't you do the test again?" questioned Mrs. Sanders.

"Normally we can, but Medicare will only pay once for these expensive tests"

"Well, what am I supposed to do now?"

"The people at Medicare recommend that you drop your husband off somewhere in the middle of town. If he finds his way home, don't sleep with him."

Men

Men Are Just Happier People

NICKNAMES

If Laura, Kate and Sarah go out for lunch, they will call each other Laura, Kate and Sarah. If Bill, Dave and John go out, they will affectionately refer to each other as Fat Boy, Godzilla and Four-eyes.

EATING OUT

When the bill arrives, Mike, Dave and

John will each throw in \$30.00, even though it's only for \$25.00. None of them will have anything smaller and none will actually admit they want change back. But when the girls get their bill, out come the pocket calculators.

MONEY

A man will pay \$2 for a \$1 item he needs. A woman will pay \$1 for a \$2 item that she doesn't need but it's on sale.

BATHROOMS

A man has six items in his bathroom: toothbrush and toothpaste, shaving cream, razor, a cake of soap, and a towel. The average number of items in the typical woman's bathroom is 337. A man would not be able to identify more than 20 of these items.

ARGUMENTS

A woman has the last word in any argument. Anything a man says after that is the beginning of a new argument.

CATS

Women love cats. Men say they love cats, but when women aren't looking, men kick cats.

FUTURE

A woman worries about the future until she gets a husband. A man never worries about the future until he gets a wife.

SUCCESS

A successful man is one who makes more money than his wife can spend. A successful woman is one who can find such a man.

MARRIAGE

A woman marries a man expecting he will change, but he doesn't. A man marries a woman expecting that she won't change, but she does.

DRESSING UP

A woman will dress up to go shopping,

The next day he was back, greeted me in my yard, walked inside and resumed his spot in the hall and again slept for about an hour.

This continued off and on for several weeks.

Curious I pinned a note to his collar: 'I would like to find out who the owner of this wonderful sweet dog is and ask if you are aware that almost every afternoon your dog comes to my house for a nap.'

The next day he arrived for his nap, with a different note pinned to his collar: 'He lives in a home with 6 children, 2 under the age of 3 - he's trying to catch up on his sleep. Can I come with him tomorrow?'

Life and Creation

When God created the dog, He said: "Sit all day by the door of your house and bark at anyone who comes in or walks past. For this, I will give you a life span of twenty years."

The dog said: "That's a long time to be barking. How about only ten years and I'll give you back the other ten?"

So God agreed.

Next, God created the monkey and said: "Entertain people, do tricks, and make them laugh. For this, I'll give you a twenty-year life span." The monkey said: "Monkey tricks for twenty years? That's a pretty long time to perform. How about I give you back ten like the Dog did?"

And God agreed.

God then created the cow and said: "You must go into the field with the farmer all day long and suffer under the sun, have calves and give milk to support the farmer's family. For this, I will give you a life span of sixty years."

The cow said: "That's kind of a tough life you want me to live for sixty years. How about twenty and I'll give back the other forty?"

And God agreed again.

Finally, God created man and said: "Eat, sleep, play, marry and enjoy your life. For this, I'll give you twenty years." But man said: "Only twenty years? Could you possibly give me my twenty, the forty the cow gave back, the ten the monkey gave back, and the ten the dog gave back; that makes eighty, okay?"

"Okay," said God, "You asked for it."

So that is why the first twenty years we eat, sleep, play and enjoy ourselves. For the next forty years we slave in the sun to support our family. For the next ten years we do monkey tricks to entertain the grandchildren. And for the last ten years we sit on the front porch and bark at everyone.

Life has now been explained to you.

Financial Bail Out Package.

Doctors' Opinions on the Financial Bail Out Package.

The Allergists voted to scratch it, and The Dermatologists advised not to make any rash moves.

The Gastroenterologists had sort of a gut feeling about it, but

The Neurologists thought the Administration had a lot of nerve, and The Obstetricians felt they were all labouring under a misconception.

The Ophthalmologists considered the idea short sighted;

The Pathologists yelled, "Over my dead body!" while

The Pediatricians said, 'Oh, Grow up!'

The Psychiatrists thought the whole idea was madness,

The Radiologists could see right through it, and

The Physiotherapists thought it was pushing things a little too far.

The Surgeons decided to wash their hands of the whole thing.

The Internists thought it was a bitter pill to swallow, and

The Plastic Surgeons said, "This puts a whole new face on the matter."

The Podiatrists thought it was a step forward, but

The Urologists felt the scheme wouldn't hold water.

The Anesthesiologists thought the

Mr Griffin and Mr Snowdon received an extensive briefing from Professor Dunt on the key findings and recommendations of his report.

"Professor Dunt's review has highlighted successes and gaps in the delivery of mental health and transition services. It makes recommendations to improve the delivery of those services," Mr Griffin said.

"The Government thanks Professor Dunt for his work."

After considering the report and its recommendations, the Government will meet with key stakeholders and publicly release the report.

Defence Continues Its Support To Victorian Fires

Soldiers remain on the ground in fire-ravaged areas of Victoria and will stay until local communities and authorities are ready to take over the recovery effort.

The Commander of the Joint Task Force managing Defence's support to the Victorian Government and its fire relief effort, Brigadier Michael Arnold announced that another 110 troops were moving into the Kinglake area this weekend. The soldiers will be tasked to assist Victorian and Australian Federal Police in a new phase of the search process in devastated towns and communities.

To relieve some of the Reservists, this weekend Brigadier Arnold welcomed the arrival of almost 90 Reserve soldiers from the News South Wales based 5th and 8th Brigades, and the South Australian based 9th Brigade. Soldiers from Western Australia have already arrived in Melbourne.

"The arrival of these soldiers will bring relief to some of the Defence members that have been working constantly for the past 19 days. They will be quickly trained in the search task and will form a 110-strong search team for tasks next week."

"Some of the Reserve soldiers who have been working constantly now need to return to work. We thank them for their efforts and their employers for their flexibility. Brigadier Arnold said troops have been moving around the affected areas as required by Victorian authorities, helping with search tasks and providing services and facilities to the community. He said soldiers and assets would continue to be re-positioned as needed.

"We are providing support as requested by Victorian government authorities and continue to stand ready for additional tasks, if required," Brigadier Arnold said.

He said other elements, such as chainsaw and engineer teams, were ready to move if needed if fire conditions deteriorate.

"We've also got some temporary accommodation stores on wheels ready to go if they're required, so I'm confident we've got our assets in place and ready to go if the State authorities require them," Brigadier Arnold said.

Joint Task Force Soldiers Move Their Search To Marysville

Soldiers from the ADF's Joint Task Force 662, assisting in the search operation, have relocated to bushfire-devastated Marysville, to join Victoria Police in the new search task.

The soldiers, in conjunction with police officers, will conduct a methodical and reasonably detailed examination of fire-affected building sites in Marysville, as well as several other communities in the eastern section of the bushfire-affected area, including Narbethong and Buxton.

Commander of the Joint Task Force, Brigadier Michael Arnold, said it will not be an easy process, but the soldiers have the skills set and training to undertake the task to a high standard.

"We have provided 12 teams of six persons, who are lead by a Victorian police officer," Brigadier Arnold said.

“This new task was undertaken by the police at the behest of the State Coroner. The intent of the search is to ensure that a reasonable effort has been made to validate that each fire-affected site has been cleared of human remains. The police asked for and received our assistance in order to expedite the task.”

Since arriving in Victoria 10 days ago, the Reservists from News South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia have been operating out of the Kinglake area, clearing approximately 664 premises in Kinglake itself, as well as at Castella, Toolangi, Steels Creek, Chum Creek and Dixons Creek.

On Wednesday, the Joint Task Force forward headquarters, currently located at the Kinglake Community Centre, and its Quick Response Force, will also be moved to Marysville, to provide support to the searchers.

“I speak on behalf of all of the officers and soldiers of JTF 662 when I say we have been greatly rewarded and profoundly moved by our experience of working with the state emergency services and the people of Kinglake,” Brigadier Arnold said.

“All of my people are deeply impressed with the community’s spirit in the face of terrible adversity and their determination to rebuild both their lives and their town. We are grateful for the opportunity to help our fellow Victorians in their time of need.”

Brigadier Arnold said troops have been moving around the affected areas as required by Victorian authorities, helping with search tasks and providing services and facilities to the community.

Since being asked to assist with the immediate aftermath of the bushfires, Defence has played a vital role by building emergency accommodation and community service hubs, constructing firebreaks and containment lines, clearing roads and fallen trees, and assisting Victoria

Police in the ongoing task of searching for victims.

Visit To Solomon Islands Shows Employers The Benefits Of Reserve Service

Twenty-four employers of Defence Reservists will travel to Solomon Islands today as part of Boss Lift – a Defence program designed to encourage employer support for the Reserves.

The Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, the Hon. Dr Mike Kelly AM, MP, announced that the employers will visit soldiers from the Adelaide-based 9 Brigade, who are currently on a four-month deployment to the Solomon Islands.

While in the capital Honiara and surrounds, the employers will have the opportunity to see their Reservists on Operation ANODE, the Australian Defence Force’s (ADF) contribution to the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands.

Reserve and Employer Support Division (RESO), which is responsible for employer support for Australia’s Defence Reservists, has ensured the three-day Boss Lift program will highlight the important role the Reserves play in the Australian Defence Force and will allow employers to experience directly the essential roles played by their employees.

Dr Kelly said the employers will gain a valuable insight into the benefits their employees can bring back to the civilian workplace by being able to observe those skills that Reserve service has developed.

“We aim to highlight the skills Reservists gain from being in the ADF and how those skills can benefit civilian employers,” Dr Kelly said.

“As the ADF’s commitments grow, Reserves are bringing increased levels of capability to Australia’s Defence Force and this experience can flow directly to the civilian workplace.”

to end the call quickly, I said, ‘Uh, Pacific.’

They Walk Among Us!

My sister has a lifesaving tool in her car designed to cut through a seat belt if she gets trapped. She keeps it in the trunk..

They Walk Among Us!

My friends and I were on a beer run and noticed that the cases were discounted 10%. Since it was a big party, we bought 2 cases. The cashier multiplied 2 times 10% and gave us a 20% discount.

They Walk Among Us!

I couldn’t find my luggage at the airport baggage area, so I went to the lost luggage office and told the woman there that my bags never showed up. She smiled and told me not to worry because she was a trained professional and I was in good hands. ‘Now,’ she asked me, has your plane arrived yet?’

They Walk Among Us!

While working at a pizza parlour I observed a man ordering a small pizza to go. He appeared to be alone and the cook asked Him if he would like it cut into 4 pieces or 6. He thought about it for some time before responding. ‘Just cut it into 4 pieces. I don’t think I’m hungry enough to eat 6 pieces.’

They Walk Among Us, and they reproduce, and worst of all THEY VOTE

The Bacon Tree

Two Mexicans are stuck in the desert, wandering aimlessly and close to death.

They are close to just lying down and waiting for the inevitable, when all of a sudden.....

‘Hey Pepe, do you smell what I smell. Ees bacon, I is sure of eet.’

‘Is, Luis eet smells like bacon to meee.’

So, with renewed strength, they struggle up the next sand dune, and there, in the distance, is a tree loaded with bacon.

There’s raw bacon, dripping with

moisture, there’s fried bacon, back bacon, double smoked bacon... Every imaginable kind of cured pig meat.

‘Pepe, Pepe, we is saved. ‘Eees a bacon tree.’

‘Luis, are you sure ees not a meerage? We ees in the Desert don’t forget.’

‘Pepe when deed you ever hear of a meerage that smell like bacon...ees not meerage, ees a bacon tree’.

And with that... Luis races towards the tree. He gets to within 5 metres, Pepe following closely behind, when all of a sudden, a machine gun opens up, and Luis is cut down in his tracks. It is clear he is mortally wounded but, a true friend that he is, he manages to warn Pepe with his dying breath.

‘Pepe... Go back man, you was right ees not a bacon tree.’

‘Luis Luis Mi amigo... What ees it?’

‘Pepe... Ees not a bacon tree...’

Ees

Ees

Ees

Ees

Ees

Ees

Ees

Ees

Ees a Ham Bush.

Eds Note: Damn! I wish that lynch mob had found Anonymouse, especially after that one.

This is priceless!!!!

An older, tired-looking dog wandered into my yard. I could tell from his collar and well-fed belly that he had a home and was well taken care of.

He calmly came over to me, I gave him a few pats on his head. He then followed me into my house, slowly walked down the hall, curled up in the corner and fell asleep.

An hour later, he went to the door, and I let him out.

robber saw a bottle of Scotch that he wanted behind the counter on the shelf. He told the cashier to put it in the bag as well, but the cashier refused and said, "Because I don't believe you are over 21." The robber said he was, but the clerk still refused to give it to him because she didn't believe him.

At this point, the robber took his driver's license out of his wallet and gave it to the clerk. The clerk looked it over and agreed that the man was in fact over 21 and she put the Scotch in the bag. The robber then ran from the store with his loot. The cashier promptly called the police and gave the name and address of the robber that he got off the license. They arrested the robber two hours later.

This guy definitely needs a sign.

Idiot Number Five of 2008

A pair of Michigan robbers entered a record shop nervously waving revolvers. The first one shouted, "Nobody move!" When his partner moved, the startled first bandit shot him.

This guy doesn't even deserve a sign.

Idiot Number Six of 2008

Arkansas: Seems this guy wanted some beer pretty badly. He decided that he'd just throw a cinder block through a liquor store window, grab some booze, and run. So he lifted the cinder block and heaved it over his head at the window. The cinder block bounced back knocking him unconscious. It seems the liquor store window was made of Plexi-Glass. The whole event was caught on videotape!

Idiot Number Seven of 2008

I live in a semi-rural area (Weyauwega, Wisconsin). We recently had a new neighbour call the local township administrative office to request the removal of the Deer Crossing sign on our road. The reason: "Too many deer are being hit by cars out here! - I don't think this is a good place for them to be crossing anymore."

STAY ALERT! They walk among us... and they REPRODUCE...!!!

They Walk Among Us and Many Work Retail

They Walk Among Us and Many Work Retail

I was at the checkout of a K-Mart. The clerk rang up \$46.64 charge.. I gave her a fifty dollar bill. She gave me back \$46.64. I gave the money back to her and told her that she had made a mistake in MY favour. She became indignant and informed me she was Educated and knew what she was doing, and returned the money again. I gave her the money back Same scenario! I departed the store with the \$46.64.

They Walk Among Us and Many Work Retail

I walked into a Starbucks with a buy-one-get-one-free coupon for a Grande Latte. I handed it to the girl and she looked over at a little chalkboard that said 'buy one-get one free.' 'They're already buy-one-get-one-free,' she said, 'so I guess they're both free'. She handed me my free Lattes and I walked out the door.

They Walk Among Us!

One day I was walking down the beach with some Friends when one of them shouted, 'Look at that dead bird!'. Someone looked up at the sky and said, 'Where'?

They Walk Among Us!

While looking at a house, my brother asked the real Estate agent which direction was north because, he explained, he didn't want the sun waking him up every morning. She asked, 'Does the sun rise in the north?' When my brother explained that the sun rises in the East, and has for sometime, she shook her head and said, 'Oh I don't keep up with all that stuff.'

They Walk Among Us!!

I used to work in technical support for a 24/7 call centre. One day I got a call from an individual who asked what hours the call centre was open. I told him, 'The number you dialled is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week' He responded, 'Is that Eastern or Pacific time?' Wanting

Indigenous Australians Readied For Defence

The Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, the Hon. Warren Snowdon MP, the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, the Hon. Jenny Macklin MP and the Minister for Employment Participation, the Hon. Brendan O'Connor MP, today announced the start of the Defence Indigenous Pre Recruitment Course (IPRC) in Newcastle, NSW.

Mr Snowdon said the Defence Indigenous Pre-Recruitment Course is one of the early initiatives to be rolled out from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) Indigenous Employment Strategy.

"The 20 Indigenous trainees now start an eight week course that will help them not only prepare for an ADF career, but will serve them in any future venture," said Mr Snowdon.

During the course, trainees will visit Defence establishments in Newcastle, Singleton, Sydney, Canberra and Wagga Wagga, and will undertake training in motivation, discipline, physical fitness, communication and skills to live away from home.

Ms Macklin said one of the highlights of the course is the five day Indigenous Leadership Program in Canberra which develops participants' strengths, and communication skills.

"This course forms part of the Government's commitment to making progress on the Government's aim of halving the employment gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade," Ms Macklin said.

Mr O'Connor said the first course in Townsville last year was a great success.

"Two participants from the original course are now Army recruits currently training at Kapooka and another seven are in the recruiting process. I am confident that the Newcastle IPRC will result in similar positive employment results."

Through the cooperation of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the Department of Defence, the Australian Government has provided more than \$300,000 towards the eight week course.

Representation Re Use of Inappropriate Life Tables

Dear friends,

Please read this and pass it on to those on your address list who may be effected by it. Even if you are not personally effected because you transferred to MSBS, rolled over etc pleas spread the information. Much personal representation to our pollies is required to support the efforts of David Jamison of DFWA and other ESOs. Please also pass it to any Associations you belong to.

John Graham

Dear secretaries/Presidents of ESOs,

Here is a paper on a subject that should be dear to your hearts. Please use it as you will. It needs wide distribution and action from your members if we are to succeed in this matter. As an individual, I have done all I can. This an important matter to our soldiers who are still serving, as well as those who have retired.

Regards,
John Graham

A Representation to the Minister for Science, Technology and Personnel, the Honourable Warren Snowdon

On

The Inadequacies of use of a 45 Year Old Life expectancy Table for Defence Force Retirement Benefit (DFRDB) Fund Commutation.

By

LTCOL JA Graham (Retd)

Dear Mr Snowdon,

Introduction.

Representations on this matter are nothing new. ESOs and individuals have been drawing the attention of the Coalition to this most important problem, most probably more eloquently than I, for some years. With the election of a new Government, I hope you will be willing to take positive action to rectify the situation.

Ordinarily, I would not make a submission while the result of the latest of a seemingly endless number of inquiries is outstanding. However with the Government having moved to enact at least one recommendation of the Report of the Review into Military Superannuation Arrangements, and the fact that there have already been six Government / Senate Committee containing recommendations on Military superannuation which Government has chosen to ignore, I consider it is reasonable to discuss this matter further.

Life Expectancy tables are used to calculate commutation for DFRDB contributors, and retired pay, the same table being used as in the latter years of the DFRB i.e., that of 1963, is still used today. The tables are calculated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The tables are used to determine the amount of a contributor's retired pay and reduced retirement pay that a retiring serviceman/woman or widow will receive if he/she elects commutation, or has already done so. Commutation is an advance on the retiring member's future retirement salary from the 'scheme'.

The aim of using life tables is to ensure that the advance is repaid by the time one reaches his/her calculated life expectancy. However, if one survives to beyond that age, he/she continues to be paid at the reduced rate. This action would attract punitive legislation if an employer in the civil community attempted to impose this condition upon its superannuated ex workers.

Governments, both Labor and Coalition, have not amended the DFRDB Act to enable the use of current Life Expectancy Tables. Neither has the DFRDB Authority moved to urge governments to do so. The Life Table in use today is that of 1963 i.e. 45 years out of date.

The situation has come about by the negligence and failure in its duty of care by the Government appointed DFRDB Authority, Commissioner for Superannuation (ex-officio member of the Authority) and Comsuper, in failing to ensure the DFRDB Act was regularly updated, or amended to read that the latest table, produced by the ABS, was to be used. The Act has been amended many times, but not for this.

We have been failed by the DFRDB Authority, which is responsible for general administration of the scheme. The DFRDB Authority reports to the Minister for Defence, I understand.

The report on this aspect in the Report of the Review into Military Superannuation beggars belief, saying that 'a conversion factor based solely based on current life expectancy figures would be even more excessively generous'.

The Chairman, Mr. Podger has shown little interest in recommending fair treatment for past, present or future servicemen. He disregards the 'unique conditions of service' in his Terms of Reference and continually refers to 'Community norms'. He makes reference to servicemen equating to the Public Service. It is a sobering thought to remember that servicemen are paid to get shot at but public servants are counselled.

Servicemen/women aren't after 'excessively generous' conditions, only equity in accordance with their 'contract' when they enlisted. Mr Podger's attitude is morally reprehensible.

Discussion

The Problem

Constable.

The Sarge says, 'Mate, we have some news for you, unfortunately some really bad news, but, some good news, and maybe some more good news'. 'Well,' says the bloke, 'I guess I'd better have the bad news first?'

The Sarge says, 'I'm really sorry mate, but your wife is dead. Young Bill here found her lying at about five fathoms in a little cleft in the reef. He got a line around her and we pulled her up, but she was dead.'

The bloke is naturally pretty distressed to hear of this and has a bit of a turn. But after a few minutes he pulls himself together and asks what the good news is.

The Sarge says, 'Well when we got your wife up there were quite a few really good sized crays and a swag of nice crabs attached to her, so we've brought you your share.'

He hands the bloke a sugar bag with a couple of nice crays and four or five crabs in it.

'Geez thanks. They're bloody beauties. I guess it's an ill wind and all that... So what's the other possible good news?'

'Well', the Sarge says, 'if you fancy a quick trip, me and young Bill here get off duty at around 11 o'clock and we're gonna shoot over there and pull her up again!'

Idiots of the Year

Number One Idiot of 2008

I am a medical student currently doing a rotation in toxicology at the poison control centre. Today, this woman called in very upset because she caught her little daughter eating ants. I quickly reassured her that the ants are not harmful and there would be no need to bring her daughter into the hospital. She calmed down and at the end of the conversation and happened to mention that she gave her daughter some ant poison to eat in order to kill the ants. I told her that she better bring her daughter in to the emergency room

right away.

Here's your sign, lady. Wear it with pride.

Number Two Idiot of 2008

Early this year, some Boeing employees on the airfield decided to steal a life raft from one of the 747s. They were successful in getting it out of the plane and home. Shortly after they took it for a float on the river, they noticed a Coast Guard helicopter coming toward them. It turned out that the chopper was homing in on the emergency locator beacon that activated when the raft was inflated. They are no longer employed at Boeing.

Here's your sign, guys. Don't get it wet; the paint might run.

Number Three Idiot of 2008

A man, wanting to rob a downtown Bank of America, walked into the Branch and wrote this, "Put all your munny in this bag." While standing in line, waiting to give his note to the teller, he began to worry that someone had seen him write the note and might call the police before he reached the teller's window. So he left the Bank of America and crossed the street to the Wells Fargo Bank. After waiting a few minutes in line, he handed his note to the Wells Fargo teller. She read it and, surmising from his spelling errors that he wasn't the brightest light in the harbour, told him that she could not accept his stickup note because it was written on a Bank of America deposit slip and that he would either have to fill out a Wells Fargo deposit slip or go back to Bank of America.

Looking somewhat defeated, the man said, "OK", and left. He was arrested a few minutes later, as he was waiting in line back at Bank of America.

Don't bother with this guy's sign. He probably couldn't read it anyway.

Number Four Idiot of 2008

A guy walked into a little corner store with a shotgun and demanded all of the cash from the cash drawer. After the cashier put the cash in a bag, the

or behaving in such a manner that makes counselling not possible; keeping appointments and advising the centre as soon as possible if unable to attend; respecting centre property; and honouring agreements made with VVCS about service provision and support.

What are our responsibilities?

When you contact VVCS you can expect; a timely response; your confidentiality to be maintained; your concern or issue to be handled fairly and that any feedback or expression of concern will not adversely affect the way your matters are handled in future.

How do I contact VVCS?

Contact VVCS by calling: 1800 011 046.

During business hours - connects you to the nearest VVCS Centre – there are 15 VVCS centres located across Australia. After business hours – connects you with Veterans Line, the after-hours telephone crisis counselling service.

Perth Telephone: (08) 6461 7800

Australian Army - love this one

Life in the Australian Army...Text of a letter from a kid from Eromanga to Mum and Dad. (For Those of you not in the know Eromanga is a small town west of Quilpie in the far south west of Queensland)

Dear Mum & Dad

I am well. Hope youse are too. Tell me big brothers Doug and Phil that the Army is better than workin' on the farm - tell them to get in bloody quick smart before the jobs are all gone! I wuz a bit slow in settling down at first because ya don't hafta get outta bed until 6am. But I like sleeping in now cuz all ya gotta do before brekky is make ya bed and shine ya boots and clean ya uniform. No bloody cows to milk no calves to feed no feed to stack - nothin'!! Ya haz gotta shower though but its not so bad coz there's lotsa hot water and even a light to see what

ya doing! At brekky ya get cereal fruit and eggs but there's no kangaroo steaks or possum stew like wot Mum makes. You don't get fed again until noon and by that time all the city boys are buggered because we've been on a 'route march' - geez its only just like walking to the windmill in the back paddock!! This one will kill me brothers Doug and Phil with laughter. I keep getting medals for shootin' - dunno why. The bullseye is as big as a bloody possum's bum and it don't move and it's not firing back at ya like the Johnsons did when our big scrubber bull got into their prize cows before the Ekka last year! All ya gotta do is make yourself comfortable and hit the target - it's a piece of piss!! You don't even load your own cartridges they comes in little boxes and ya don't have to steady yourself against the rollbar of the roo shooting truck when you reload! Sometimes ya gotta wrestle with the city boys and I gotta be real careful coz they break easy - it's not like fighting with Doug and Phil and Jack and Boori and Steve and Muzza all at once like we do at home after the muster. Turns out I'm not a bad boxer either and it looks like I'm the best the platoon's got and I've only been beaten by this one bloke from the Engineers - he's 6 foot 5 and 15 stone and three pick handles across the shoulders and as ya know I'm only 5 foot 7 and eight stone wringin' wet but I fought him till the other blokes carried me off to the boozier. I can't complain about the Army - tell the boys to get in quick before word gets around how bloody good it is.

Your loving daughter

Sheila

Voted the best Australian Joke of 2008

Bloke's wife goes missing while diving off the West Australian coast. He reports the event, searches fruitlessly and spends a terrible night wondering what could have happened to her.

Next morning there's a knock at the door and he is confronted by a couple of policemen, the old Sarge and a younger

Medical advances and lifestyle changes have resulted in life expectancies being considerably higher than calculated at the time of an individual's commutation application and has resulted in this (probably) unintended consequence, of paying thousands of dollars in excess of the repayment of the advance on their retirement salary, for every year they live beyond their 1963 Life Table assessed life expectancy.

A Ministerial Explanation.

The following is an attempted explanation of the Government's reasoning regarding this lifetime reduction in retirement salary by the former Minister of Veterans' Affairs, the Honourable Mr Bruce Billson, in a letter to Brigadier Neil Weekes MC (Retd) dated August 9th, 2006:

"...It is a common misunderstanding that pensions are reduced after commutation in order to repay the amount commuted. This is not the case. The repayment is a notional concept used to explain the process by which scheme life expectancy factors are used to ensure that members electing to commute part of their pension do not receive more than they would in usual pension payments over their expected lifetime. That is, the amount commuted and the residual

pension should not exceed the amount of pension a member would receive if they had chosen not to commute their pension."

This is the key. The Minister indirectly states that, in effect, if both members, Member A who commutes and Member B who does not commute, live beyond the life expectancy lifetime (assuming they are the same age and retired with the same rank and at the same time), then Member A will continue repayments for as long as he/she lives and therefore will NOT receive the same amount of pension that Member B does.

This contradicts the stated policy - and I repeat, contributors were never told of this eventuality during service or at Resettlement Seminars, nor were such details included in any resettlement pamphlet/brochure/booklet.

Neglect of Employer Responsibility to DFRB/DFRDB Members

It is the responsibility of the DFRDB Authority to recommend amendments to the Act. It has done so on many occasions, but has failed in its responsibility in this particular matter. Comsuper, as administrators of the scheme have also failed in not notifying the DFRDB Authority of this

Bayswater Hotel

The Baysie allows the Association the use of their Function Room every month for our meetings. This they have done at no charge as the Association is a non-profit veteran's organisation. All members are welcome to come along. Remember that our meetings are on the first Thursday of each month except January.

Dinner, at the Baysie, is from 1800 hours to 2030 hours and is relatively cheap, wholesome food. It is served as a Buffet Style meal and you can have hot dinners or a cold salad style meal. Should you wish to go more up-market you can order from the Al-a-Carte menu. If you wish to have a private function with a buffet style meal the Baysie staff is only too pleased to cater for you.

If you drive to the Baysie there is a Carpark at the rear with room for about 100 cars. Alternatively you can get to the Baysie by train. The Hotel is about 100m the north side of the railway line from the Bayswater Railway Station.

Further information can be supplied by the Secretary.

discriminatory problem. Neither of these organisations is pro-active, but reactive. The inaction of the Service members of the authority to properly represent former and current ADF members is disappointing.

There is nothing in the legislation prohibiting the authority from instigating amendments. When questioned on this in the past Comsuper, or the former Government, has not been able to quote legislation or regulations to refute this assertion.

Present and Future Effects

Many Military superannuants are already affected by this 'lifetime' provision. We are coming to a time when many DFRDB Superannuants are reaching the age when their advance will have been repaid on the calculations of that 1963 age table, and will continue to receive the reduced payment.

This provision will apply in future years to those DFRDB contributors still serving. It is intended by Government, it appears, that the 1963 tables will be used for the 5600 DFRDB contributors still serving in the ADF in June 2008.

The practice of a member continuing to receive reduced retirement pay for the rest of his / her life is akin to a bank continuing to deduct mortgage payments from one's account after the mortgage is discharged.

The table below illustrates the variation in life expectancy between 1963 and 2007.

Year	Male	Female
1963	68	74
2005/07	79	84

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics)

Examples of the effect

Example I

A DFRB superannuant who retired in 1978, whose life expectancy was 70 years using the 1963 life tables applied to his/her application, the commutation was to be repaid by that age. He is now 79 years of age, and has continued

being paid the reduced rate of his fortnightly benefits. This constitutes an unfair loss to the member of \$ 59.82 per fortnight, or \$1559.73 per annum.

The member's loss since he repaid his commutation, in the form of reduced retirement pay, is now \$15,032.56.

Example 2

A DFRDB superannuant with 31 Years service, retiring in 1986, received the following written advice from Comsuper:

Retirement Pay \$20924.56 per annum; or \$802.56 per fortnight.

Reduced Retirement Pay after commutation \$17464.79 per annum; or \$669.88 per fortnight

This member will continue to lose \$133.64 per fortnight, or \$ 3474.64 per annum after he has repaid the advance. This member will have lost \$ 17373.20 after only five years.

Disclosure of the Provision of a Lifetime Reduction

Members had little opportunity to know of the alleged lifetime reduction provision. Not being told of this matter during their service, or at Resettlement Seminars. There was no mention of the reduction in retirement pay being permanent in printed material distributed by DFRB Authority/Comsuper. How could they could they know?

A straw poll of superannuants in my address book is attached. They confirm my assertions, and throw considerable doubt on those of Comsuper.

The lifetime reduction provision has now been published in Comsuper Fact sheet DB04, dated July 2007, and the DFRDB Handbook, only 40 years too late! This would seem to indicate that the Authority/Government intends to continue this discriminatory against current serving members. This is a disgrace. No wonder you are having problems in recruiting, with such an off handed attitude to defence personnel.

address a range of issues and are goal-directed and time-limited. They include; Anger Management; Anxiety and Depression (anxiety and stress management, depression); Lifestyle Management; Sleep and Relaxation; Heart Health programs; Relationships; Changing the Mix – Alcohol correspondence program; Programs designed for Partners and Sons & Daughters; Stepping Out, transitioning from the Defence Force into a civilian life, and many more

Referrals to VVCS

Veterans, peacekeepers and members of their families can refer themselves. Current serving members without eligibility can request a formal referral from the ADF. Medical practitioners, other health and welfare workers and ex-service organisation may refer by telephone, letter or recommend self-referral.

Referrals to other services

VVCS can arrange referrals to specialist services and treatment programs for veterans (eg. admission to a treatment facility (PTSD) or provider (psychiatric assessment). Specialist services for veterans families (e.g. psychiatric assessment for Vietnam veterans' partners and sons and daughters), and emergency accommodation centres where available.

Confidentiality and privacy in VVCS

VVCS is committed to preserving and upholding your rights to privacy and confidentiality. Building and sustaining the trust and rapport with our clients is important to us.

VVCS records are stored securely. Every effort is made to ensure that your counselling sessions, interviews and contact with VVCS are confidential. We keep notes on interviews and records of attendance so we can provide you with appropriate professional help and for planning and evaluation purposes.

Clinical information will not be released to the Department of Veterans' Affairs

without your permission. Generally information about you is not accessible by any Commonwealth or state agency without your permission.

If you are a member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and are referred to VVCS through the ADF Agreement for Services, we are required to provide periodic reports regarding your treatment to the ADF Referring Authority.

In exceptional circumstances, it is possible that certain information may have to be released in accordance with the law. This would only occur where your safety or the safety of others is at risk; in serious criminal matter, including war crimes; or in response to a court direction.

What are your rights?

In using this service, you have a right to; be treated with respect, dignity and courtesy; have access to holistic and transparent high quality services; have your rights to privacy and confidentiality protected within the limits imposed by the legal system and the duty of care principle; have fair and equal access to our services; have access to accurate information about your issues and counselling/treatment options, and wherever possible, be involved in decision-making regarding your counselling/treatment options; be able to refuse any or all assessment and counselling; access your records through the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act (If this is a formal FOI request, it will require your file to be examined by an FOI officer); and expect services to comply with appropriate standards of professionalism, competency and accountability.

What are your responsibilities?

In using this service, you are responsible for; respecting the rights of other clients and staff to privacy and confidentiality; treating VVCS staff and other clients in a respectful and non-abusive manner; ensuring that you are not under the influence of alcohol, and/

access the service but eligibility to use the service will be verified. If you have any questions about your eligibility to access VVCS, contact your nearest office.

What services does VVCS provide?

VVCS provides individual, couple and family counselling; case management services; after-hours crisis telephone counselling through Veterans Line; group programs for common mental health issues (eg. Anxiety, depression, sleep and anger); psycho-educational programs for couples, including a residential lifestyle management program; health promotion programs including Heart Health – a 52 week supervised exercise and health education program offered in group and correspondence formats; Stepping Out, a 2-day 'transition' program for ADF members and their partners preparing to leave the military; Changing the Mix, a self-paced alcohol reduction correspondence program; Operation Life Workshops; referral to other services; and information, education and self-help resources.

In a friendly and safe setting, counsellors help people address problems in their lives with the aim of finding effective solutions for an improved quality of life. VVCS counsellors are available to help, whether or not the problems are obviously war-related.

What is counselling?

Recognition of problems and counselling may help prevent breakdowns in health and emotional well being. Counselling can help to communicate, understand and address a range of personal and emotional problems, including; ongoing war and service-related stresses for veterans, as the trauma of war can have lasting effects for them and their families; impact on partners, sons and daughters; personal crises at work or home; relationship and family issues; alcohol and other drug abuse; employment issues, and other

physical or emotional difficulties.

What is individual counselling?

Individual counselling helps to deal with the emotional aspects of war, including PTSD, or current situational stresses. Counselling can often uncover past successful thinking patterns, which can help to alleviate current problems. Counselling can also teach veterans different and constructive ways of dealing with difficult emotions.

What is couple counselling?

War-related and other stresses may result in problematic interpersonal relationships. Couple counselling helps people understand relationship patterns and consider relationship options including rebuilding relationships to provide a strong foundation for future growth.

What is family therapy?

Often members of families are acutely aware of the day-to-day effects of war-related and other stresses but may be unaware of what can be done about it. Family therapy addresses the difficulties facing the whole family and looks at how the family can positively act to limit the impact of difficulties on their lives.

Crisis counselling and Veterans Line

Crisis counselling is available face to face or by telephone during working hours.

Veterans Line is an after hours crisis telephone counselling service operating to assist veterans and their families cope with crisis situations. Veterans Line is available on the following toll-free* number: 1800 011 046

*If you use a mobile phone, it may cost you more.

What are group programs and what programs are available?

Group programs provide a variety of educative and therapeutic groups to enhance the quality of life for veterans and their families.

VVCS groups have been very positively received by both veterans and their families. Groups may be provided to

A copy of the DFRDB publication 'DFRDB Retirement Benefits dated January 1985' has been forwarded to me by a DFRDB superannuant. Again, there is no mention that the reduction in retirement pay is for life. A copy of this leaflet is attached

An Appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal

The Administrative Appeals Tribunal has considered the issue of 'reversion' when a person reaches his life expectancy in 'Re Reynolds and Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Authority (2001) 64 ALD 704'. In that case, the Tribunal referred to paragraphs 14(a) and (b) of the Jess Report. Mr. Reynolds' appeal failed because the AAT cannot rule on alleged faulty legislation.

There would not have been cause for an appeal from Mr Reynolds had the Act reflected the current life table at the time of his discharge.

Conclusion.

* The problem has not been caused by DFRB/DFRDB Superannuants;

* The problem has been caused wholly by various governments not heeding the complaints of members and, primarily, by the DFRDB Authority by not exercising its duty of care in that it failed to recommend an amendment to the Act;

* The lack of action by the responsible authorities in this matter over the past 40 years is morally indefensible. The Government should not be making many millions of dollars profit from Superannuants by this scandalous procedure; and

* The Government needs to show action in achieving the Prime Minister's recent statement of intent relating to the treatment of Defence personnel;

“.the first responsibility of government is the security of the nation. And it follows therefore that government has a particular responsibility towards those who have worn the nation's uniform. Because there is in my view

no higher calling than to wear the uniform of Australia.” Kevin Rudd 8th Sept 2008

Minister, I hope you now understand my legitimate concerns about past Governments' apparent apathy towards members of the DFRDB Scheme and the lack of fairness, justice and consistency. I believe the Government must demonstrate its good faith and commitment to DFRDB members and amend this Act. We who have been treated unfairly since retirement, and our widows, must be compensated and receive our full entitlements into the future.

Recommendations

In the interests of equity, the DFRB/DFRDB Acts be amended to provide for benefits to revert to the full level, once the advance has been repaid, in accordance with the life table used to calculate reduced retirement salaries; those retirees who have already reached their assessed life expectancy should have retired salary restored to the pre commutation retired salary amount without delay; and that recognition be given to the total injustice of 1963 Life Tables being used for ADF personnel still serving, and that the latest life table available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics be used at the time of their discharge.

LTCOL JA Graham (Retd)
106 Grose Road
Faulconbridge, 2776.
December 28th 2008
Telephone. 02 47516653

Email;

CC.

The Honourable Joe Fitzgibbon MP,
Minister for Defence.

The Honourable Alan Griffin MP, Minister
for Veterans' Affairs.

The Honourable Mike Kelly AM MP.
Parliamentary Secretary for Defence
Support.

Mr. Leo Bator, Chairman of the DFRDB
Authority.
Senator Nick Sherry, Minister for
Superannuation.

Vietnam Veterans' Family Study - An Intergenerational Study

Register now

DVA needs Vietnam veterans and Army personnel who served from 1962 to 1975 and their families to take part in a study with the aim of identifying factors that make families resilient. This will give useful information and advice which can be provided to the families of future serving members to support them during their service. The intergenerational study will look at what effect war service in Vietnam may have had on veterans' families health and wellbeing.

The study has invited 10,000 randomly selected Vietnam veterans and 10,000 randomly selected Army personnel who served from 1962 to 1975 but did not deploy to Vietnam. Invitation packs include extra registration forms for veterans to pass onto family members as each family member needs to register individually.

Air Force and Navy personnel who served during the Vietnam era are also able to participate in the study. These participants will undertake the same survey as Army participants but due to scientific reasons their results will be the focus of a separate report. Similarly, Vietnam veterans who are not part of the randomly selected group and the families of deceased veterans can also register to be part of the study.

The success of the study relies on a big response from those invited. Not just Vietnam veterans and their families but also Army personnel who served during the Vietnam era and their families for comparison. Adequate numbers in the comparison group will ensure the study is scientifically valid and help identify any differences in the health and wellbeing of the families in the two groups. General P J Cosgrove AC MC (Ret'd) has pledged his support for the study and has written to invited veterans and Army personnel to encourage their participation.

Email healthstudy@dva.gov.au
Phone: 1800 502 302
Mail: Family Study Program
Department of Veterans' Affairs
PO Box 21
WODEN ACT 2606

Veterans' And War Widows' Pensions Increased

Indexation will deliver Veteran and War Widow pensioners up to an extra \$14.10 a fortnight, Minister for Veterans' Affairs Alan Griffin announced today. Some 365,000 veterans, their partners and war widows will benefit.

Minister Griffin said pensions will increase from 20 March, paid from pension day 26 March.

"For the first time, the Special Rate (TPI) Pension is more than \$1,000 a fortnight at \$1,011.90," Mr Griffin said.

The increases are based on a movement of 0.9 per cent in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and a top-up of \$2.60 per fortnight to bring the single Service Pension rate to 25 per cent of Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE). All disability pensions are indexed by reference to both CPI and MTAWE. This resulted in a 1.4 per cent increase.

Pension Old fortnightly rate	New fortnightly rate
Special Rate (TPI) Pension/ MRCA	Special Rate Disability Pension
\$997.80 to \$1,011.90	Extreme Disablement Adjustment
\$550.70 to \$558.50	100 per cent General Rate of Disability Pension
\$354.50 to \$359.50	Intermediate Rate Disability Pension
\$677.00 to \$686.60	Service Pension – single
\$562.10 to \$569.80	Service Pension – couples
\$469.50 each.	\$939.00 couple to \$475.90 each.
\$951.80 couple	War Widows/ers Pension
\$598.70 to \$607.00	Income Support Supplement
\$167.80 to \$170.20	

For more information on the new pension rates visit www.dva.gov.au or call 133 254.

VVCS - Veterans And Veterans Families Counselling Service

The VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service is a community based mental health service. The VVCS mission is to improve the quality of life of veterans and their families, through services that promote and maintain health, wellbeing, independence and community integration with particular focus on mental health and social functioning.

THE OUTREACH PROGRAM

VVCS provides specialised, free and confidential counselling services to eligible veterans, their partners and families. VVCS provides counselling services through staff in 15 centres located across Australia and through an Outreach Program. The Outreach Program is designed to promote better access to VVCS services for members of the veteran community, regardless of where they live. Outreach Program Counsellors are located across Australia in main population centres and rural and remote areas, as well as outer metropolitan areas.

VVCS has a comprehensive Outreach Program throughout Australia, providing veterans and their families living in rural, remote and some outer metropolitan areas with access to contract counsellors and other health services. Referral can be arranged through your local VVCS office by phoning 1800 011 046. This network provides local contact, support and treatment to veterans and their families in regional and remote areas.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR PROVIDERS

The VVCS places consecutive AusTender notices for Outreach Program Counsellors in targeted regions across Australia. The onus is

on a tenderer to understand the contents of the Request for Tender (RFT) and the implications of being involved in the RFT process. The RFT documents are available on the AusTender website - www.tenders.gov.au

All questions about the RFT must be submitted in writing and preferably by **e-mail** to the Tender Officer (vvcscontracts@dva.gov.au), up to 5 clear business days prior to the tender lodgement deadline.

What is VVCS?

VVCS provides counselling and group programs to Australian veterans, peacekeepers, their families and eligible current serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) members. It is a specialised, free and confidential Australia-wide service.

VVCS staff are qualified psychologists or social workers with skills in working with veterans, peacekeepers and their families. They can provide support for working through lifestyle, health and family matters as well as issues related to military service or peacekeeping operations.

Who can use VVCS?

The following people can use VVCS; Australian veterans of all conflicts and peacekeeping operations as defined by the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986; Partners and dependent children under 26 years of age of veterans with issues arising from the veteran's service; war widows/widowers; ex-partners, within five years of separation; all sons and daughters of Vietnam veterans regardless of age with psychological, emotional and social needs arising from the impact of their parents operational or warlike service; ex-service personnel with a mental health condition as a DVA-accepted disability and their family members, and current serving members of the ADF who have been formally referred by the ADF under the Agreement for Services.

DVA entitlement is not required to