

**MINUTES OF F111 DESEAL/RESEAL SUPPORT GROUP MEETING HELD  
AT IPSWICH RSL ON SUNDAY 9/4/06**

Ian Frazer opened the meeting at 9.30am. He advised all present that the Annual Return and Audit had been done.

Minutes of the previous Meeting (AGM) were available to all, and accepted.

Kathleen Henry then read the Correspondence.

- The application for Best Grant Funding had been submitted and should be advised by mid June.
- Bernice Miller thanking the Support Group for their condolences on the passing of Cliff mid January, also thanking them for the support and wishing them success in the fight for compensation.

Ian Fraser then handed over to Cameron Thompson to give a run down on the meeting held with the new Minister for Defence, Bruce Billson.

Cameron advised his meeting was with Mr Billson and members of his office. No one from DVA was present. Ian, Kathleen and Jeff were present and gave good representation on a range of important issues including 180A of VEA, date for widows before 2001. Spoke about the whole nature of ex-gratia payment. Bruce made some comments, sought suggestions. Talked about consistent claims across board. Main Issues covered. During sitting week, cornered Bruce and had meeting with Staff. Proposed ideas meeting with Vet Affairs, anything submitted will need to go to Cabinet or Internal Regulations. Made an appointment for week of 10<sup>th</sup> May.

Ian added that Cameron has been playing good cop, Ian & Kathleen bad cop.

David Stenzil spoke about no action on his ex-gratia payment since February when further info was forwarded. Why can't they sort it.

Cameron: Committee went down to Canberra with enquiries. One of the issues is access to records. One of the questions Cameron wanted to post is on the internet for people to have access to.

David – Records were destroyed; RTE doesn't show what you did. Board of Inquiry statement should be accepted and Stat Decs should be recognized more.

Cameron – The Small number of people checking records are overwhelmed by the amount of work involved.

Allan Aburn. With the numbers, total numbers working on planes at the time, eligibility details go back to 1973 when Deseal/Reseal Group formed, up to then Framies did Pick & Patch repairs at Squadron and Maint. Squadron.

Cameron asked the Minister to address the problem of lack of information available.

Kathleen – We had a Committee Meeting 3 weeks ago. Ian advised the initial concern was for 3AD to be pushed during the Board of Inquiry. Defence decided to expand the scope and include the peripherals which included all 482, 1 & 6 Squadron tank entry personnel. Those members were included in BOI and Health Study. They can't now narrow the scope and go back to allowing only the 3AD workers. Support Group is backing everyone. Defence admitted liability and broadened the scope. They should be looking after everybody. Acknowledge Pick & Patch back in 1973. The terminology of the ex-gratia eligibility stating “attached to a deseal section” is the loophole they are using to exclude the squadron personnel, and needs to be changed.

The Board of Inquiry - Judged and Findings of what went wrong and correct it. No charges for Hazchem laws broken up to 2001, bureaucrats don't care. We haven't been looked after.

Cameron to ask minister about his feelings on BOI perhaps Chief of Air Force or Minister for Defence should be charged for Hazchem laws broken and Standing Orders.

Ian there from the beginning the “terms of Reference” stated nobody would be prosecuted. A Complex issue, Cameron will run with it.

Suggestion of another meeting to pull apart BOI.

Kathleen and Barry Willis went and saw Joint Standing Committee (JSC), Report available to everyone. Cameron spoke to JSC and DVA were asked to report in February. Access to records is a big issue. DVA made the allegation that records had been lost and had only just been found again, now they could work through .The RAAF has been asked to make them publicly available. Public Inquiry of Defence and Standing Committee minutes should be available. Ask. What action does the Standing Committee intend to take? Revisit and seek an outcome.

SHOAMP Health Forum – Peter Felton Attended. Now Better Health Programme from 1/3/06. Using own doctors, info sent to own GP. Melanoma testing, Bowel Cancer checks, encourage non drinking. Questionnaire to be sent out, please send back. Looking at Depression. Info to remain confidential. Support Group encourage screening using own GP. Needs to be done every 12 months. DVA don't have that concept . If they find cancer covered under SOP, will it be fast tracked. Keith Horsley was invited to attend today's meeting but was not available.

Workcover want to close their cases. Need to get Workcover to have another meeting with everybody.

Welfare Officer Seminar – 3 day seminar. Kathleen attended. Lots of resources available. Bereavement Packages will go to all on Attendance Register. Anyone available to do Hospital visits please let us know, we need to look after the welfare of the families.

The RSL has stated to the government that the 3 tier system for ex-gratia should be scrapped and all members should receive \$40K. The Support Group still considers it should be a larger amount.

DVA Quest info:

Noel Payne – There are 2000 conditions to be determined with SRCA, same under VEA. Conditions are being rejected under VEA. The meeting in March was heated (Kathleen)

Mental Health Seminar – minutes available.

Programme called “ASIST” Suicide prevention. Levels of Risk – 2 day workshop. Full education on intervention and help. Workshops paid for by DVA.

Meeting with VVFA State President – notes available.

VEA Section 180A – identifies and allows for VEA payment to a particular person or group of persons - IF there is no SOP, OR IF the condition criteria (ie Deseal chemicals) is not listed in the SOP AND the RMA has stated they will not change the SOP (which they have stated), then the provision allows for all of us to apply under Section 180A. However, the delegates are not applying it, just rejecting claims. Go to the VVFA in your local area and ask for Veterans’ Review Board under Section 180A Sections 3 and 120.

Pay under 7.2 of MRCA. Precedent has been set. Crattenburg precedent. Deseal/Reseal is a material contribution.

The meeting then took a break to partake of the excellent array of food provided by all attendees. Thanks to everyone.

The Raffle was drawn – 3 prizes.

There is still a push to include the Firefighters in the ex-gratia payment.

On the Forum Media releases and answers from the minister are available.

Spouses survey – still on hold as they are still trying to put together a cohort.

Mitochondrial study have the numbers ready to go.

Childrens Health survey – VVFA are supportive of us pushing for a Children’s Study. We need to push for Dependants. There is an independent Laboratory in Sydney, Scientific Toxicology, will test kids for free.

Jeff Curl advised – Childrens issues will be busy soon. VVCS run a SONS & DAUGHTERS programme to help kids understand the effects of PTSD. Our kids are welcome to join it. Contact VVCS in your local area for more information.

Plans for the future:

There is a complete lack of welfare available in Ipswich. If we get our grant and set up we will attract more funding to run workshops and seminars. We can provide

networking for the men, wives and kids. We will have an advocate and all the welfare information to hand. We can expand our services to other ex-service persons.

DVA hasn't given us a lot of information. Their productivity is based on product not results. It is up to the individuals to ask the right questions to be able to access information. We will be driving it ourselves.

Lyn Needham is sending a list of courses available. If anyone wants to become a welfare officer let Kathleen or Peter Felton know. The Best Grant Funding will cover 4 officers @ 15 hours per week.

Funding & Fundraising – we have been authorised to sell Legacy badges at the Logan Hyperdome from 27 Aug to 2 Sept, also at Bunnings stores. Next meeting we will need a Co-ordinator and volunteers for Legacy badge sales. Nobby Clark and Gordon Dudley put their hands up to co-ordinate the Hyperdome.

Legacy is open to all widows and children of servicemen and Chad is attempting to be available at the next meeting to tell us about our eligibility to their services.

Home assist – some things are provided free, others have a small fee. In Ipswich the City Council or RSL Homecare.

Sea of Orange protest – started by East Timor Vets and VVA in protest of DVAs lack of assistance. It is a Peaceful protest wearing an Orange armband. Each individual is to make up their own mind.

Increasing membership – DVA don't sent out info on the Support Group to anyone.

We need more Lifestyle Courses.

Database of Conditions CD available to Group to add Childrens conditions. There should be a database of all Desealers conditions. Questionnaire to be sent out. Code numbers to factor in conditions.

Everyone should have a print out of conditions and medication from GP.

MLCOA do not have an Environmental or Toxicologist Specialist.  
MLSRA do have a group of Doctors based in the city. So if you are not happy ask to go to a MLSRA.

Date of next meeting 23 July 2006.

Meeting closed 1227.

General conversation continued. Postscript. Christopher Bate DS/RS passed away on Friday morning.