

Statement of Principles
concerning
**CUTS, STABS, ABRASIONS OR
LACERATIONS**

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986
subsection 196B(2)

1. Being of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that a **cut, stab, abrasion or laceration and death from a cut, stab, abrasion or laceration** can be related to operational service rendered by veterans, peacekeeping service rendered by members of Peacekeeping forces and hazardous service rendered by members of the Forces, the Repatriation Medical Authority determines, under subsection 196B(2) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*, that the factors that must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting a **cut, stab, abrasion or laceration or death from a cut, stab, abrasion or laceration** with the circumstances of that service, are:
 - (a) receiving physical trauma to the part of the body where the cut, stab, abrasion or laceration was sustained, at the time when the injury was sustained; or
 - (b) the inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for the cut, stab, laceration or abrasion.
2. Subject to clause 3 (below) at least one of the factors set out in paragraphs **1(a) and (b)** must be related to any service rendered by a person.

3. The factor set out in paragraph **1(b)** applies only where:
- (a) the person's **cut, stab, abrasion** or **laceration** was sustained prior to a period, or part of a period, of service to which the factor is related; and
 - (b) the relationship suggested between the **cut, stab, abrasion** or **laceration** and the particular service of a person is a relationship set out in paragraph 8(1)(e), 9(1)(e), 70(5)(d), or 70(5A)(d) of the Act.
4. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:

“abrasion” means a mechanically produced wound that:

- (a) interrupts the continuity of the epidermis or other external tissue; and
- (b) may or may not penetrate to the subcutaneous tissues; and
- (c) was caused by at least one of the following factors:
 - (i) abrasion; or
 - (ii) scratch; or
 - (iii) scrape; or
 - (iv) friction; or
 - (v) crushing; and
- (d) was not caused by a:
 - (i) gunshot; or
 - (ii) missile; or
 - (iii) explosive device or fragment thereof; or
 - (iv) burn;

“cut” means a mechanically produced incised wound that:

- (a) is usually horizontal to the skin's surface; and
- (b) interrupts the continuity of the epidermis or other external tissue; and
- (c) may or may not penetrate to the subcutaneous tissues; and
- (d) was caused by an instrument having a sharp edge such as a:
 - (i) knife; or
 - (ii) scalpel; or
 - (iii) machete; or
 - (iv) axe; and
- (e) was not caused by a:
 - (i) gunshot; or
 - (ii) missile; or
 - (iii) explosive device or fragment thereof; or
 - (iv) burn;

“laceration” means a mechanically produced wound that:

- (a) is caused by the action of an object not normally used to make a cut; and
- (b) interrupts the continuity of the epidermis or other external tissue by:
 - (i) tearing; or
 - (ii) scraping; or
 - (ii) cutting, and
- (c) may or may not penetrate to the subcutaneous tissues; and
- (d) was not caused by a:
 - (i) gunshot; or
 - (ii) missile; or
 - (iii) explosive device or fragment thereof; or
 - (iv) burn;

“stab” means a penetrating cut wound, including a wound known as a “puncture wound” that:

- (a) is deeper than it is long; and
- (b) includes wounds caused by a:
 - (i) bayonet; or
 - (ii) knife; or
 - (iii) spiked instrument; or
 - (iv) thorn; or
 - (v) needle, including a hypodermic syringe; and
- (c) was not caused by a:
 - (i) gunshot; or
 - (ii) missile; or
 - (iii) explosive device or fragment thereof; or
 - (iv) burn.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 1994

The Common Seal of the _____)
Repatriation Medical Authority _____)
was affixed to this instrument _____)
in the presence of: _____)

KEN DONALD
CHAIRMAN