

Determination
of
Statement of Principles
concerning
OTITIC BAROTRAUMA

ICD CODES: 993.0

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986

1. This Statement of Principles is determined by the Repatriation Medical Authority under subsection **196B(2)** of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (the Act).

Kind of injury, disease or death

2. (a) This Statement of Principles is about **otitic barotrauma** and **death from otitic barotrauma**.

(b) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, “**otitic barotrauma**” means damage to the middle ear arising from inequalities in the barometric pressure on each side of the tympanic membrane, attracting ICD code 993.0.

Basis for determining the factors

3. The Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **otitic barotrauma** can be related to relevant service rendered by veterans, members of Peacekeeping Forces, or members of the Forces.

Factors that must be related to service

4. Subject to clause 6, at least one of the factors set out in the paragraphs in clause 5 must be related to any relevant service rendered by the person.

Factors

5. The factors that must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting **otitic barotrauma** or **death from otitic barotrauma** with the circumstances of a person's relevant service are:
- (a) being exposed to an abrupt change in the barometric pressure surrounding the person at the time of the clinical onset of otitic barotrauma; or
 - (b) being exposed to an abrupt change in the barometric pressure surrounding the person at the time of the clinical worsening of otitic barotrauma; or
 - (c) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for the otitic barotrauma.

Factors that apply only to material contribution or aggravation

6. Paragraphs **5(b)** to **5(c)** apply only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, otitic barotrauma where the person's otitic barotrauma was suffered or contracted before or during (but not arising out of) the person's relevant service; paragraph 8(1)(e), 9(1)(e), 70(5)(d) or 70(5A)(d) of the Act refers.

Other definitions

7. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:

“being exposed to an abrupt change in the barometric pressure” means directly experiencing a sudden rise or fall in air or water pressure such as occurs during rapid altitude changes in an aircraft or whilst underwater diving;

“ICD code” means a number assigned to a particular kind of injury or disease in the Australian Version of The International Classification of Diseases, 9th revision, Clinical Modification (ICD-9-CM), effective date of 1 July 1995, copyrighted by the National Coding Centre, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney, NSW, and having ISBN 0 642 22235 5;

“relevant service” means:

- (a) operational service; or
- (b) peacekeeping service; or
- (c) hazardous service.

Dated this *Sixteenth* day of *January* 1996

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

KEN DONALD
CHAIRMAN