

Determination

of

Statement of Principles
concerning

ROSS RIVER FEVER

ICD CODE: 066.3

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 **Ross River fever and death from Ross River fever**.
- (b) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, "**Ross River fever**" means infection by a mosquito-borne alpha virus, known as Ross River virus, attracting ICD code 066.3.

Basis for determining the factors

3. The Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **Ross River fever and death from Ross River fever** 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 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 **Ross River fever** or **death from Ross River fever** with the circumstances of a person's relevant service are:
- (a) having an increased risk of exposure to mosquitoes in a geographical area with Ross River virus, at least three days, but not more than 30 days, immediately before the clinical onset of Ross River fever; or
 - (b) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for Ross River fever.

Factors that apply only to material contribution or aggravation

6. Paragraph 5(b) applies only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, Ross River fever where the person's Ross River fever 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:

“increased risk of exposure to mosquitoes” means an increased risk of being bitten by mosquitoes bearing Ross River virus due to, for example, participation in outdoor activities or movement to an area with higher prevalence of Ross River fever;

“geographical area with Ross River virus” means one of the following areas which are reported to have, or to have had, Ross River virus transmission:

- (i) Australia;
- (ii) Papua New Guinea; and
- (iii) the following South Pacific Islands:
 - Solomon Islands;
 - Fiji;
 - Cook Islands;
 - Tonga;
 - American Samoa; and
 - the French Polynesian Islands of New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna;

“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 1996, copyrighted by the National Coding Centre, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney, NSW, and having ISBN 0 642 24447 2;

“relevant service” means:

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

Dated this *Eighth* day of *October* 1997

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

KEN DONALD
CHAIRMAN