

south east asian treaty organisation (seato)

december 2007 nurse update: 13

SEATO Nurses 10 years on - Recommendations

That a Ministerial determination be made pursuant to section 5R of the VEA 1986 (or other appropriate mechanism) to extend eligibility for repatriation benefits under the VEA to members of the civilian surgical and medical teams (SEATO members) who served in Vietnam.

5.2 That transitional arrangements be put in place for SEATO members with claims currently accepted by Comcare pursuant to the SRCA as follows:

5.2.1 SEATO members with claims for compensation accepted by Comcare and currently in receipt of incapacity payments can elect to continue to receive incapacity payments under Comcare until payments cease at age 65 or receive no less than the special rate benefits and access to the "Gold Card" under the VEA;

5.2.2 SEATO members with claims for compensation accepted by Comcare who have or were entitled to claim compensation payments for incapacity that have or would have terminated at age 65 be eligible for no less than the special rate pension and have access to the "Gold Card" under the VEA.

This will enable SEATO members to receive a similar level of income support to Veterans in receipt of the TPI pension and access to a "Gold Card" for medical treatment at age 65.

Please find below a brief update on SEATO nurse issues:

Election 07

In the lead up to the recent election the ANF put forward to the two major parties the attached paper including recommendations to extend eligibility for repatriation benefits to members of the civilian surgical and medical teams who served in Vietnam together with transitional arrangements for members with claims accepted under Comcare.

The new Minister for Veteran's Affairs, Alan Griffin has recently agreed to meet with the ANF next February for further discussion in relation to SEATO nurse matters.

A full report on the outcome of that meeting will be sent to SEATO nurses on our mailing list.

Comcare Claims

No new claims have been lodged with Comcare this year. The number of claimants remain at 18 (plus one subsequently withdrawn). Greg Isolani from KCI Lawyers continues to manage a number of claims and is available to assist with any questions SEATO members may have in relation to the claims process. Greg can be contacted on 03 9614 5866 or contact Debbie Richards at the ANF Federal Office: 03 96028500; email: debbie@anf.org.au

We look forward to productive discussions next year with the new Minister. In the meantime the ANF Federal Office extends best wishes for the festive season and new year.

