

south east asian treaty organisation (seato)

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nurse update: 12

URGENT NOTICE - COMCARE CLAIMS

The proposed changes to the Comcare Guide for assessing the degree of permanent impairment in relation to claims for lump sum payments for permanent injuries under the Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 will come into effect from 1 March 2006.

As you may recall from the last newsletter, the ANF wrote to Comcare last year highlighting our opposition to the proposed changes on the basis that it would make it more difficult for nurses to claim lump sum payments for permanent injuries.

Comcare have advised that the changes will be effective from 1 March 2006, however a claim for permanent impairment received before 1 March 2006 will be assessed under the current Guide.

Please note that anyone with an illness or injury that may be related to (or aggravated by) their time in Vietnam should contact Debbie Richards at the Federal Office of ANF on 03 9639 5211, email: debbie@anf.org.au or phone Greg Isolani on 03 9614 5866 immediately.

Please give this your urgent attention.

ANF Biennial national delegates vote to continue support for SEATO Nurses

ANF delegates from South Australia moved and seconded the following resolution at the recent ANF Biennial National Conference held in Darwin last October:

That the ANF Federal Office continue to lobby the Australian Government to fully recognise the entitlements of SEATO nurses and organise a national "Day of Shame" involving all ANF Branches to focus attention on the plight of SEATO nurses.

The motion was carried unanimously.

The Biennial National Conference is the forum for consideration and debate on matters of national policy. Resolutions of the conference are taken as recommendations for consideration by the ANF Federal Executive.



Australian War Memorial - new Vietnam gallery to include experience of civilian surgical teams

Work has begun to set up a new Vietnam gallery at the War Memorial in Canberra which is to include the experience of the civilian surgical teams. Reprinted below is part of an email to Dot Angell CN-ASTV Group from Libby Stewart, Content Leader, Vietnam, requesting information and providing contact details.

"...Items we are interested in are photos, letters, tapes, memorabilia, even nursing equipment that may have come back with people. If you feel you could help us, so that we can properly represent this important aspect of the Australian involvement in Vietnam, I would love to hear from you. I can be reached by email: libby.stewart@awm.gov.au or phone 02 6243 4362".

Health study - update on database for female Vietnam veterans

The establishment of the database containing a record of Australian women who participated in the Vietnam war in various roles is progressing slowly but more names are needed to establish a database with sufficient numbers to conduct further health studies for women.

Robert Van der Hoek, from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) reported that so far a total of 285 women have registered, the largest group being civilian nurses (77); followed by RAAF (58); unofficial entertainers (49); Army (43); Red Cross (15) and official entertainers (13). Others include: journalists; allied health professionals; foreign affairs and other administrative staff.

Further information about the database is available on the AIHW website: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/veteran/fvvchr/index.html> or contact Robert Van der Hoek by email: Robert.vanderhoek@aihw.gov.au or phone: 02 6244 1133.

Health study 2005: Korean war veterans

The Health Study 2005: Australian Veterans of the Korean War commissioned by DVA and conducted by Monash University can be accessed from the DVA website at: http://www.dva.gov.au/adf/health_studies/mainhs.htm

Once again, the study was only able to analyse mortality data relating to male veterans as the number of female veterans (58) was too small to allow the derivation of reliable results. This reinforces the need to keep promoting the database for female Vietnam veterans and ensure people register at their earliest opportunity.

DVA health study on cancer incidence in Australian Vietnam veterans

The report on the first study investigating cancer incidence in Vietnam veterans is still not available from DVA. We will continue to monitor it's progress.

Authorised by Ged Kearney, Assistant Federal Secretary, Australian Nursing Federation.