



Submission No 6

Inquiry into RAAF F-111 Deseal/Reseal Workers and their Families

Name: Mr K D Fisher

[REDACTED]

Defence Sub Committee Secretariat,
Parliament House,
Canberra 2602,
A C T.

10 June '08.

For info: Minister for Veterans Affairs.

Re: F111 deseal/reseal inquiry.
(adequacy of terms of reference)

Sir/Ma'am,

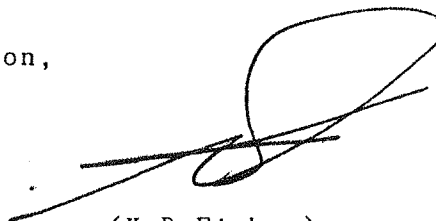
In response to the invitation in the Press Release dated 30 May '08 concerning the Parliamentary inquiry into the F111 deseal/reseal debacle, please accept the following input which I hope can and will be addressed in that inquiry.

1. For whatever reason, the previous Government failed to accept that it was not only those personnel engaged on F111 aircraft deseal/reseal activities who were exposed to the "chemical cocktail" involved.
2. I have had two Ex RAAF Aircraft Technicians contact me recently (Mr G.McLeod and Mr R.Sharpe...who are not represented by an ESO or Support group) in an attempt to gain knowledge of the findings of the previous inquiry. Both these men suffered medical problems following periodic exposure to sealants, and now have health issues which may or may not be attributable to that chemical exposure. Because these men completed this task on different Aircraft at different Squadrons, it seems that their case was conveniently deemed not important enough to be investigated during the previous inquiry. This aspect leads us to conclude that the terms of reference for that inquiry were deliberately narrow in order to facilitate limiting the known liability. (Agent Orange Revisited).
3. It is disturbing to read that although the terms of reference for this inquiry seems to be broader, the main focus remains with the F111 Technicians. All the other personnel who were knowingly exposed to these chemicals do not appear to be acknowledged and/or specifically listed. As we understand it, the numbers involved are small but that fact should not be the reason to negate their plight by the removal of their circumstances from the inquiry agenda.
4. In closing, our perception remains that the previous Government chose to 'wrap itself in the flag of patriotism' while knowingly rejecting legitimate concerns. We sincerely hope that this inquiry does not "gloss over the issue" in an attempt to arrive at a similar outcome. We respectfully request that the terms of reference be broadened to include ALL personnel who were exposed so that a full understanding can be reached in terms of the extent of the failure of the 'duty of care' by the RAAF. After all, the ADF knew of the

Page 2.

effect of Dioxin and other chemicals contained in the 'Agent Orange' cocktail, therefore we must be forgiven for thinking that their lack of information concerning health risks following exposure to these sealants was intentional, regardless of the origin of the instruction to withhold that information.

For your Consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K.D. Fisher', written in a cursive style with a large loop at the end.

(K.D.Fisher).

For Victims.

Enclosures:

- Annex A. Media Release and Terms of Reference (with comment).
- Annex B. Identification regime offered by previous inquiry.
- Annex C. Claim rejection for Mr G.McLeod concerning 'definition'.
- Annex D. RAAF medical report following exposure (Mr McLeod).