



## **Submission 108**

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

**Name:**                      **Ms Leigh Woods**

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE  
INQUIRY INTO RAAF F-111 DESEAL-RESEAL WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES  
SUBMISSION FROM LEIGH WOODS

- My husband, LEX WOODS was a Tier 1 Deseal/Reseal participant from 1980 until 1982. I did not know him during this time. My observations are made on the basis of my relationship with him over the past twenty three years.
- I am amazed by his lack of animosity about what has happened. He rarely sounds bitter, he does not apportion blame. In fact, he tries to forget it. He just attempts to cope the best way he can.
- He proudly holds down a responsible job, however he is completely 'spent' at day's end. He has nothing left in reserve.
- He has changed in recent years. He is now prone to headaches, he sleeps poorly, he is lethargic, he has mood swings and he has daily battles with a range of medical problems. He has severed many social contacts. He is more and more disengaged from his surroundings. This includes us as his family. We miss him.
- I have watched my husband confused and bewildered by paperwork, bureaucratic red tape, medical appointment schedules and lengthy processing procedures imposed upon him, to prove something that is a given - he WAS exposed, he HAS suffered.
- It appears to me this just makes him have to suffer it all over again.
- I have witnessed him stressed, impacted and inconvenienced by a litany of medical tests, often with disputed outcomes.
- I have heard him proudly declare "I'm okay compared to others", but in the next breath, I hear him voice his concerns about where his tarnished health status will take him into the future.
- I suspect that he fears that if he succumbs to the past, his current standing will be compromised.
- He is reluctant to make waves, or focus too much on Deseal/Reseal issues for fear the past will impede on where he is at the moment. Consequently, he has only reluctantly sought medical help. He has made some reactive efforts to seek assistance for his range of afflictions. The SHOAMP Health Care Scheme would appear to have been of little support to him on these occasions.
- He says he is grateful of the 'ex-gratia' payment he received, but underwhelmed by it, given that the BOI findings were so damning. He had naively hoped compensation would be just and commensurate with harm done. Present legislation appears to deny him such justice.
- I have great concerns for my husband's future wellbeing. I don't want him to have to repeatedly fight his way through tests, case studies, assessments, bureaucratic layers and repeated medical appointments. He has been through enough. It is time there was closure on this mess. He needs unequivocal support from the Australian Government, whom he served loyally throughout his military career. He and others like him need streamlined health support to manage the medical, psychological and neurological conditions attributed in the SHOAMP report and the F111 Deseal/Reseal BOI findings to their involvement in the F111 Deseal/Reseal program.
- My husband and I worry enormously about the long term impact of his exposure to chemicals, on the health and future wellbeing of our twin teenage daughters.
- This submission is written in support of my husband's previously lodged submission.
- I am deeply appreciative of the efforts of the 'Goop Troop' executive, who have battled this tragedy for so long. Thanks to them, this Parliamentary Inquiry is now taking place. I can only hope that a just outcome is finally reached.

  
LEIGH WOODS  
