



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Defence Sub Committee

Chair: Senator Michael Forshaw
SubComm Chair: The Hon Arch Bevis

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 30 May 2008

New inquiry into F-111 Deseal/Reseal personnel ***First public hearing on Monday 21 July 2008***

The Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade will conduct an inquiry into the compensation issues surrounding former Royal Australian Air Force personnel and their families affected by the deseal/reseal cleaning process of fuel tanks on F-111 bombers.

The Defence Sub-Committee will investigate and review claims for compensation made by former F-111 deseal/reseal personnel, including the Commonwealth's response to the health and support needs of the former deseal/reseal workers and their families.

The Sub-Committee will investigate whether the response was adequate and consistent with the findings of the previous Study of Health Outcomes in Aircraft Maintenance Personnel (SHOAMP) by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and whether the overall administration and handling of the program was accurate.

On launching the Inquiry, Chair of the Sub-Committee, Arch Bevis (Member for Brisbane, QLD) said, "I encourage former RAAF personnel involved in the F-111 reseal/deseal matter to come forward and tell the Committee their experiences. Their submissions will be welcomed".

The Sub-Committee has been tasked with reporting on the following Terms of Reference and will consider:

- the adequacy and equity of the Health Care Scheme in meeting the health and support needs of the of participants and their families, and whether this was consistent with SHOAMP findings;
- the adequacy and equity of the financial element of the Ex-Gratia Scheme and whether it was consistent with:
 - (i) the findings of SHOAMP;
 - (ii) the Health Care Scheme Response;
 - (iii) the Tier definitions; and
 - (iv) one-off payments to other veterans groups; and
- whether the overall handling and administration of ex-gratia and compensation claims was appropriate, timely and transparent for both participants and their families.

Submissions to the inquiry are due by **26 June 2008**.

**The hearings will be on Monday 21 July 2008 in Committee Room 2R1
Parliament House Canberra and in Brisbane on Monday 28 July 2008**

For media inquiries, contact the Sub-Committee Chairman, The Hon Arch Bevis MP on 02 6277 4518 or mobile 0419 731 490.

For all other inquiries, contact the Senior Research Officer, Muz Ali, on 02 6277 4466 or visit the committee website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jfadt/index.htm>