



Submission No 54

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

Name: Mr Colin Host

Colin L Host

[REDACTED]

June 26, 2008

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir or Madam:

From December 1980 until December 1983, I held the appointment of F111C Liaison Officer at Sacramento Air Logistics Centre (SMALC) McLelland Airforce Base in California USA.

During this period one of my duties was to liaise with SMALC in setting up, monitoring and reporting on the progress of the Cold Proof Load test and Deseal Reseal programmes performed on our F111C aircraft by SMALC personnel. I was charged with this task until the appointed management team of SQN LDR Paul Welch and F SGT G Coles arrived on site to take up their respective duties.

In the course of performing my duties associated with this task I was required to go to the Deseal Reseal facility on a regular basis to inspect airframe defects, fuel tank condition and components removed.

As part of the inspection process, some of the components removed would have to be cleaned and shipped back to Australia for disposition action. When the parts required shipping, I would call on SGT Peter Cutting to clean, package and organise their shipment. This entailed Sgt Cutting going to the Deseal Reseal facility with me to pick up the parts and clean them on site. While we were not directly using the deseal medium we did come in close contact with it through handling the parts and because it was being sprayed and we were breathing it in the atmosphere of a closed building. Peter also had to use mediums to clean the parts and while I am not sure what all the mediums were, because it happened so long ago, MEK, Naphtha, Trichlorethylene and JP4 are a few that I recall.

We were not issued with any safety equipment when carrying out these tasks and because we were unaware of what the consequences of coming in contact with SR51, Aviation fuel and cleaning mediums could have on our health in the future, we never questioned why safety equipment was not issued to us.

I maintained a log of events while I was in charge of this programme and handed it on to the management team when they arrived and as far as I am aware they continued to use this log throughout the course of the complete programme. If the records of this programme have been archived and still available, this log will support what I have stated above.

Sincerely,

Colin L Host.

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Warrant Officer Retired.

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