



Submission 104

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

Name: Mr Jason Griffiths

Dear members of the Senate sub committee,

Having suffered somewhat severely due to my time in Deseal/Reseal, I find that the interim care and support I receive from MCRS is only just adequate. I find it most distressing that I cannot cross over to VEA and receive full entitlements. If it were possible for me to cross over to VEA I would receive the full entitlements package of a full pension and Veterans Affairs Gold card and also a lump sum payment. This I have been told by Vet Affairs. The problem seems to be asking some poor guy in Brisbane to definitively name a cause of cancer, which is never going to happen due to costs involved in the research required and the scientific knowledge available today. So no SOP will ever be written. So I can never cross over to VEA.

The \$40,000 payment I received effectively allowed me to pay off some debts that I incurred while unemployed between the time I contracted Cancer, and the time MCRS rescued me. That was about all it achieved.

If I could access the full entitlements it would reduce the stress of the cost of living, which is spiralling out of control at the moment. The compensation payments I receive presently just cover rent, phone and electricity and partial food bill. Registration of the car makes things a bit tight. Luckily my wife is working. Although the full pension would not be enough to live on (as rent is now on average about \$300 a week), the lump sum would enable me to take out a small mortgage and purchase a modest dwelling. Thus using the left over to go to food, phone and electricity. With out it I will live out my days in limbo and most likely lose my family as the cracks are now appearing.

Considering that what I and others have sacrificed, (our lives literally), it would seem that the least our country could do, is through an **Act of Parliament**, issue those that should be entitled too, but can't get, the Veterans Affairs Gold Card and pay out a reasonable lump sum tax free payment of the order of \$250,000 at least, (Considering the Senators and MP's super payout for service to the people, this is a small amount), and leave current monetary contributions as they are. I know this adds up to a large amount of money, (probably a package in excess of 1 million dollars for the worst of us), but we are dealing with one of the largest industrial accidents this country has ever seen. Please do not forget this!

Our names will never be on some stone monument, as we were never involved in some heroic battle. Yet our casualties are almost as great as for the entire Vietnam campaign. We will never receive a medal in recognition for our efforts, as we do not fit the criteria. However we followed orders and did our duty. We were told it was safe and we were not in harms way. They knowingly lied to us and disobeyed OHS orders. Our place of work was the second most toxic place on the base, next to the Radio active Canberra bomber supposedly buried on the airfield. On top of that I stayed there 27 months when the normal stay was only supposed to be 12 months

Please understand that I am not greedy, I would just like a fair go. My life has been completely destroyed and I have no chance of ever competing in the work place to secure a comfortable reasonable life, as any other non-disabled member of the Australian population has. Nor have I any chance at any Superannuation scheme.

Before Deseal/Reseal I was top of my trade training in all courses, (My name is on the plaque at Wagga), now I cannot even construct this document without the help of my wife and spell check.

You the Australian people are responsible for this, and have admitted as such. I ask you act in a fair and just manner and make my remaining days while I wait for the next round of surgery and treatments and eventually death, to be relatively comfortable (considering the daily issue of pain I get. At least lashing with Cat-O-nine tails had a finite number) and secure at least. For that is why I joined the RAAF for. So you the people could be relatively comfortable and secure, as my Father (Capt. Army) and my Uncle (Rat of Tobruk), my Grand mothers brother (AIF, died on Gallipoli) did before me.

Jason Griffiths

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Ex RAAF 3AD Deseal/Reseal