

Submission.

With the government offering minimal health care to some affected veterans of the British bomb tests in the 1950s, this is too little too late and not at all generous in compensation coverage and support to Australian Tests Participants (Nuclear Veterans) of the British Nuclear weapons Tests in Australia.

Full coverage under the Veterans Entitlement Act should be extended to all of those military personnel who are bona fide British Nuclear Weapons Tests participants and whose names appear in the Government's nominal roll, and to those civilians who were fully employed by the Federal Government and were present during the actual tests or may have been involved in the cleanup period after the actual tests. A friend of mine was a weather expert at Maralinga and is in this category. He has cancer and there is an 18% increased rate of cancer incidence among nuclear veterans.

The general difference between Military and Civilian participants is that civilian participants were only involved if they wanted to be and earned extremely high wages and bonuses, they could leave at any time that conditions were not to their liking.

Military personnel on the other hand were there because they were ordered to be there and had no say in the matter; they were all forced to sign the Secrecy Act. And they came under military law as well as civilian law.

Most of the civilians whose names appear on the nominal roll had left the test site before any tests were carried out and were put on the nominal roll purely to water down any tests or studies that would follow.

I believe that military nuclear tests participants (Nuclear Veterans) should be allowed full qualifying service under the Veterans entitlement Act. or at the very least, immediate full implementation of the Clarke Committee's Recommendations.

The Bills do not implement the Clarke Recommendation to declare the Nuclear Veterans' service as non-warlike hazardous service.

This means that the Nuclear Veterans are not given the chance to apply for a disability pension for war related injuries. It also means their widows cannot apply for a pension when the Veteran has died of his war injuries.

This was what the Clarke Review recommended, and this was what the Minister had previously supported.

The Nuclear Veterans understandably feel betrayed.

The Government is ignoring the recommendations of its own independent reviews that were conducted at great taxpayer expense.

Sincerely  
Cate Kyne