

REGULAR DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION INC NATIONAL OFFICE

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RDFWA

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The Committee Secretary
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Inquiry Into the Provisions of the Australian Participants in British Nuclear Tests (Treatment) Bills 2006

In view of the short time available for this Inquiry, our Association has not had time to develop a detailed submission. However, this is seen as important legislation affecting the navy, army and air force personnel who are the principal constituents of our Association, namely the regulars.

We refer members of the Committee to the submission made by Dr J P Lonergan in which he argues convincingly as to the possible fallibility of the two studies commissioned by the DVA. His arguments point to the complexities attendant in the area of nuclear physics to the point where it is not possible to state with certainty that, on the balance of probabilities, particular medical outcomes would *not* ensue.

The provision of health care for this cohort of Australian servicemen involved in the tests is supported. However, it is the area of compensation that needs to be addressed but is not included in the Bills. It is our firm view that all these service men and women who were exposed to the effects of the UK atomic tests in Australia should be entitled to an appropriate level of compensation in recognition of that unusual aspect of their service.

Recognising that these tests took place some 50 years ago, there is a sound case for the Government to cease defending those highly contestable DVA studies, and adopt a magnanimous and generous policy in respect of these veterans.

In support of Dr Lonergan's submission, we would be pleased to appear before the committee.

Yours sincerely

H J P Adams
National President