

COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION FOR VETERANS

I appreciate the opportunity to provide a submission relating to the Productivity Commission Draft Report – A Better Way to Support Veterans.

I make the following comments based upon my experience as :
Secretary of the Tweed Heads and Coolangatta RSL Sub-Branch,
An Officer in the Royal Australian Naval Reserve (Retired), and
a Chief Executive in civilian employment with Territory and Local
Governments (Retired)

I find the Report has approached veterans' compensation and rehabilitation system in a humane manner given the complexity of its grounding within the existing legislative and administrative framework.

The objectives for the veteran support system are acknowledged as humane and the basis of worker's compensation addresses a realistic situation. It is in the areas of transition from military to civilian life that I offer comment.

Whilst actively relating to transition, preparation takes place prior to discharge, there should be a measure of ensuring that the person is deemed (by themselves and appropriately qualified personnel) to be totally adjusted to seamlessly take their place back into the society of the day. This may require extension to the date of discharge for this to be achieved.

For persons injured and/or disabled during service, an approach based upon private practice and governmental practices, would, in many circumstances, be appropriate.

An injured/disabled person should, at their decision, be able to remain in an appropriate position within the totality of the Department of Defence (DOD). This may require training/education by the individual for this to be achieved.

The position may be within the military framework or the "civilian" activities of the DOD. In both scenarios the person has the option to remain as a military person (eg – continue to wear uniform even if in a "civilian" occupation and to maintain "military" conditions).

From my experience the transitioning is critical and I believe approaches that I have briefly outlined would be effective to many to provide the best possible 'wellness' for them.

I would be happy to discuss any of the above should this be desired.

Yours faithfully

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