



Specialist Medical Review Council

Declarations

Section 196W
Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986

Re: Statements of Principles Nos. 5 and 6 of 2008

In Respect of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

Requests for Review Declaration No. 23

1. In relation to the Repatriation Medical Authority (the RMA) Statement of Principles No. 5 of 2008 concerning posttraumatic stress disorder and death from posttraumatic stress disorder, made under subsection 196B(2) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (the VEA), the Specialist Medical Review Council (the Council) under subsection 196W of the VEA:

DECLARES that there is sound medical-scientific evidence on which the RMA could have relied to amend the Statement of Principles to include the factors set out below;

DIRECTS the RMA to amend Statement of Principles No. 5 of 2008 by including the following factors for each of clinical onset and clinical worsening:

(a) Having a perception of threat and/or harm to the integrity of the self as a consequence of being in what:

- (i) the individual concerned; and
- (ii) a reasonable person in the circumstances of that individual would have;

considered to be any or all of a threatening, hostile, hazardous and/or menacing situation and/or environment.

(b) Having a perception of threat and/or harm to the integrity of:

(i) a significant other; and/or

(ii) other persons known to the individual or with whom the individual concerned has had contact in the discharge of that individual's duties and/or responsibilities;

as a consequence of the individual concerned and the persons in (i) and/or (ii) being in the same or similar circumstances as the individual concerned which:

(iii) the individual concerned; and

(iv) a reasonable person in the circumstances of that individual would have;

considered to be any or all of a threatening, hostile, hazardous and/or menacing situation and/or environment but excluding a perception engendered from viewing or listening to mass media (unless such viewing or listening is part of that individual's duties and/or responsibilities).

and

2. In relation to the RMA Statement of Principles No. 6 of 2008 concerning posttraumatic stress disorder and death from posttraumatic stress disorder, made under subsection 196B(3) of the VEA the Council under subsection 196W of the VEA:

DECLARES that the sound medical-scientific evidence available to the RMA is insufficient to justify any amendment to the Statement of Principles to include as factors exposure to malevolent environment and/or perceived threat or any other factor.

3. In addition, the Council:

REMITTS both Statements of Principles Nos. 5 and 6 of 2008 concerning posttraumatic stress disorder and death from posttraumatic stress disorder to the RMA, and

DIRECTS the RMA to conduct a new investigation as soon as reasonably practicable, taking into account whatever new information has become available since both Statements of Principles were determined in 2008, including but not limited to the DSM-5¹ in addition to the information that was available to the RMA when Statements of Principles Nos. 5 and 6 were determined.

¹ *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5™)* American Psychiatric Association 2013.

Jonathan Phillips
Presiding Councillor

Richard Bryant
Councillor

Helen Herrman
Councillor

Alexander McFarlane
Councillor

Derek Silove
Councillor

The Common Seal of the)
Specialist Medical Review)
Council was affixed by)
authority of the Council in)
the presence of:)



Jan Bowman
Registrar

Dated this **Seventeenth** day of **December 2013**

The Council's Reasons for Decision in relation to this Declaration can be obtained from its website at www.smrc.gov.au, or on request by writing to the Specialist Medical Review Council Secretariat, PO Box 895, Woden ACT 2606 or by telephoning (07) 3223 8840.