

**Determination**  
of  
Statement of Principles  
concerning  
**ATRIAL FLUTTER**

*Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*

1. This Statement of Principles is determined by the Repatriation Medical Authority under subsection **196B(3)** of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (the Act).

**Kind of injury, disease or death**

2. (a) This Statement of Principles is about **atrial flutter** and **death from atrial flutter**.  
  
(b) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles "**atrial flutter**" means a macroreentrant tachycardia arising in the atria of the heart causing a rapid atrial rate exceeding 250 beats per minute.

**Basis for determining the factors**

3. On the sound medical-scientific evidence available, the Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that it is more probable than not that **atrial flutter** and **death from atrial flutter** can be related to relevant service rendered by veterans or members of the Forces.

**Factors that must be related to service**

4. Subject to clause 6, at least one of the factors set out in clause 5 must be related to any relevant service rendered by the person.

## **Factors**

5. The factors that must exist before it can be said that, on the balance of probabilities, **atrial flutter** or **death from atrial flutter** is connected with the circumstances of a person's relevant service are:
- (a) suffering from ischaemic heart disease at the time of the clinical onset of atrial flutter; or
  - (b) suffering from chronic bronchitis with pulmonary obstruction at the time of the clinical onset of atrial flutter; or
  - (c) suffering from emphysema at the time of the clinical onset of atrial flutter; or
  - (d) suffering from congestive cardiac failure at the time of the clinical onset of atrial flutter; or
  - (e) undergoing cardiac or thoracic surgery within the seven days immediately before the clinical onset of atrial flutter; or
  - (f) suffering from atrial fibrillation within the seven days immediately before the clinical onset of atrial flutter; or
  - (g) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for atrial flutter.

## **Factors that apply only to material contribution or aggravation**

6. Paragraph 5(g) applies only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, atrial flutter where the person's atrial flutter was suffered or contracted before or during (but not arising out of) the person's relevant service; paragraph 8(1)(e), 9(1)(e) or 70(5)(d) of the Act refers.

## **Inclusion of Statements of Principles**

7. In this Statement of Principles if a relevant factor applies and that factor includes an injury or disease in respect of which there is a Statement of Principles then the factors in that last mentioned Statement of Principles apply in accordance with the terms of that Statement of Principles.

**Other definitions**

8. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:

**“chronic bronchitis with pulmonary obstruction”** means a respiratory tract disorder with:

- (a) excessive mucus production sufficient to cause cough and sputum production with expectoration for at least three months of each of at least two consecutive years which is not attributable to other respiratory diseases; and
- (b) chronic expiratory obstruction on functional evaluation;

**“death from atrial flutter”** in relation to a person includes death from a terminal event or condition that was contributed to by the person’s atrial flutter;

**“relevant service”** means:

- (a) eligible war service (other than operational service); or
- (d) defence service (other than hazardous service);

**“terminal event”** means the proximate or ultimate cause of death and includes:

- (a) pneumonia;
- (b) respiratory failure;
- (c) cardiac arrest;
- (d) circulatory failure; or
- (e) cessation of brain function.

Dated this *Twenty-First* day of *November* 2002

The Common Seal of the )  
Repatriation Medical Authority )  
was affixed to this instrument )  
in the presence of: )

KEN DONALD  
CHAIRMAN