



The Australian Federation of Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Ex-Servicemen & Women Ltd
(Incorporated in the ACT)

TPI FEDERATION AUSTRALIA

“Disabled in our Service - United in our Cause”



Federation President's Report

May 2018

You may be aware that there is a new Veterans' Affairs Minister - again. This is the 8th Minister in 10 years. He is Darren Chester MP and his electorate is in Gippsland, Victoria. Minister Chester was elected to Parliament in 2008. He was Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence from 2013 to 2015. He was Assistant Minister for Defence from 2015 to 2016. He was Minister for Infrastructure and Transport from 2016 to 2017. He was a journalist from 1986 to 1998. He was a Marketing Consultant from 1998 to 2002. He was Chief of Staff to PJ Ryan MLA from 2004 to 2008.

The Federation has just had their bi-annual congress and our Vice President will give a report on that in the next issue of TRUCE. Again, it was disappointing that the MPs and Senators did not give us more time and respect considering the effort that all the State/Territory Presidents make to get to Parliament House. By way of example the new Minister, who had allocated 30 minutes for us arrived 10 minutes late and then proceeded to talk about football. By the time we finally addressed some issues, we only had 12 minutes in which to do this.

As usual, Amanda Rishworth MP and Senator Linda Reynolds gave us their respect, time and attention that your State/Territory Presidents deserve. They appreciated this.

Since the Congress, the Federation has been busy constructing submissions at extremely short notice, one for the Australian National Audit Office and another for the Productivity Commission. The ANAO review is a review into the processes and procedures that are utilised by DVA, whereas the Productivity Commission is a review of the three compensation Acts which the possibility of merging them into one Act.

If you feel you have any constructive thoughts that can be added to either review, can you let me know? If you have examples of how the Department or the Legislation has been negligent, can you let me know?

DVA is also running another couple of reviews that you may wish to help me to address. The first, which is due at the end of April, is a review of the Rehabilitation Appliance Program (RAP). If you feel there are some items that need to be removed or added to the program, can you let me know? If you feel that there are some processes or procedure that need to be addressed, can you let me know?

The other review is the review into the DVA Transport Booked Car With Driver that is currently being held. I don't have an end date for that review at this stage. If you feel you have had experiences that can assist the review, can you let me know?

I thank the many TPIs who contacted me regarding their issues with their hearing aids. Because of your efforts, many Audiologists contacted me for clarification of the issues with DVA subsidies. I was able to subsequently put together a portfolio of issues from both Veterans and Audiologists, which proved the confusion that was present in the marketplace. I have asked DVA for a plain English clarification of their policies for the provision of hearing aids to Veterans and War Widows. DVA has stated that they will be issuing new Fact Sheets for both Veterans and providers very shortly. They will also be asking the Audiologist to publish articles from them on the subject that will be distributed in their internal magazines. I have also asked for articles for your magazines with the new Departmental explanations.

The TPI Federation wishes to thank DVA, especially Liz Cosson, Kate Pope, Robyn Kemp and Joy Rosso for their co-operation in trying to simplify the system for you and improve the often complex processes that are placed in your way.

The other issue which still seems to be of some doubt to some TPIs, is the provision of income support for those TPIs who do not have operational service. If you are not eligible for the Service Pension because of the type of Service that you had then you are more likely to be eligible to apply for the Centrelink Disability Support Pension (DSP). This is an Income and Assets tested pension. It includes the TPI compensation in the test as income. When, and if, the DSP is approved, Centrelink advises DVA. DVA then calculates the Defence Force Income Support Allowance (DFISA). A separate DFISA payment is made by DVA. If you think you are eligible, apply for the Centrelink DSP to begin the process.

As with the hearing aids, DFISA or Transport or any issue that you have, can you either call or email me so that we can attempt to get the issues rectified. Your TPI Association is here for you and your families.



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