

AUGUST 2015

2 YOUR PLAN

The record of all the entitlements and services that Veterans' Affairs provides to you.



3 CHANGES TO SERVICE DELIVERY

How you can find out more information on the changes.



MESSAGE FROM JACKI

Jacki Couchman, Head of Veterans' Affairs and Secretary for War Pensions

Over the past couple of months we've focused on strengthening our partnerships with other organisations which support veterans and their families. In particular, we've been talking to the RSA – National Executive Members, the Support Services Committee and others, about how we can best work together. We have a lot of objectives in common. We want to ensure that veterans are recognised and honoured for their service to New Zealand – and that the role of their families in supporting them is also acknowledged. We want to ensure veterans and their families receive all the support that is available to them, and we want to support veterans to regain their health and wellbeing. We have huge respect for the RSA and highly value our partnership with them. At the same time, both the RSA

and Veterans' Affairs recognise that we have our own roles to fulfil. By working together we can understand each other's perspective and how we achieve the best outcome for those we serve.

Like the RSA, Veterans' Affairs is working out how it can better connect with those who are currently serving, and who are veterans of more recent deployments. The Veterans' Support Act enables Veterans' Affairs to provide new forms of targeted support for these veterans and their families from 7 December 2015. If you are currently serving, you will hear more from the RSA and from Veterans' Affairs over the coming months. And if you have served operationally on or after 1 April 1974, there is new support coming from 7 December which may



benefit you. We'll be out and about on bases and camps later this year, and providing further information on our website (veteransaffairs.mil.nz) and through this newsletter. In the meantime, you can contact us on 0800 483 8372 if you have any queries

We look forward to being able to provide more support, to more veterans.

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Hon Craig Foss, Minister of Veterans' Affairs

In June I attended a national commemoration to mark the 65th anniversary of the start of the Korean War. It was my privilege to meet Korean War veterans at the commemoration, to lay a wreath on behalf of the New Zealand Government and to do an oral history reading from a letter sent by Clarence Kinzett to his parents, dated 24 April 1951. The letter describes the Kap'young battle. I have read out a number of letters and diary entries from the front during commemorative events this year. These accounts always

include a lot of factual information – about what is happening and who is involved. They talk about the conditions New Zealanders and their allies are serving in and the people they are serving with – those they rely on to have their back. They also often talk about home and what they are missing from home.

I don't doubt that the letters sent home were sanitised versions of what was actually happening because no-one wanted to concern those left behind. However through these accounts I see courage, commitment and comradeship – values which the New Zealand Defence Force and those serving within it have always held dear.



Minister Craig Foss with Des Vinten, President of the New Zealand Korean Veteran's Association, at Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, 25 June 2015.

There's no doubt that we have sent, and continue to send, some of our best and brightest to fight; to rebuild; to train; to maintain peace; to assist those in states of emergency.

Thank you for your service.

Thank you for your service in the New Zealand Defence Force. Your contribution on behalf of our nation is greatly appreciated and will never be forgotten.

YOUR PLAN

WHAT IS YOUR PLAN?

Your Plan is the record of all the entitlements and services that Veterans' Affairs provides to you.

As you make contact with your case manager for support or services in the future a Your Plan will be created and sent to you. The Your Plan, tailored to you, will be as simple or as detailed as it has to be to meet your needs.

Veterans' Affairs will work with you to ensure Your Plan meets your goals. Your Plan will cover:

- services or support to help maintain your independence, such as lawn mowing or housework
- approved treatment and/or rehabilitation
- the entitlements that you receive from Veterans' Affairs.

If your circumstances change so will Your Plan to ensure it meets your latest needs.

TREATMENT

Any veteran who has an accepted service-related injury, illness or condition is eligible for payment of, or contribution towards the cost of their treatment.

When delivering treatment for an accepted condition the treatment provider must meet the requirements of the Veterans' Support Act 2014

- Treatment providers defined in the Veterans' Support Act 2014 are; acupuncturist, audiologist, chiropractor, counsellor, dentist, medical laboratory technologist, medical practitioner, nurse, nurse practitioner, occupational therapist, optometrist, osteopath, physiotherapist, podiatrist, or speech therapists.
- Veterans' Affairs will, dependent on the recommendations of specialists, advise you of the type and duration of the treatment required to treat your service

related condition. Often a mix of treatments may be required and some of these may also be funded by the DHB as well as Veterans' Affairs.

Prior approval is required for any treatment other than visiting your GP or picking up a prescription for an accepted condition as listed on your treatment card. Approval is determined on a case by case basis and should be discussed with your Case Manager.

If you do not have a Case Manager then please contact our Enquiry Line so one can be assigned for you.

NEW SUPPORT FOR VETERANS

If a veteran needs to go into hospital for long term care (28 consecutive days or more) Veterans' Affairs can now assist with travel or related costs for family or other eligible persons to visit to a one-off funding allocation up to a maximum of \$2,000 each year.

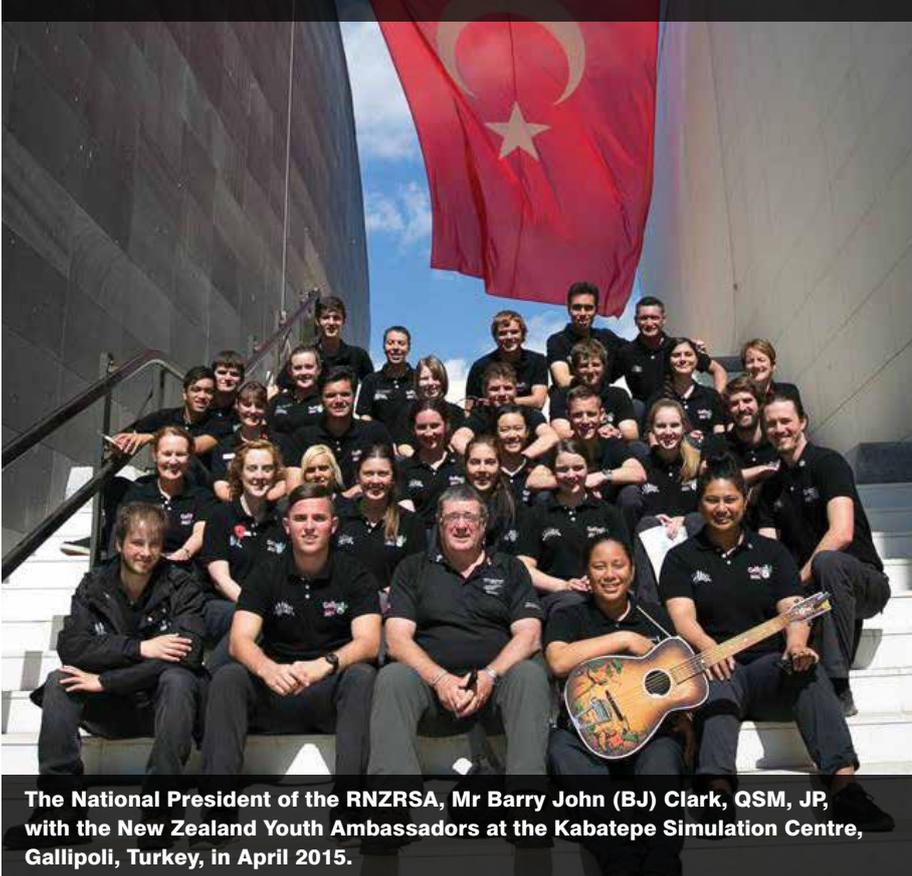
It is important to understand that veterans who are in residential care facilities (such as rest homes or rest home hospitals) do not qualify for this funding assistance.

The funding may be used in several different ways. Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

- A veteran has a child living or working overseas. The funding may be used in part or whole towards the cost of reimbursing or contributing towards an international airfare.
- The veteran has a spouse and their home is a few hours' drive from the hospital the veteran is admitted to. The funding can be used for travel by private vehicle, accommodation and/or meal costs and out-of-pocket expenses, such as car parking or toll fees.

While the veteran remains in long-term hospital care, the funding can be used until the allocation has been exhausted.

TOGETHER WE REMEMBER – LEST WE FORGET



The National President of the RNZRSA, Mr Barry John (BJ) Clark, QSM, JP, with the New Zealand Youth Ambassadors at the Kabatepe Simulation Centre, Gallipoli, Turkey, in April 2015.

CHANGING THE WAY SERVICES ARE DELIVERED FOR VETERANS

Veterans' Affairs aims to put veterans and their families at the heart of everything we do.

We are committed to providing good quality, consistent and vetted service delivery to veterans and their families. We are also required to procure and contract for services according to government rules.

HONOURING SERVICE

The Certificate of Appreciation and Lapel Badge

The Certificate of Appreciation and Lapel Badge honour service of several kinds. You're eligible for the Certificate and Badge if you are, or have been:

- a veteran of the New Zealand Armed Forces with qualifying operational service under the Veterans' Support Act 2014;
- a civilian deployed with the New Zealand Defence Force, with qualifying operational service under the Veterans' Support Act 2014;
- a recipient of the New Zealand Operational Service Medal, with service in the New Zealand Armed Forces or the New Zealand Police; or
- a Land Girl with the New Zealand Women's Land Service during the Second World War.

The Certificate carries the signatures of the Prime Minister and Minister of Veterans' Affairs. It expresses the thanks of the Government and people of New Zealand for the service given.

You can get an application form, or information about the Certificate and Badge, by phoning us on Freephone 0800 483 8372 or (64) 4 495 2970 if calling from outside New Zealand.

Veterans' Affairs currently manages close to 20,000 contracts to provide services such as gardening, lawn-mowing and home help services. It also pays for a lot of services for veterans where there is insufficient clarity around service delivery, quality, timeliness or what is value for money.

As a government agency, ensuring good quality services are provided is particularly important – not just for the people who need those services – but also for the taxpayers who fund them.

Veterans' Affairs is now moving to ensure it complies with all government rules around procurement and contracting. To do this we are seeking expressions of interest from providers for a number of services including home help services, pharmaceutical services, podiatry services, and windows, gutters and house washing services.

A contract for lawn and garden services has already been let and the new provider, Crewcut, will start working with veterans in September. Although Crewcut is a national provider for lawn and garden services it will subcontract to other providers in a number of areas across New Zealand.

The change in how we procure and contract for services is not driven by a requirement to save money – although of course we need to make sure that what we pay for is value for money.

If there are any savings made from these changes, that money will be used to provide more services for more veterans.

What does this mean for you as a veteran?

You can continue to be assured that you will receive good quality services, regardless of where you live in New Zealand. These services will be audited so we know they are being delivered to you when you need them, and at the right standards.

You will be able to get the same number and type of services whether you live in a small town or a big city. This doesn't always happen at the moment.

You will also have clear channels to ask questions or complain through if you are not happy with your services.

You may get your services from a new person or organisation in the future but you can be secure in the knowledge that they will be delivered by experienced, trusted and accountable providers. We will ensure there will be as little inconvenience to you as possible through any changes.

If you have any concerns or queries about these changes you can contact us at veteransaffairs@nzdf.mil.nz, or you can call your case officer directly for further information.

TRAVEL ALLOWANCE AND RECREATIONAL TRAVEL CONCESSION

These will continue to be available to veterans from 7 December, as part of the new Veterans' Independence Programme.

We've been looking at ways to make it easier for you to seek reimbursement for recreational travel concession. From 7 December reimbursement of up to \$200 within one financial year can be claimed by a veteran filling out a statutory declaration to say that this travel has occurred. This means that receipts would not be required for petrol or to prove the journey. Receipts would only be required for travel by public transport or air, or for travel where the amount claimed is more than \$200 per year.

HAVE YOU TAPPED INTO THE RSA'S SUPPORT SERVICES YET?

While many New Zealanders associate the RSA with our much older veterans, our support services are available to all current and former service personnel and their families. It can start with as little as an understanding ear to listen confidentially to your concerns, a supportive chat with other veterans or access to financial assistance and specialist services.

This is where the funds raised through our Poppy Appeal are deployed and

A MESSAGE FOR VETERANS ON WAR DISABLEMENT PENSION – APPLYING FOR NEW OR EXTRA SUPPORT SERVICES

A number of veterans have raised concerns about the requirement to transfer from a War Disablement Pension to the Disablement Pension in order to access new or extra support services.

Support services are aimed at helping veterans to recover from injury or illness and/or to achieve the level of independence appropriate for each veteran.

The services include such things as:

- Aids and appliances (e.g. hearing aids and glasses)
- Home Help (with domestic activities such as cleaning)
- Modifications to the home (e.g. ramps, level access shower)
- Training for Independence (coaching a veteran to adapt to their injury or illness and regain as much independence as possible)
- Transport for Independence (e.g. adapting a veteran's vehicle for a wheelchair hoist)

In response to concerns raised by veterans, Veterans' Affairs has reviewed the Veterans' Support Act and decided that access to such services can be administered in a similar manner as access to treatment.

Effective from 30 June 2015 veterans will not need to transfer from their War Disablement Pension to the Disablement Pension to be able to access new or extra support services.

we want as many people as possible to know that they are available, and more importantly, to access them.

RSAs throughout the country have Support Advisors available whose key purpose is to connect individuals and families with the range of support services we have to offer. This could be anything from advice on benefits and financial assistance to supporting applications for entitlements and service through Veterans' Affairs and respite from the pressures of family life.

What past and current serving personnel and their families may not realise is that they don't have to be a member of the RSA to take advantage of the support we have available. We encourage anyone who knows someone who needs support or is looking for help themselves, to ring their local RSA and ask to speak to a Support Advisor. Our services are completely confidential and free of charge.

To locate your local RSA visit www.rsa.org.nz

RSAs throughout the country have Support Advisors available whose key purpose is to connect individuals and families with the range of support services we have to offer.

RAF BOMBER COMMAND VETERANS

If you served in this command, the New Zealand Association would welcome you as a member. There is no charge to join. Members receive an RAF (NZ) Aircrew badge, an ID card and quarterly newsletters. Family members are also welcome to join as associates.

The Association holds an annual memorial service and regular regional luncheons.

In Auckland, a group meets every Wednesday at MOTAT to maintain the Lancaster and associated displays.

If you are interested in joining, please contact: P J Wheeler QSM
NZBCA Executive Officer
P O Box 317111, Hobsonville,
AUCKLAND 0664
Ph: (09) 416 5302, Fax: (09) 416 5302
Email: spirits@xtra.co.nz

APPOINTMENTS ANNOUNCED FOR MINISTER OF VETERANS AFFAIRS' STATUTORY BOARDS

Hon Craig Foss, Minister of Veterans' Affairs, has recently announced the appointment of members to the following Boards.

Veterans' Entitlement Appeals Board

The Appeal Board is an independent statutory board that determines appeals against review decisions made under Part 7 of the Veterans' Support Act 2014. It runs in a similar way to the former War Pensions Appeal Board with increased powers and responsibilities.

Chair: Rebecca Ewert

Members: Raewyn Anderson, Dr Hillary Gray, Dr Christopher Holdaway (RSA nominee)

Veterans' Advisory Board

The Advisory Board's statutory function is to provide advice to the Minister, including advice on policies to be applied in respect of veterans' entitlements.

Chair: Chris Mullane

Deputy Chair: Tania Good

Members: Mark Wheeler, Barry John Clark, Karyn Thompson, Danny Broughton

Further information on each of the Board members can be found on the Veterans' Affairs website.

CALLING ALL VETERANS

Howick RSA focuses on the ongoing care of veterans and immediate family, with a welfare officer and van dedicated to this task. If you live between Ridge Road and the Tamaki Estuary and would like support call Paulette on (021) 727 08642, or the RSA on (09) 534 9702 to discuss.



Contributions for Veterans' Affairs News are to be posted to:

The Editor
PO Box 5146
Wellington 6145

or emailed to:
veteransaffairs@nzdf.mil.nz

Thank you for your service in the New Zealand Defence Force. Your contribution on behalf of our nation is greatly appreciated and will never be forgotten.

