

AUTUMN 2018



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## About VA News

VA News is published four times a year by Veterans' Affairs New Zealand—Te Tira Ahu Ika a Whiro.

Our team takes care in writing great content and—to the best of our knowledge—has sourced accurate information.


The views expressed in VA News are not necessarily those of Veterans' Affairs or the New Zealand Defence Force.


## Contact us

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Cover image: Members of the Veterans' Affairs team at Pukeahu National War Memorial Park. From left to right: Cass, Enquiry Line Officer; Alma, Policy Advisor; Linton, Senior Case Manager. We'll have an interview with each of them in future editions of VA News.



New Zealand Government

# From the Head of Veterans' Affairs

## Tēnā koutou katoa

Here at Veterans' Affairs, we are looking forward to 2018.

One of our priorities this year is to continue to improve our service to you. I'm proud of the work my team has lined up for the next 12 months. As I mentioned in my message at the end of last year, we are not where we want to be yet.

This year we are looking at increasing the number of services available under the Veterans' Independence Programme. You will also see a significant improvement in the way we communicate with you through letters and forms, as well as introducing new ways to communicate and engage with you.

In the coming months we will conduct our annual client survey. This year will see us partner with an independent provider. If you receive a survey, I encourage you to complete it. Your feedback is critical to ensuring we are delivering services and support that meet your—and your fellow veterans'—needs.

As I write this message, I reflect on the passing of the last surviving officer of the 28th Māori Battalion. Alfred "Bunty" Preece died at his home on the Chatham Islands on Friday 3 March with his whānau by his side. Bunty was



**Bernadine Mackenzie,**  
Head of Veterans' Affairs

a respected member of his community, and he served his nation both abroad in times of conflict, and at home in peace.

With April approaching, thoughts turn towards Anzac Day. Throughout the country and abroad people are preparing for the commemorations—colleagues in the New Zealand Defence Force, friends in Australia and Turkey, and RSAs nationwide. It is as important as ever that we take time to reflect on the courage, commitment and comradeship of those who have fought in New Zealand's best interests.

**Ka maumahara tonu tātou ki a rātou**  
**We will remember them**



**Hon Ron Mark, Minister for Veterans and Minister of Defence, following the procession at Alfred "Bunty" Preece's service.**



# The Commemorative Fund

**The Commemorative Fund helps to ensure the enduring contribution of New Zealand veterans is honoured.**

The Fund provides financial contributions to enable veterans to return to their place of Qualifying Operational Service, or attend commemorative activities overseas that are related to their service.

“In the previous 9 months we’ve provided over \$43,000 in funding” says Elaine Myers-Davies, manager of the Projects and Communications team at Veterans’ Affairs.

“This has enabled more than 30 veterans to return to their place of Qualifying Operational Service, or to attend overseas commemorations. For example, we’ve been honoured to be able to support 12 veterans to return to Malaysia and participate in their Independence Day parade.”

Each and every qualifying New Zealand veteran is entitled to either:

- \$2,500 worth of funding, or
- \$2,000 if they received their full entitlement before 1 July 2016—the maximum then claimable.

Thanks to a recent policy change, a Commemorative Travel Contribution can be provided to help cover the cost of international travel and domestic connections, travel insurance, and accommodation.

“We believe this approach is more in line with our principle of benevolence, and ensures veterans are able to claim against their full entitlement” says Elaine.

“In saying that, if you have previously received a contribution—but not your full entitlement—we encourage you to apply to receive your remaining balance if you’re undertaking further commemorative travel.”

The Commemorative Fund can also provide Commemorative Project Contributions to New Zealand based projects that commemorate veterans enduring contribution to New Zealand. Eligible projects include memorials, educational programmes or resources, or reunions.

**“In the previous nine months we’ve provided over \$43,000 in funding”**



To find out more about the Commemorative Fund visit [www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/commemorative-fund](http://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/commemorative-fund) or give us a call.





## Kiwis shine in MFO Force Skills competition

**The New Zealand Sinai contingent team took home the trophy for the Best Minor Unit Team (contingents which are not one of the three Battalions) and were also the overall winning team in the Multinational Force & Observers (MFO) Force Skills competition recently.**

It was a sweet victory for the Kiwis who demonstrated their skills across a variety of challenges.

With a lack of flexibility in their MFO jobs, the Kiwis rarely had time to train as a complete team, often having to come together in the evenings or by giving up their low activity periods. In the end, this made the achievement of the New Zealand team even more significant.

The 2018 competition had some significant changes from previous years which made the job of planning it by the Force Training Team (predominately staffed and commanded by NZCON) a challenge.

Traditionally it has been held in North Camp but with most of the force now located in South Camp the competition was moved south this year, which meant there was less space and facilities to work with. Also, the MFO had previously run a separate driving competition but stopped for the

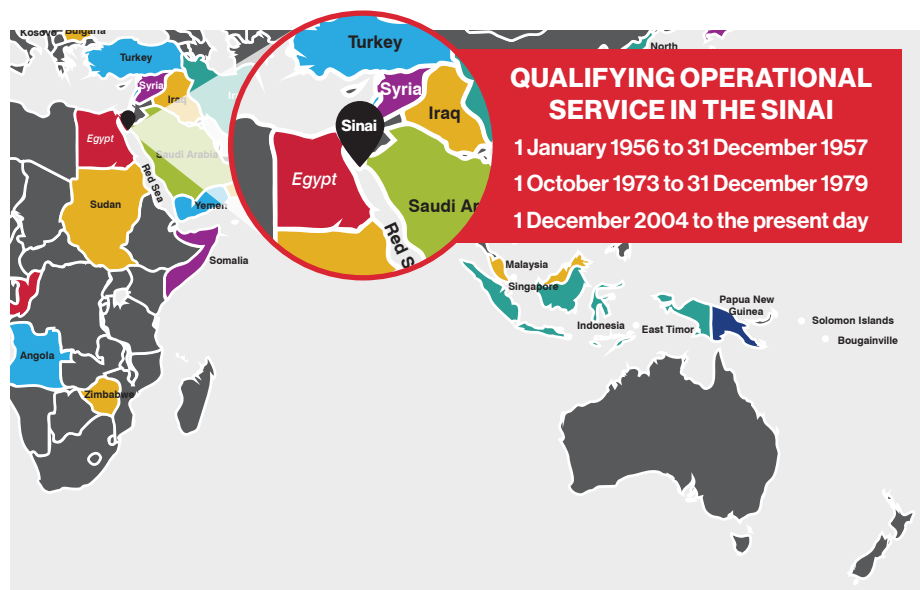
last couple of years. 2018 saw this competition resurrected but now as part of the Force Skills Competition, turning it from a single day to a 2.5-day event. Despite that the format and location being untested the competition ran smoothly.

For some nations, the Force Skills competition is a big event. Two of the three major MFO Battalions—Fiji and Colombia—take it very seriously and start training their teams a few months out.

Day one and two included tests of driving and patrol skills, combat shooting, medical skills, Rules of Engagement knowledge, and improvised explosive device responses. The New Zealand team came first—

or first equal—in five out of the six stands. The two team drivers, LCPL Andrew Reddin and PTE Joseph Omlo, cleaned up the driving stands and took home three trophies—highest driving assessment score, highest score on the vehicle maintenance stands, and highest driving score overall. The third day was more physical, and began with the obstacle course followed by a five km forced march in body armour, and finished with a range shoot. The Kiwis finished 5th, 2nd, and 2nd in each stand respectively, with SSGT Steven Allen taking out the Top Shot award.

If you have Qualifying Operational Service in the Sinai, Veterans' Affairs may be able to provide you support—now or in the future.





# Report on the review of the operation of the Veterans' Support Act

**Professor Paterson presented his report on the Review of the operation of the Veterans' Support Act to the Chief of Defence Force at the end of March.**

Professor Paterson was originally to report to the Chief of Defence Force by 15 December 2017, but this date was extended to allow time to do justice to all matters raised during the consultation process.

"I would like to thank everyone who participated in the Review. People have been so generous with their views and time. It has been a great privilege to hear from you, and to meet so many veterans and their families. Without your input, this Review would not have been possible. My findings and recommendations reflect what

I've heard and where I believe improvements can be made," says Professor Paterson.

The Chief of Defence will submit Professor Paterson's report to the Minister for Veterans for tabling in Parliament, at which point it will be publicly available. The Government will consider the report, and respond to its recommendations, including any changes proposed to the Veterans' Support Act.



Professor Paterson

## Payments over the Easter period

Payment dates will be different to what you might be expecting over the Easter period. Due to the statutory holidays our payment provider will be making some payments early.

Payments into	Old payment date	New payment date
New Zealand accounts	3 April 2018	29 March 2018
Australian bank accounts	3 April 2018	29 March 2018
International bank accounts	3 April 2018	29 March 2018

## Ode readers required

Every day at 5pm, a Last Post ceremony is conducted in front of the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior at the Pukeahu National War Memorial. The service, which lasts approximately seven minutes, incorporates the lowering of the two New Zealand flags, the playing of the Last Post, the observation of one minute's silence and recitation of the Ode of Remembrance in both Te Reo Māori and English.

Individuals as well as groups are encouraged to participate in these ceremonies. We are currently seeking people to read the Ode of Remembrance at the Daily Last Post Ceremony at the National War Memorial in the coming weeks.

If you wish to read the Ode of Remembrance in either English or Te Reo Māori, please email the following information to [commemorations@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:commemorations@nzdf.mil.nz)

- Name
- Email address
- Contact phone number
- Available date(s)
- Whether you wish to recite the Ode of Remembrance in Te Reo Māori, English or both.



## Annual rates adjustment: new rates

From 1 April 2018 new rates, adjusted for Consumers Price Index (CPI) inflation, will come into effect for:

- Grandparented entitlements from the War Pensions Act 1954
- Scheme One entitlements
- Entitlements common to Scheme One and Two
- Veteran's Pension and related Lump Sums

Full details on the new rates are on pages 6 and 7.

New rates for Scheme Two entitlements will take effect from 1 July 2018. Information on these rates will be published in the next edition of VA News.

# Grandparented rates from 1 April 2018

## War Disablement Pensions

Ordinary rates		Rates for those with Severe Disablement		Rates for those with Severe Disablement: Aged 60 years and over	
Disablement (%)	Weekly rate (\$)	Disablement (%)	Weekly rate (\$)	Disablement (%)	Weekly rate (\$)
5	11.17	105	234.63	105	258.09
10	22.35	110	245.80	110	270.38
15	33.52	115	256.97	115	282.67
20	44.69	120	268.15	120	294.97
25	55.87	125	279.32	125	307.25
30	67.04	130	290.49	130	319.54
35	78.21	135	301.67	135	331.84
40	89.38	140	312.84	140	344.12
45	100.56	145	324.01	145	356.41
50	111.73	150	335.18	150	368.70
55	122.90	155	346.36	155	381.00
60	134.08	160	357.53	160	393.28
65	145.25				
70	156.42				
75	167.60				
80	178.77				
85	189.94				
90	201.11				
95	212.29				
100	223.46				

## Other Grandparented War Pensions and Allowances

	Weekly rate (\$)
<b>Clothing Allowance</b>	
Loss of two limbs or parts	23.73
Loss of leg or part	22.90
Loss of arm or part	16.59
Use of mechanical appliance (maximum)	16.59
Soiling of clothing	16.59
<b>Travelling Allowance</b>	25.76
<b>Allowance for Decorations</b>	32.07

**Note:** The Allowance for Decorations is available for recipients of United Kingdom Gallantry Awards only.

## Veteran's Pension and Lump Sums



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

### Veteran's Pension

	Gross Weekly Rate (\$)
Single living alone rate	463.04
Single sharing accommodation rate	425.55
Relationship rate	350.76
Relationship (partner not receiving superannuation or pension)	664.68
Relationship (partner not receiving superannuation or pension) legacy rate	701.52

### Lump Sums

	Lump sum(\$)
<b>Lump Sum Payment on death of veteran</b>	5,965.08
If veteran was, before 1 April 1990, receiving a war veteran's allowance under the War Pension's Act 1954	15,040.46
<b>Lump Sum Payment on death of spouse or partner of veteran</b>	4,548.54

The weekly rates for the Veteran's Pension are shown as gross amounts. The exact payment you receive will depend on your own tax circumstances.

### Questions about Veteran's Pension and Lump Sums

For information about the Veteran's Pension and Lump Sum Payments contact the Veterans' Pension Centre.

☎ Freephone 0800 650 656

@ [www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/contact-us/veterans-contacts.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/contact-us/veterans-contacts.html)

## Scheme One entitlement rates from 1 April 2018

### Disablement Pension

Impairment Rating (%)	Weekly rate (\$)
5-7	11.18
8-12	22.35
13-17	33.52
18-22	44.69
23-25	55.87
26-30	67.04
31-32	78.21
33-37	89.38
38-41	100.56
42-47	111.73
48-49	122.90
50	134.07
51	145.25
52-54	156.42
55-57	167.59
58-61	178.77
62-66	189.94
67	201.12
68-74	212.28
75	223.46
76	234.63
77	245.81
78	256.97
79	268.15
80	279.32
81	301.66
82	324.01
83	346.35
84	368.71
85-100	393.28

### Other weekly payments

	Weekly rate (\$)
Surviving Spouse or Partner Pension	164.84
Dependant's Pension	164.84
Children's Pension	176.51
Weekly Income Compensation	932.96

### Annual payments

	Annual Rate (\$)
<b>Children's Bursary (Orphans and Children of Veteran's Pension)</b>	
Full Time Year 9-13	932.90
Full-time Tertiary	1,106.99
Part-time Tertiary	466.40
<b>Children's Bursary (Other Children)</b>	
Full Time Year 9-13	466.42
Full-time Tertiary	553.47
Part-time Tertiary	233.19

## Rates for entitlements common to Scheme One and Scheme Two from 1 April 2018

### Weekly Rates

	Weekly Rate (\$)
<b>Battery Allowance</b>	
Monaural	1.08
Binaural	2.19

### Lump sum payments

	Lump Sum (\$)
Retirement Lump Sum	34,259.52
Asset Threshold for Couple (excl. house or vehicle)	311,450.16
Asset Threshold for Single or Couple (incl. house or vehicle)	519,083.61
<b>Motor Vehicle Grant</b>	
Total Lower Body Impairment	19,137.70
Severe Lower Body Impairment	8,612.53
Motor Vehicle Fitting Controls Grant	3,089.93
<b>Funeral Expenses</b>	
Funeral Expenses	2,516.19
Transportation of body within same locality	669.49
Transportation of body to a different locality	1,338.97



# Our people, your Veterans' Affairs

VA News sat down to talk with Alma Shaw, a Policy Advisor here at Veterans' Affairs

## Can you describe a typical day at VA?

Much of my work is demand driven. My official title is 'Policy Advisor', but I wear a number of different hats. I need to have a general overview of all our policies and what is going on in the veteran arena. Primarily, I am responsible for the coordination and preparation of general correspondence for the Head of VA, requests for official information, and issues received via the complaints process. I am also responsible for ensuring privacy issues and requests are looked after appropriately, and providing privacy training to our staff. I assist with the coordination of papers going to the Minister, which sees me liaising with colleagues in the wider NZDF and in the Minister's office.

## What's been your highlight of working at VA?

Learning. When I started in my role my knowledge of war and conflict came from watching Saving Private Ryan in Sixth Form English. During my training I was surprised—but also very grateful—to learn the number of ways New Zealand's Armed Forces have been involved at an international level, as well as at home.

I've also learned a bit of family history. My Great Koro—Tiweka Brown—was a member of the 28th Maori Battalion and embarked with the 10th Reinforcements. Regrettably while serving he was injured and sent home. While I had heard stories about him, it wasn't until I began working here that I really started looking into his service. I was able to use NZ Archives' Archway service to look at his service records. It's an amazing learning tool.

## How long have you worked at VA?

I started at Veterans' Affairs in June 2013—coming up to my fifth anniversary. Prior to this role I was with the British High Commission working as a qualified Consular Assistant and Passport Examiner.

## What are you looking forward to in 2018?

I'm looking forward to the changes that are being made with our communications and how they will work for all of you. I'm particularly excited about our new website due for release next month. Most of all I am looking forward to the outcome of the Review of the operation of the Veterans' Support Act, and the changes that may arise from it.

At a personal level—my big goal for the year is to start learning Te Reo. I'm also looking forward to watching my daughters—8 and 4—grow. They already both have such solid personalities.



Private Tiweka Brown