

VANZ News

December 2012



INSIDE

UN Korean War Allies Association founder made Honorary Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit

North African veterans remember fallen comrades at El Alamein

Alexandra student wins Battle of Passchendaele Competition

Changes to Pensions

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The Minister with veteran Dudley Wilkinson before he departed to El Alamein.

A message from the Minister

Hon Nathan Guy, Minister of Veterans' Affairs

As the Christmas season approaches I want to wish all veterans and their families a relaxing and safe holiday.

This is also a time to remember those who are no longer with us, particularly the six members of the New Zealand Defence Force who were tragically killed in Afghanistan this year. This will be a sad Christmas for their families and my thoughts are with them.

This has been a very busy year as Minister. In October I was proud to speak at the RSA's annual conference, where Prime Minister John Key announced the Government's response to the Law Commission's Review of the War Pension Act 1954.

The overall package is worth \$60 million over five years and includes an increase to the War Disablement Pension and Surviving Spouse Pension rates by 5 per cent, beginning on 1 April 2013. This will be on top of the annual CPI increase.

We are also increasing eligibility for support services such as home help and lawn mowing, which will benefit an estimated 3,000 additional veterans and 1,100 surviving spouses or partners. You can read more about these changes in this newsletter.

This has been a major piece of work, and I'm proud we have been able to accept 132 of the Law Commission's 170 recommendations, despite the pressure on the Government's budget.

It has been a special privilege for me this year to recognise the sacrifice our veterans have made – being able to attend the Anzac Day commemorations at Gallipoli was a particular honour.

We have also commemorated the 70th anniversaries of the Fall of Singapore, the arrival of US Marines into New Zealand, Bomber

continued on page 2

From the CHIEF OF DEFENCE FORCE

Lieutenant General RR Jones, Chief of Defence Force

As Christmas approaches I'd like to acknowledge the fantastic community support the NZ Defence Force has received throughout 2012. The veteran community is an important part of who we are as a Defence Force, and all the support you provide is much appreciated.

This year has not been without its ups and downs, but ultimately it has been a great year.

Good progress has been made with Veterans' Affairs issues, and I was pleased with the Prime Minister's announcement in October of a new \$60 million package to improve the support and recognition given to veterans who have served our country, including changes to War Pensions.

This year veterans have attended the dedication and unveiling of the Bomber Command Memorial in London in June, and the 70th anniversary of the Battle of El Alamein in Egypt in October.

It's important for veterans to attend these commemorations, allowing them to have their service recognised, and pay tribute to those who did not return to New Zealand.

We will continue to provide support to veterans attending commemorations into next year, with the 70th anniversary of the Pacific War taking place in April, and the 60th anniversary of the Korean Armistice in July.

Despite the tragic losses suffered in Afghanistan this year, in particular with five soldiers killed in August, we have made good progress in operational theatres. With the completion of our operational roles in Afghanistan, and the withdrawal process from Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands, we have completed ten years of operational commitment. We can be proud of what we have achieved in all of these locations.

Looking forward to next year, 2013 will be equally successful. With the return of our people from Afghanistan and the Solomon Islands, the re-orientation of our people back into training in the Pacific, the ramping up of joint exercises with other countries such as Australia, America and Canada, and improving the Joint Amphibious Taskforce capability, we can look forward to another great year.

Wherever you are this festive season, whether in New Zealand or overseas, in a warm climate or cold, I wish you all the best for a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Command commemorations in London and the Battle of El Alamein. We have also marked the first annual Malayan Veterans' Day, which will now become an annual event.

There is also good progress on improving the delivery of services to our veterans. The Case Management in the Community programme is helping

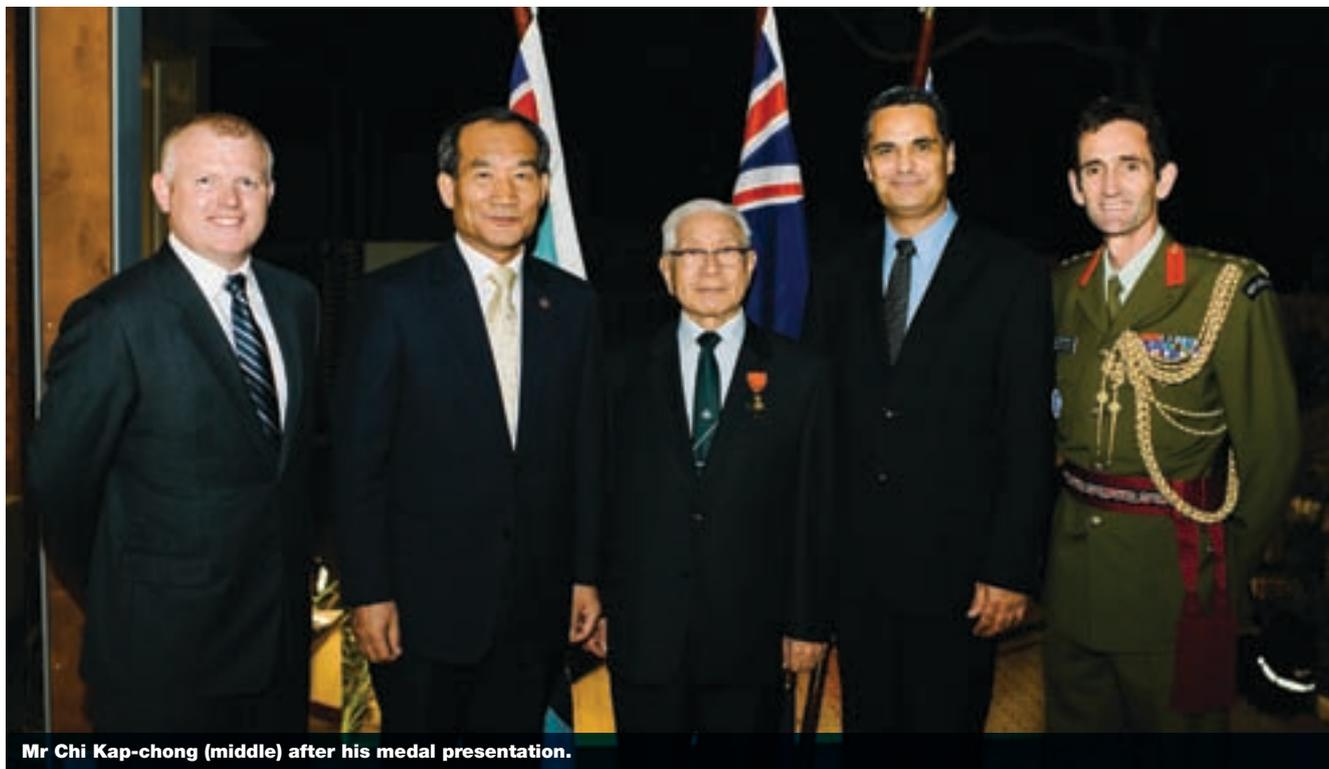
veterans to interact one-on-one with case managers from VANZ and build relationships.

Earlier this year I was also proud to announce that more veterans would be acknowledged for their service in deployments overseas by recognising 11 additional deployments as emergencies under the War Pensions

Act 1954, including operations in Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq over the last 30 years.

Thank you again to all veterans – young and old – for the service you have given to New Zealand. The Government will continue to give veterans the support and recognition they deserve.

Best wishes for 2013.



UN KOREAN WAR ALLIES ASSOCIATION FOUNDER MADE HONORARY OFFICER OF THE NEW ZEALAND ORDER OF MERIT

The founder of the UN Korean War Allies Association, Mr Chi Kap-chong, has been made an Honorary Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the 2012 New Zealand Queen's Birthday and Diamond Jubilee Honours List, and was presented with his medal in September.

Mr Chi was made an Honorary Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to New Zealand-Korea relations, in particular supporting the memory of New Zealand and Commonwealth veterans from the Korean War.

Mr Chi was presented with his medal by Ambassador Rata at a ceremony attended by Mr Chi's family, the Minister of Veterans' and Patriots' Affairs of Korea, ambassadors and other dignitaries.

Mr Chi Kap-chong is a retired Korean journalist and a former member of the Korean National Assembly, who in his current role as Chair of the UN Korean War Allies Association, has been instrumental in establishing the New Zealand ANZAC memorial in Kapyeong, and donated the stone that forms the base of that memorial.

He founded the UN Korean War Allies Association in 1963 and has been Chair since 1977. His citation notes that he has worked tirelessly for more than fifty years to promote better understanding between the UN Allies, particularly the Commonwealth countries, and Korea, focusing on ensuring that veterans are remembered by current and future generations of Koreans.

His efforts on behalf of New Zealand have enhanced personal remembrance for New Zealand families and perpetuated Korean awareness of the part New Zealand played in the Korean War. Despite being in his eighties, Mr Chi continues to attend all Commonwealth Commemorative meetings and activities.

The occasion highlighted the important and lengthy contribution Mr Chi has made to New Zealand-Korea relations over many decades. It was particularly appropriate that Mr Chi's service was recognised during the 2012 Korea-New Zealand Year of Friendship.



Veterans Alan Peart, Clive Meddings and Dick Spraggs at the El Alamein Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery.



Veteran Regi Frew pays tribute to a fallen New Zealand soldier.



Chief of Army, Major General Tim Keating with veteran Stewart Frame.

NORTH AFRICAN VETERANS REMEMBER FALLEN COMRADES AT EL ALAMEIN

The North Africa Star was proudly on display when New Zealand veterans of the North African campaign attended commemorations in Egypt in October to mark the 70th anniversary of the Battle of El Alamein.

Twenty-two veterans aged between 88 and 96 attended a New Zealand National Service to mark the anniversary on 19 October 2012, followed by an International Service of Thanksgiving on 20 October. A ceremony was also held in Wellington.

Their medals proudly worn across their chests, the veterans entered the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in El Alamein – many of them for the first time – to the sound of a Karanga, to recognise and remember all those who fought and died during the North African Campaign.

The commemorations were attended by New Zealand Defence Minister, Dr Jonathan Coleman, and Chief of Army, Major General Tim Keating, who both laid wreaths.

As a number of veterans had predicted, returning to El Alamein and attending the commemorations was an emotional experience.

“It was a lovely service, very moving,” said Verdun Affleck (95), a Sergeant who served in Egypt with 20 Battalion for four years.

Alan Peart (90) said the New Zealand National Service, which was held near many graves of New Zealanders killed at El Alamein, was very humbling.

“It was very touching, and I could just envisage what happened here,” Mr Peart said.

Mr Peart was a Flight Lieutenant, whose role in the North African Campaign was mainly combat with enemy fighters and strafing attacks on enemy assets.

“I found my cousin, Lieutenant Colonel Jan Peart’s grave. He commanded 18 Battalion, and someone who served with 18 Battalion was paying respects at his grave at the same time.”

The International Service of Thanksgiving involved a Catafalque Party drawn from New Zealand and Australian service personnel from the Multinational Force and Observers.

New Zealand veterans John Wills (95) and Eric Wilson (93) also laid a wreath on behalf of all New Zealand veterans.

Mr Wills said it was an honour to lay a wreath during the commemoration.

“It was a moment of sadness for the soldiers buried here, because I saw quite a lot of it,” Mr Wills said.

While travelling to El Alamein from New Zealand the veterans spent valuable time together, reminiscing and re-living their war days.

Andy McGovern (94) likened the time spent with other veterans to “how it is in the Army”.

“You might be a Captain, a Lieutenant, or a Private, but when it comes down to the nitty gritty, you’re all there together – that’s comradeship,” Mr McGovern said.

Keeping in touch with Veterans’ Affairs New Zealand

Please tell us as soon as you

- Change your address
- Change your bank account
- Change your marital status
- Plan to go overseas to live
- Move to a rest home or hospital
- Have someone come to live with you

In the sad event of your death

- your family or the executor of your estate needs to tell us as soon as you pass away
- your partner or family may have some entitlements, ie
 - a funeral grant
 - a memorial plaque or headstone for your grave in a public or private cemetery
 - you may be receiving help that needs to be cancelled or reassessed
- your pension will be paid until the date of your death; if it is not stopped immediately after your death it can quickly build up a debt that your estate will have to repay

We suggest you leave this note with your Will or personal papers so the person looking after your affairs knows to get in touch with us.

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ph 0800 483 8372 in NZ
ph +64 4 495 2070 from overseas
email veterans@xtra.co.nz



STAFF PROFILE: LYNNE DALLEY

In this edition of VANZ News we profile Lynne Dalley, Adviser Memorials and Cemeteries at Veterans' Affairs New Zealand.

Lynne has worked at VANZ since 2007, in her current position as Adviser Memorials and Cemeteries. In her role Lynne helps widows and families and friends of veterans order memorials after a family bereavement. She also arranges for the manufacture and installation of the memorials, and enjoys a close relationship with manufacturers and installers, as well as funeral directors and

RSA's, which will also order the memorials for families.

While most of Lynne's contact is usually with families of veterans, Lynne enjoys all aspects of her job.

"I enjoy helping veterans' families at a very difficult time, to ensure they are happy with the services memorial they want for their loved one.

"It also means veterans can have some peace of mind, knowing that we are here to help their families during this time."

Lynne has accompanied a contingent of New Zealand veterans to Gallipoli for the 95th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings in 2010, and to London to attend the dedication and unveiling of the Bomber Command Memorial in Hyde Park in June this year.

"I love overseas travel with all its different experiences and cultures, so I felt very privileged to be chosen to accompany the veterans on these tours.

"These trips have been very special for me as I have been able to talk with the veterans and hear some of their incredible stories," Lynne said.

ALEXANDRA STUDENT WINS BATTLE OF PASSCHENDAELE COMPETITION

An insight into the toll the First World War and the Battle of Passchendaele took on his family won Alexandra's Nathan Garry (17) first place in this year's Battle of Passchendaele multi-media competition.

The Dunstan High School student was presented with a \$2000 grant by Veterans' Affairs Minister Hon Nathan Guy, at a commemoration ceremony marking the 95th anniversary of the Battle of Passchendaele, at the Auckland War Memorial Museum on 12 October 2012. The grant will be used towards Nathan's ongoing education.

Nathan's essay, entitled, 'The Boys

from the Upper Junction', is extremely personal, and demonstrates the tragic consequences the First World War and the Battle of Passchendaele, which saw the greatest loss of New Zealand lives in one day, had on thousands of families throughout the country, including his own.



CHANGES TO PENSIONS

Comparison of Current 1 April 2012 Weekly Rates of War Disablement Pensions and Surviving Spouse Pension with rates from 1 April 2013 adjusted for a Five Percent Increase. The Annual CPI Adjustment will be added to the below rates on 1 April 13.

SURVIVING SPOUSE PENSION

Surviving Spouse Pension	Weekly Rate 1 April 2012	Weekly Rate With 5% 1 April 2013
Surviving Spouse Pension	\$149.43	\$156.90

ORDINARY RATES

Disablement Percentage	Weekly Rate 1 April 2012	Weekly Rate With 5% 1 April 2013
5%	\$10.13	\$10.64
10%	\$20.26	\$21.27
15%	\$30.39	\$31.91
20%	\$40.51	\$42.54
25%	\$50.64	\$53.17
30%	\$60.77	\$63.81
35%	\$70.90	\$74.45
40%	\$81.03	\$85.08
45%	\$91.16	\$95.72
50%	\$101.29	\$106.35
55%	\$111.41	\$116.98
60%	\$121.54	\$127.62
65%	\$131.67	\$138.25
70%	\$141.80	\$148.89
75%	\$151.93	\$159.53
80%	\$162.06	\$170.16
85%	\$172.18	\$180.79
90%	\$182.31	\$191.43
95%	\$192.44	\$202.06
100%	\$202.57	\$212.70

RATES FOR THOSE WITH SEVERE DISABLEMENT

Disablement Percentage	Weekly Rate (under 60) 1 April 2012	Weekly Rate (under 60) With 5% 1 April 2013	Weekly Rate (over 60) 1 April 2012	Weekly Rate (over 60) With 5% 1 April 2013
Disablement Percentage	Weekly Rate (under 60)	Weekly Rate (under 60)	Weekly Rate (over 60)	Weekly Rate (over 60)
105%	\$212.70	\$223.34	\$233.97	\$245.67
110%	\$222.83	\$233.97	\$245.11	\$257.37
115%	\$232.96	\$244.61	\$256.26	\$269.07
120%	\$243.08	\$255.24	\$267.39	\$280.76
125%	\$253.21	\$265.87	\$278.53	\$292.46
130%	\$263.34	\$276.51	\$289.67	\$304.16
135%	\$273.47	\$287.15	\$300.82	\$315.86
140%	\$283.60	\$297.78	\$311.96	\$327.56
145%	\$293.73	\$308.42	\$323.10	\$339.26
150%	\$303.86	\$319.05	\$334.25	\$350.96
155%	\$313.98	\$329.68	\$345.38	\$362.65
160%	\$324.11	\$340.32	\$356.52	\$374.35

NEW VETERANS LEGISLATION

Government Response

The New Zealand Government accepted 132 of the Law Commission's recommendations, adopting them in full or in part. The Government has committed a \$60 million package over the next five years to implement the new legislation, which will incorporate the accepted recommendations.

More Information

More information about the Government response and the proposed new legislation can be found on the VANZ website at www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz.

Increase to Pensions

The Government will increase both the War Disablement Pension and Surviving Spouse Pension payment rates by 5 percent from 1 April 2013. This is in addition to the usual Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustment that occurs annually at this time.

The Surviving Spouse Pension will increase from \$149.43 per week to \$156.90 per week.

New Legislation

The new legislation will contain many of the same provisions as in the current Act. All veterans currently covered under the 1954 Act will have coverage under the new legislation. The service

eligibility criteria will remain the same. The benevolence of the 1954 Act will continue in the new legislation.

Medical treatment for accepted conditions will continue to be funded.

Where to from here

The Bill for the new legislation is currently being drafted and is expected to be introduced to Parliament early next year.

Weekly WDP Rates		
Percentage	Current	5% increase
25%	\$50.64	\$53.17
50%	\$101.29	\$106.35
75%	\$151.93	\$159.53
100%	\$202.57	\$212.70

Following the Bill's introduction to Parliament, the Bill will be referred to Select Committee. At that time the Bill will be available to the public.

Have your say

Veterans and other members of the public will have an opportunity to comment on the new legislation as part of the Select Committee process.

veterans serving up to and including Vietnam. Scheme Two will cover service after Vietnam. The recommendations in the report were not costed, and the Law Commission advised the Government to obtain rigorous costings before making decisions on the recommendations. The recommendations affected 12 Government agencies as well as the Australian Government. Considerable departmental consultation was undertaken with affected agencies. This took a significant period of time to ensure that the implications of all recommendations were identified before decisions were made.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following information reflects the recommendations agreed to by the Government. These are still subject to scrutiny at Select Committee and the parliamentary process.

How will I know when the new legislation and any new rules apply?

There will be announcements made once the draft Bill has been through the Parliamentary process and a date for the new legislation is confirmed. There will be several months warning of the date. Any person who is in receipt of entitlements at the time the new legislation comes into effect will be provided with information advising them about the changes.

How will I know what entitlements I have under the new legislation?

VANZ will develop fact sheets setting out information about each entitlement, which will be available to veterans before the new legislation is introduced.

I am currently in receipt of a War Disablement Pension. How will these changes affect me?

All veterans currently in receipt of a War Disablement Pension will have their entitlements grand-parented under the new legislation.

Will the rate at which my pension is paid change?

Current pension recipients will continue to be paid their pension at the rate it is currently paid. The pension will continue to be adjusted each year to take into account changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). There will be a 5 percent increase to the War Disablement Pension and Surviving Spouse Pension rates on 1 April 2013.

I am currently in receipt of a War Disablement Pension. What scheme will I be covered by if I make a claim for another condition?

Veterans will retain their current entitlements under the new legislation. Once Scheme Two is implemented, any future claims will be treated in one of two ways.

If the claim relates to service prior to the date Scheme Two was implemented, it will be covered by Scheme One.

If the claim relates to service after the date Scheme Two was implemented, it will be covered by Scheme Two.

How will I know whether I'd be better off keeping the pension I currently receive or moving to an entitlement under the new legislation?

All veterans currently in receipt of a War Disablement Pension will keep that entitlement under the new legislation. Those veterans currently aged under 65 and in receipt of the Veteran's Pension will have a choice to move to a new entitlement, known as Veteran's Weekly Income Compensation. Veterans will be provided with information setting out exactly what the implications would be in moving to the new entitlement before they make the decision. This includes information from the Ministry of Social Development showing how any other entitlements may be affected.

Similarly, all Surviving Spouse Pension recipients will keep their entitlement under the new legislation.

I served in Vietnam after 1 April 1974. What scheme am I covered by?

All veterans with qualifying service in Vietnam will be covered under Scheme One.

I am under 65 years of age and in receipt of a Veteran's Pension. If I change to weekly compensation payments, can I change back to a Veteran's Pension at a later date?

No. This is a one-time decision to change to weekly compensation payments. Veterans will be provided with information on how the change might affect them to allow them to make an informed decision.

WORK TO DATE

The Law Commission's final report on its review of the War Pensions Act 1954 contained 170 recommendations. The Law Commission proposed replacing the current legislation and recommended that significant changes be made to the administrative and decision-making processes to update and modernise the legislation.

The Law Commission also recommended that two schemes be introduced to better cater for the needs of both elderly veterans and those of modern day and future deployments. Scheme One will cover

PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Set out below is an overview of the main features of the proposed new legislation to replace the War Pensions Act 1954. It is possible that some features of the new legislation may change as the Bill progresses through the Parliamentary process. Updates on the progress of the Bill will appear in future issues of VANZ News and on the VANZ website at: www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz

SCHEME ONE

OVERVIEW

Scheme One will commence on 1 July 2014 and will cover veterans with service from the Second World War through to Vietnam. Scheme One will act as the legislation for all veterans until such time as Scheme Two is introduced.

VETERANS

Scheme One will be based on entitlements in the current Act.

WAR DISABLEMENT PENSION

Scheme One veterans will continue to receive War Disablement Pensions for any impairment that is found to be aggravated by or attributable to their military service. This is paid in the form of a lifetime periodic payment. The War Disablement Pension will be paid for four weeks following the recipient's death. This will give time for families to put the veteran's affairs in order without generating a debt.

VETERAN'S WEEKLY INCOME COMPENSATION

The Veteran's Pension for veterans who are under 65 years of age will be replaced with a new pension. The pension will pay a higher rate of income compensation for veterans unable to work than is currently available. However, partners cannot be included. Veterans in receipt of a Veteran's Pension can choose to remain in receipt of that pension. The rate paid will be based on 80 percent of the average wage which, based on current figures, will be an increase of approximately \$200/week gross.

SPOUSES/PARTNERS

There will be no change to the Surviving Spouse Pension eligibility criteria. There will be a 5 percent increase to the rates of the Surviving Spouse Pension on 1 April 2013.

DEPENDANT CHILDREN

Scheme One will have a Children's Pension that will be a combination of the Parent's Allowance and Child's Pension entitlements available under the current legislation. This will be paid at the combined rate of both of the current entitlements.

SCHEME TWO

OVERVIEW

Scheme Two will commence on 1 July 2015 and will cover veterans with qualifying operational service after Vietnam. As recommended by the Law Commission, Scheme Two will be aligned with ACC entitlements.

VETERANS

IMPAIRMENT COMPENSATION

The War Disablement Pension will be replaced by compensation that is aligned with the equivalent form of ACC entitlement. ACC impairment compensation is paid in two different forms – a periodic payment or lump sum depending on when the injury occurred. Scheme Two impairment compensation will be paid in the same form as the ACC payment but at a rate higher than that paid by ACC. If an eligible veteran's claim is not accepted by ACC, then VANZ will pay the full amount of both the compensation payable by ACC and the additional "top-up" payment from VANZ.

WEEKLY COMPENSATION PAYMENTS

The Veteran's Pension for veterans under 65 years of age will be replaced with weekly compensation payments. Veterans who qualify for ACC and are eligible for income compensation under Scheme Two will receive 80 percent of their pre-injury earnings from ACC plus an additional 20 percent "top-up" payment from VANZ. This will mean that they will receive 100 percent of their pre-injury earnings while they are unable to work. Veterans who do not qualify for ACC but are eligible for income compensation under Scheme Two will be paid 100 percent of the pre-injury earnings by VANZ. In this way all eligible veterans will be compensated equally.

SPOUSES/PARTNERS

There will be no change to the Surviving Spouse Pension eligibility criteria. There will be a 5 percent increase to the rates of the Surviving Spouse Pension on 1 April 2013.

DEPENDANT CHILDREN

Scheme One will have a Children's Pension that will be a combination of the Parent's Allowance and Child's Pension entitlements available under the current legislation. This will be paid at the combined rate of both of the current entitlements.

COMMON PROVISIONS

CONTINUED BENEVOLENCE

The benevolence underlying the principles of the 1954 Act will remain as will the beneficial evidential provisions.

VETERAN'S PENSION AND WAR FUNERAL GRANT

There will be no change to the present eligibility criteria or rates in respect of the Veteran's Pension for eligible veterans and spouses/partners who are 65 years of age or over. Nor will any change be made to the War Funeral Grant.

INDEPENDENCE PROGRAMME

From 1 July 2015 there will be changes to the eligibility criteria for accessing support services such as home help and lawn mowing to allow an estimated 3,000 additional veterans and 1,100 surviving spouses/partners access to services.