



Australian Government
Repatriation Medical Authority

Statement of Principles concerning

SOLAR KERATOSIS

No. 73 of 2012

for the purposes of the

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986
and

Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004

Title

1. This Instrument may be cited as Statement of Principles concerning solar keratosis No. 73 of 2012.

Determination

2. The Repatriation Medical Authority under subsection **196B(2)** and **(8)** of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (the VEA):
 - (a) revokes Instrument No. 7 of 2005 concerning solar keratosis; and
 - (b) determines in its place this Statement of Principles.

Kind of injury, disease or death

3.
 - (a) This Statement of Principles is about **solar keratosis** and **death from solar keratosis**.
 - (b) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, "**solar keratosis**" means an epidermal lesion characterised by the proliferation of atypical keratinocytes in the lower levels of the epidermis. There may be defective maturation of the epidermis, causing flat scaliness or heaped-up focal keratosis. This definition excludes Bowen's disease. Solar keratosis is also known as actinic keratosis.
 - (c) Solar keratosis attracts ICD-10-AM code L57.0.

- (d) In the application of this Statement of Principles, the definition of "**solar keratosis**" is that given at paragraph 3(b) above.

Basis for determining the factors

4. The Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **solar keratosis** and **death from solar keratosis** can be related to relevant service rendered by veterans, members of Peacekeeping Forces, or members of the Forces under the VEA, or members under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (the MRCA).

Factors that must be related to service

5. Subject to clause 7, at least one of the factors set out in clause 6 must be related to the relevant service rendered by the person.

Factors

6. The factor that must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting **solar keratosis** or **death from solar keratosis** with the circumstances of a person's relevant service is:
- (a) being a prisoner of war of Japan before the clinical onset of solar keratosis; or
 - (b) having sunlight exposure to unprotected skin at the affected site for at least 2250 hours while in a tropical area, or having equivalent sunlight exposure in other latitude zones, before the clinical onset of solar keratosis; or
 - (c) being treated with an immunosuppressive drug for a continuous period of 12 weeks before the clinical onset of solar keratosis; or
 - (d) undergoing PUVA therapy involving the affected site where:
 - (i) the first PUVA treatment commenced at least five years before; and
 - (ii) at least 25 PUVA treatments were administered; before the clinical onset of solar keratosis; or
 - (e) having cutaneous contact of the affected site with bipyridyl compounds associated with paraquat manufacture, on more days than not for a cumulative period of at least five years, before the clinical onset of solar keratosis; or
 - (f) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for solar keratosis.

Factors that apply only to material contribution or aggravation

7. Paragraph 6(f) applies only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, solar keratosis where the person's solar keratosis was suffered or contracted before or during (but not arising out of) the person's relevant service.

Inclusion of Statements of Principles

8. 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 as in force from time to time.

Other definitions

9. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:

"a tropical area" means any area between the Tropic of Capricorn (23° 27' South) and the Tropic of Cancer (23° 27' North);

"an immunosuppressive drug" means a drug or an agent administered orally, intravenously or intramuscularly for the purpose of suppressing the immune responses, but does not include an inhaled or topical steroid;

"death from solar keratosis" in relation to a person includes death from a terminal event or condition that was contributed to by the person's solar keratosis;

"equivalent sunlight exposure in other latitude zones" means the cumulative hours of sunlight exposure equivalent to that specified for a tropical area, calculated by multiplying the hours of exposure in each latitude zone by the latitude weighting factor for the zone as per the latitude weighting factor schedule and adding together the result for each zone:

Latitude weighting factor schedule

<u>Latitude zone</u>	<u>Latitude weighting factor</u>
a latitude between 23° 27' S and 23° 27' N	1.0
a latitude from > 23° 27' to 35°	0.75
a latitude from > 35° to 45°	0.5
a latitude from > 45° to 65°	0.25;

"ICD-10-AM code" means a number assigned to a particular kind of injury or disease in The International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th Revision, Australian Modification (ICD-10-AM), Seventh Edition, effective date of 1 July 2010, copyrighted by the National Centre for Classification in Health, Sydney, NSW, and having ISBN 978 1 74210 154 5;

"paraquat" is a dipyridilium compound whose dichloride and dimethylsulphate salts are used as contact herbicides;

"PUVA" means photochemotherapy with oral methoxsalen (psoralen) and ultraviolet A radiation;

"relevant service" means:

- (a) operational service under the VEA;
- (b) peacekeeping service under the VEA;
- (c) hazardous service under the VEA;
- (d) British nuclear test defence service under the VEA;

- (e) warlike service under the MRCA; or
- (f) non-warlike service under the MRCA;

"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;

"unprotected skin" means skin that is directly exposed to the sun and is not protected by sunscreen, clothing or any other physical barrier.

Application

- 10.** This Instrument applies to all matters to which section 120A of the VEA or section 338 of the MRCA applies.

Date of effect

- 11.** This Instrument takes effect from 31 October 2012.

Dated this *twenty-second* day of *October* 2012

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

PROFESSOR NICHOLAS SAUNDERS AO
CHAIRPERSON