

APPENDIX F:

LETTER TO THE MINISTER CONCERNING SMOKE AND MASKING AGENTS



**Repatriation
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File Ref: 6300

23 July 2003

The Hon. Mrs Danna Vale MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs and
Minister assisting the Minister for Defence
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

Expert Committee to Review SAS Health Issues – Various Smoke and Masking Agents

I refer to my recent letter to you dated 26 June 2003 and I am writing to provide you with a further update in relation to the progress of the Expert Committee to Review SAS Health Issues, particularly in relation to 1.3 of the terms of reference which deals with *Smoke and masking agent exposure*.

The Expert Committee is still receiving information from the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) concerning the above agents. This has the potential to indefinitely delay completion of the Committee's work. The SASR has suggested that we could follow up further on chemicals possibly present in devices through the Defence Safety Management Agency and Pain Wessex Chemicals.

We have decided to finalise our report on the information to hand as at 14 July 2003 and will recommend that any further follow up of chemicals in smoke and masking devices should be referred to Occupational Health and Safety in ADF for appropriate consideration. We have tracked and investigated a substantial number of chemicals but the possible extended list does not appear to be readily available.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Donald', is written over a circular stamp or seal.

Ken Donald
Chairperson
Repatriation Medical Authority

cc. President, Repatriation Commission.