

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Defence (Kevan Jones): The Government committed to implementing in full all the recommendations arising from the Review of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme when it was published on 10 February 2010. As the Review acknowledged, considerable detailed work is required to translate the Review's high level recommendations into legislation. An important first step is the formation of the proposed independent medical expert group, which I am establishing on an interim basis today in order to meet the timescales envisaged by the Review. The terms of reference, structure and membership of this interim medical expert group which will advise on armed forces compensation is set out below:

Terms of Reference

The interim Independent Medical Group is established as a result of the AFCS Review (Cm 7798) published on 10 February 2010. Its role primarily is to advise on the appropriate levels of compensation for all the specific injuries, illnesses and diseases highlighted in the AFCS Review as being areas of concern, in time to be included in the consultation in Autumn 2010 leading to the legislation planned for early 2011 to implement the Review.

In addition, the interim Group will also, as appropriate:

- a. provide initial advice on the list of recognised diseases that, on the balance of probabilities, are predominantly caused by service in the armed forces since 6 April 2005;
- b. provide initial advice on those injuries, illnesses or diseases that might be made worse by service during the first six months of service that are currently excluded from the Scheme. This advice will need to distinguish between those injuries, illnesses or diseases that might simply be triggered by service, but are not caused by service (perhaps such as asthma which might only become apparent during initial training);
- c. advise on the definitive structure and membership of the Group, beyond the transitional Group which would only be in existence for around 12 months;
- d. advise on any other medical matters in relation to the Armed Forces Compensation Schemes that the Minister for Veterans requests it to provide.

Membership

The Chairman and expert members of this interim Group will comprise senior licensed consultants drawn from the relevant specialties, including: Trauma/Orthopaedics, Neurology, Ear/Nose/Throat, Occupational Medicine, and Mental health. The MOD's Senior Medical Adviser to the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Personnel) will also be a member of the Group. Three lay members will also be appointed to the Group: one from Service/ex-Service

Organisations on the statutorily established Central Advisory Committee on Pensions and Compensation (CAC), one from the in-Service representatives on the CAC, and an injured serving person who has claimed under the Scheme. The Group will be able to draw on other expert advice where required.

The Chairman of the Group will be a member of the CAC that advises the Minister for Veterans, and the Chairman would present the advice of the Group to Minister as a member of the CAC. The advice and the Government's decisions in relation to it would be published together at the same time on the MOD's website.

The following individuals have been appointed to form this interim group:

Chairman: Professor Sir Anthony Newman Taylor CBE, FRCP, FFOM, FMedSci

Expert Members: Professor David Alexander MA(Hons) C.Psychol PhD FBPS FRSM(Hon) FRCPsych; Professor Linda Luxon FRCP; Dr John Scadding MD FRCP; Dr David Snashall MSc FRCP FFOM LLM; and, Professor James Ryan OStJ, MB, BCh, BAO (NUI), FRCS (Eng), MCh (NUI), Hon FCEM, DMCC(SoA), RAMC(V)

MOD's Senior Medical Adviser to the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Personnel): Dr Anne Braidwood CBE MRCP MRCPGP

Lay Members: Lt Col Jerome Church MBE, General Secretary British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association, member of the CAC, representing the Confederation of British Service and Ex-Service Organisations; Col Robin Vickers, Army Pay Colonel, representing the three single Service members on the CAC; and, Col David Richmond, a serving member of the armed forces who suffered an AK47 bullet wound that shattered his femur in Afghanistan in June 2008 who was injured when Commanding Officer 5SCOTS.

Mode of working

The Group itself will not be expected to create its advice from first principles. Instead, the MOD would investigate issues and draw up evidence-based proposals for the Group to consider and either validate or advise, support or challenge in the same way that the MOD conducted the work of the AFCS Review and used the Independent Scrutiny Group to validate this work. The MOD will provide secretariat support to the Group.

The Group will meet as and when required, perhaps 4-6 times during its existence. Between meetings business will be conducted via correspondence. Some meetings may be conducted virtually via video- or telephone-conferencing.

Terms of Appointment

The Chairman and members of this interim independent medical group to advise on Armed Forces compensation will be appointed until February 2011. The roles will not be remunerated, but the MOD will reimburse reasonable travel and subsistence expenses. The Chairman and

members will be expected to follow the Seven Principles of Public Life enunciated by the Nolan Committee.