

## Read the answers to some questions from the Online Event for NZ Veterans in Australia

The presenters of the event were invited to answer questions from our veteran community.

These questions focus on New Zealand veterans who are living in Australia.

We have transcribed the questions and answers from Sharon Cavanagh's session (Manager of Veterans' Services at Veterans Affairs New Zealand).

### What is the definition of a veteran?

As you know, the term refers to any person who has qualifying routine service in the New Zealand armed forces before 1 April 1974, and qualifying operational service in the New Zealand armed forces either before or after 1 April 1974.

Qualifying operational service is based on an assessment of the level of operational or environmental risk a service person faced. A deployment that is considered to pose a significant risk of harm to the members deployed may be declared by the Minister to be qualifying operational service for the purposes of the Act.

Under current legislation only the people who meet the definition in the Act can legally be described as veterans; and because the term is defined in law (the Veterans' Support Act 2014), this is the definition that needs to be used in any reference to legal entitlements under New Zealand law.

However, I can assure you that, like other New Zealanders, we are comfortable in using the term more broadly in other contexts, for example when referring to former service personnel more generally.

More information about Qualifying Service (<https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/eligibility/qualifying-service/>)

### What is available to help us here [in Australia]? What general support is available to us?

There is support you can get from us but first, you should check your eligibility for support by using the check your eligibility tool on our VA website.

Check your eligibility (<https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/eligibility/check-your-eligibility/>)

Depending on your circumstances, there may be a range of support options available to you. This includes:

- Treatment and rehabilitation
- Services, including those under the Veterans' Independence Programme (lawns, gardens, window washing, home cleaning)
- Financial entitlements – both one-off and regular payments

You will still need to meet the normal eligibility criteria for each support, service or entitlement. Our website does have a section dedicated to those living in Australia so I would encourage you to check that out online.

## Why is it taking so long for reviews to be completed?

We are conscious that some of our veterans are experiencing delays in receiving updates on where reviews might be at.

The impact of COVID-19 on our workforce, extended waiting times for specialist and medical reports and a 60% increase in the volume of applications being received, is impacting significantly on processing times.

Ongoing delays will continue for the coming months.

## Are conflicts that Australia was not involved in included in their services for New Zealanders?

To check if there is a declaration of qualifying operational service for New Zealand military service, use the check your eligibility tool.

Check your eligibility (<https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/eligibility/check-your-eligibility/>)

## Is there a list of illnesses accepted by VA as possibly service related?

There are service-related presumptions. This is when a condition or death is automatically service-related because it is clearly related to a qualifying operation.

There are also conclusively presumed conditions and there are four types of service that have conditions covered by a Presumptive List. These are:

- Those who served in the Gulf Conflict
- Those who served in Vietnam
- Those exposed to nuclear radiation
- Former prisoners of war.

Our website also provides information regarding our use of Statements of Principles. We also use these to figure out if certain conditions can be related to Qualifying Service.

More information on Statements of Principles (<https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/for-clients/how-we-make-decisions/conditions-we-cover/statements-of-principles/>)

## I am struggling with my housekeeping/cleaning — Is assistance available in Australia?

If you have qualifying service, you may be eligible for these services under our Veterans' Independence Programme. This programme helps you remain independent and safe in your own home.

You should check your eligibility on our website by using the check your eligibility tool and then give us a call on the freephone number from Australia, and we can do a needs assessment to figure out what will best meet your needs.

Check your eligibility (<https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/eligibility/check-your-eligibility/>)

Contact us (<https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/contact-us/>)

Date

11 April 2022

Tags

[News about events \(https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/news-events/articles/?tag=56\)](https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/news-events/articles/?tag=56)

