



Information for Veterans Exposed to Ionizing Radiation and Their Families

Vol. 3, No. 2

September 2006

“DOC” CAMPBELL, FORMER NAAV LEADER, DIES

Robert M. “Doc” Campbell, Jr., of Santee, CA, 2003-2004 Vice Commander of the National Association of Atomic Veterans (NAAV), died in his sleep on Sunday, April 23, 2006, his wife Jeanne reported. Jeanne Campbell described her late husband as a “very caring compassionate man,” who was “very dedicated in helping the Atomic Veterans in their effort to receive the help and recognition they deserved.”



R. Campbell

Campbell, retired from the Navy, was a corpsman in a biomedical unit that participated in atmospheric tests in the 1950s in the Pacific and Nevada testing areas. Doc was very active helping veterans, especially atomic veterans.

Echoing Mrs. Campbell, Bernard (Bernie) E. Clark, Secretary/Treasurer, NAAV, noted that Doc was very interested in the organization which played a very active part of his life the past few years. “We will all miss him,” wrote Clark. “Without exception, everybody in communication with ‘Doc’ knew where he stood on any issue before the Association. His contributions to a better organization will long be remembered.” Clark recalled Doc “seemed to enjoy swimming upstream against the tide of opinion.”

R.J. Ritter, current National Commander, NAAV, signed an official “Memoriam” signifying Doc’s dedicated service to our country and to the NAAV organization. Clark urged that everyone know that the NAAV recognizes Campbell’s “steadfast loyalty and dedicated service, first to his country and second to our organization.” Clark indicated that Campbell served in a number of capacities in NAAV, including member, Director, Vice-Commander, Convention Chairman, and Coordinator of State Commanders.

Doc Campbell’s signature block told it all. He identified himself as an Atomic Veteran, Korea Veteran, Vietnam Veteran, DAV Life Member, and NAAV Life Member. He was also a strong supporter of this newsletter.

VA CHIEF OFFICER MATHER RETIRES; DEYTON TAKES OVER; EDITOR ROSENBLUM RETIRES

January 2006 saw a change in leadership at the Office of Public Health and Environmental Hazards (OPH&EH), the office responsible for facilitating VA’s medical care for Atomic Veterans and others who sacrificed much during military service to our country.



S. Mather

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Early this year, Susan H. Mather, M.D., M.P.H., Chief Officer, Public Health and Environmental Hazards (PH&EH), retired. For 26 years, since joining VA in 1979, Mather translated her passion and dedication into services, strategies, and successful initiatives for a wide range of veterans on various health issues. Her contributions range from ensuring that VA clinical personnel were among the first to recognize and treat HIV/AIDS, to the Veterans Health Initiative, which provides Web-based modules on providing care for health effects of military service, including those on ionizing radiation, the Vietnam War and Agent Orange, and many other health issues of concern to veterans.

When first appointed as Chief Officer in 1990, Mather was responsible for VA's role in addressing AIDS, women veterans health, and environmental hazard health issues. Under her leadership, the small office grew into a diverse organization that addresses many significant public health, as well as military and veterans' health issues that affect veterans, including smoking cessation, pandemic flu response, and emergency preparedness in a post-9/11 world.

Deyton New Chief Officer

Following Mather's retirement, one of her top officials, Lawrence R. Deyton, M.S.P.H., M.D., assumed the role of Chief Officer. Deyton was Chief Consultant for the public health programs of the office since 1998, building policies and programs in HIV, hepatitis C, and emerging infectious diseases on behalf of health care providers and patients in the VA health system.



L. R. Deyton

As Chief Officer, Deyton also assumed responsibility for VA's handling of issues related to the health of veterans exposed to Agent Orange, ionizing radiation, and a variety of environmental hazards encountered during Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, Desert Storm, and Desert Shield.

Before joining VA, he led research programs in the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

(NIAID) at the National Institutes of Health for 11 years, formulated policy for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health of the Department of Health and Human Services for 6 years, and served as a legislative aide with the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Health and the Environment.

Deyton also teaches. He is Associate Professor of Medicine and of Health Policy, George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences, and practices medicine. He holds a weekly clinic at the VA Medical Center Washington, DC, caring for veterans with HIV, infectious diseases and hepatitis C. He is a graduate of Kansas University, the Harvard School of Public Health, and the George Washington University School of Medicine, and has over 100 publications in peer-reviewed journals on AIDS clinical trials, clinical trials methodology, and public health aspects of HIV. For more information on the office, visit www.vethealth.cio.med.va.gov/.

Newsletter Editor Retires

After nearly 34 years of Federal Service, including about 32 years with VA, the writer/editor of the *Ionizing Radiation Review*, Donald J. Rosenblum, retired in early September 2006. This is his final issue of the *Ionizing Radiation Review* newsletter. He has been the chief writer and editor of the newsletter since its founding in 2004.



D. Rosenblum

Rosenblum has been working on issues related to environmental hazards since he joined the Agent Orange program office in September 1980. He was the most senior employee (in terms of length of service) in the PH&EH program.

He prepared the *Agent Orange Review* (since 1989), as well as the *Gulf War Review*, and the *Operations Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom Review* (since they were established in 1992 and 2003 respectively). In addition, he has authored numerous Information Bulletins (brochures, pamphlets, fact sheets), co-edited two modules in the Veterans Health Initiative

series, assisted in the development of various posters, exhibits, and videotape programs, and responded to thousands of letters.

He is the recipient of numerous awards (including the Word-master Award three times) and commendations from VA and several organizations for whom he volunteered.

Rosenblum created a strong foundation for this and the other newsletters and, thus, they will continue even though he has retired.

For this article, Rosenblum's supervisor, Mark A. Brown, Ph.D., Director, Environmental Agents Service, offered the following remarks about his retiring deputy's contribution to VA and the veterans it serves:

His fellow workers all will miss his enthusiasm and hard work, but they know that his work over the years has touched the lives of literally millions of veterans and their families, including, of course, the readers of this newsletter.

HOW TO GET DISABILITY COMPENSATION FROM VA

(Because of the high level of interest in this subject and the fact that not everyone reads every article in the newsletter, the following article has been updated and is repeated).

Like other veterans, those veterans exposed to ionizing radiation are eligible for monthly payments, called disability compensation, from VA if they have service-connected illnesses or injuries. The disability must have been incurred or aggravated during active military service. Furthermore, the veteran must have been terminated from military service through separation or discharge under conditions that were other than dishonorable.

Disability compensation varies according to the degree of disability and the number of dependents. Benefits are not subject to Federal or state income tax. The receipt of military retirement pay, disability

severance pay, and separation incentive payments known as SSB and VSI (Special Separation Benefits and Voluntary Separation Incentives) also affects the amount of VA compensation paid.

The disability ratings range from 0 to 100 percent (in increments of 10 percent). For example, in 2006, a veteran with a disability rating of 10 percent receives \$112; a veteran with disability rating of 50 percent gets \$690; and a veteran who is totally disabled and evaluated at 100 percent receives \$2,393 monthly.

Veterans with disability ratings between 30 and 100 percent are also eligible for monthly allowances for each child. (The amount depends on the disability rating).

A veteran who is in need of regular aid and attendance of another person or who is permanently housebound may be entitled to additional benefits. VA must make that determination before the veteran can get these benefits.

Must Apply to Be Considered

Compensation is not automatically provided to any veterans. Registry examinations are completely different from claims for disability compensation. VA veterans service representatives (VSR) can provide the necessary claim application and assist veterans who need help in completing it. VSR's are located at all VA Regional Offices, in VA medical centers, and at most VA clinics. For help in locating a VSR near you, call the following toll-free telephone number: **1-800-827-1000**.

Other Benefits

In addition to the compensation program described above, individual veterans may be eligible for the full range of other benefits offered by VA, including education and training, vocational rehabilitation, home loan guarantees, life insurance, pension, burial benefits, and more.

To learn more about VA's programs, radiation-exposed veterans and other interested parties can visit the VA home page www.va.gov or call **1-800-827-1000**.

DISABILITY COMPENSATION RATES FOR 2006

Disability Rating	No Dependents	Veteran With Spouse Only
10%	\$112	
20%	\$218	
30%	\$337	\$377
40%	\$485	\$539
50%	\$690	\$757
60%	\$873	\$954
70%	\$1,099	\$1,193
80%	\$1,227	\$1,385
90%	\$1,436	\$1,557
100%	\$2,393	\$2,528

These rates were effective December 1, 2005, in accordance with Public Law 109-111, enacted November 22, 2005. Veterans with disability ratings of at least 30 percent are eligible for additional allowances for dependents. Dependents include spouses, minor children, between ages 18 and 23 who are attending school, children who are permanently incapable of self-support because of disability arising before age 18, and dependent parents. The additional amount depends on the disability rating.

Veterans with certain severe disabilities also may be eligible for additional special monthly compensation. For additional rate information, see compensation rate tables online at www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Rates/comp01.htm. **Legislation is pending to increase the rates.**

CONDITIONS RECOGNIZED, INCLUDING BONE CANCER

(Note: This publication is new to some readers. Because of the high level of interest, this article repeats information included in earlier "Reviews." There are no additional conditions since the last issue. Bone cancer was accidentally left off the list in the last issue. We regret the error.)

The following conditions have been presumptively recognized by VA for service-connection. That means that veterans with certain types of exposure to ionizing radiation who have one or more of the illnesses listed below are eligible for disability compensation from VA and do not have to prove that their condition was caused by ionizing radiation to be eligible for disability compensation from VA.

- Leukemia other than chronic lymphocyte leukemia;
- Cancer of the thyroid;
- Cancer of the breast;
- Cancer of the pharynx;
- Cancer of the esophagus;
- Cancer of the stomach;
- Cancer of the small intestine;
- Cancer of the pancreas;
- Multiple myeloma;
- Lymphomas (except Hodgkin's disease);
- Cancer of the bile ducts;
- Cancer of the gall bladder;
- Primary liver cancer except if cirrhosis or hepatitis B is indicated;
- Cancers of the salivary gland;
- Urinary tract cancer (kidney/renal, pelvis, ureter, urinary bladder, and urethra);
- Bronchiolo-alveolar cancer (a rare form of lung cancer);
- Cancer of the bone;
- Cancer of the brain;
- Cancer of the colon;
- Cancer of the lung; and
- Cancer of the ovary.

Please Note: To be considered for disability compensation, a veteran must specifically apply for that benefit. **Participation in the Ionizing Radiation Registry does not automatically constitute an application for compensation benefits.**

SPECIAL ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTAIN DISABLED MILITARY RETIREES

This article was submitted on behalf of the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard by Barry W. Craigen, Combat Related Special Compensation Program Manager, HQ Air Force Personnel Center. Please keep in mind that only those veterans who can answer 'yes' to all four of the questions in this article can qualify for this program.

Military retirees have funded their own disability compensation from within their military retired pay for the 100 years preceding 1999. In June 2003, Congress approved the Combat Related Special Compensation (CRSC) program for implementation in June 2003 to replace some or all of the monies offset from military retirees' pay by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for disability compensation for qualifying disabilities.

In determining basic program eligibility, retired members should answer the following questions:

- * Am I retired with 20 (or more) years of active duty uniform service or retired at age 60 from the Guard or Reserve?
- * Am I receiving military retired pay?
- * Do I have a compensable VA disability rating of 10 percent or higher?
- * Is my retired pay reduced by VA disability payments (VA Waiver)?

If you answered "yes" to **ALL FOUR of the above questions** and have not submitted your CRSC application, you could be missing an opportunity for **additional tax-free** compensation. The program focuses on "combat-related" disabilities incurred from armed conflict as well as hazardous service (aircrew, EOD, parachuting, diving, etc.), under conditions simulating war, or through instrumentalities of war (such as, military-unique vehicles, munitions, ionizing radiation exposure, etc.). The amount payable is directly related to the rating percentage assigned to VA service-connected combat-related

ABOUT THE IONIZING RADIATION REVIEW

The *Ionizing Radiation Review* is written by VA's Environmental Agents Service (EAS) to provide information to former military service members who may have been exposed to ionizing radiation during their military service. The *Review* describes the possible long-term health consequences of such exposure and VA's programs to respond to this health risk.

The newsletter is intended to help provide information to veterans and their families concerned about the health risks of exposure to ionizing radiation in military service.

This is the fifth issue of the *Ionizing Radiation Review* newsletter. The earlier issues were published in February 2004, December 2004, August 2005, and January 2006. We anticipate publication once or twice annually, depending on the amount of news on this subject, budgetary considerations, and interest. This newsletter was completed in late July 2006, and does not include developments that occurred after that time.

Questions, comments, and suggestions for future issues are encouraged and can be sent to the editor of the *Ionizing Radiation Review*, Environmental Agents Service (131), VA Central Office, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20420.

Requests for additional copies of the newsletter should also be sent to the same address. Supplies are limited. Please specify the quantity and issue date requested.

Current and back issues of the *Reviews* are posted on the Internet at www.VA.gov/IRAD.

disability(ies) that qualify under CRSC criteria (not all disabilities qualify), but cannot exceed the amount of withheld retired pay.

Eligible retirees may also receive Individual Unemployability (IU) payments, Special Monthly Compensation (SMC), and an adjustment for dependents under certain circumstances.

It costs you 39 cents (postage) and a few minutes of your time to apply--let your Service CRSC experts make the call on your eligibility. Many people are extremely surprised to learn their disabilities qualify under the program! Since 2003, the Services have processed over 100,500 applications as of March 31, 2006, with an average approval rate of 65 percent.

Your CRSC team (the Service from which you retired) needs your completed DD 2860 (CRSC Application), all 214(s)/retirement orders as well as your VA rating decision letter(s) and any other available medical or personnel documentation to support your claim for combat-related disabilities. CRSC applies to all of the military Services and the Coast Guard. Any of the Service teams can explain the program and discuss the documentation required.

The application is available online through the DefenseLink Web site or by contacting any of the Services for a paper copy.

Note: For those retirees under the Concurrent Retirement and Disability Payment (CRDP) program, you may **only** receive compensation under one program--CRDP or CRSC--at a time. If you are approved for CRSC, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service will initially determine which program is most financially advantageous to you--and you'll have the option of changing between the two every year during the open season.

DoD DefenseLink
<http://www.defenselink.mil/prhome/mppcrsc.html>

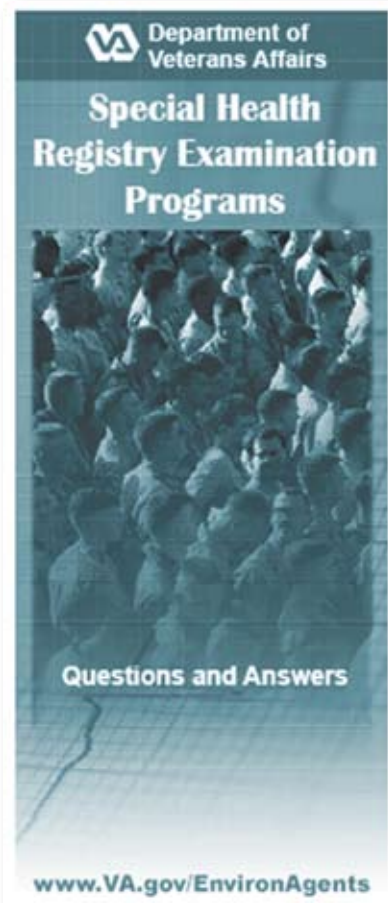
AIR FORCE
HQ Air Force Personnel Center
<http://www.ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>
1.866.616.7074 toll-free (Select option 5, then option 1) or 210.565.1600

ARMY
Army Human Resources Command
<http://www.crsc.army.mil/>
1.866.281.3254 toll-free

COAST GUARD
Coast Guard Personnel Command (adm-1)
<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cgpc/adm/adm1.htm>
1.866.307.1336 toll-free

NAVY AND MARINE CORPS
Naval Council of Personnel Boards
<http://www.hq.navy.mil/ncpb/CRSCB/combatrelated.htm>
1-877.366.2772 toll-free (pre-recorded)

NEW BROCHURE EXPLAINS REGISTRY PROGRAMS



The Environmental Agents Service recently produced and distributed a brochure, entitled *VA Special Health Registry Examination Programs*, that provides useful information about the various health registry programs it administers, including the

Ionizing Radiation Registry. The new brochure is available at local VA facilities and is online at www.VA.gov/EnvironAgents.

Among other things, the publication explains the registry exams, why VA has registries, how a veteran gets on a registry, and their benefits and limitations, where registry examinations are available, and how many veterans have participated in the various VA registry programs.

The brochure helps make clear what the registries do, explaining the relationship between the registries and the disability compensation claims process. The registries are separate from claims. A very important point emphasized in the brochure is that while the registry examination results might yield useful information for the adjudication of a claim, **participation in the registry does not mean that a claim is filed**. The filing of a disability claim is a separate process.

The brochure can be identified as Information Bulletin 10-57. It is expected to be available from the Environmental Health Coordinator at all VA medical centers by early September 2006.

IONIZING RADIATION REGISTRY STATISTICS

As of May 31, 2006:

Total number of initial (first-time) Ionizing Radiation Registry (IRR) examinations during 2006 -- **106 (all men)**

Total number of IRR examinations (includes initial and follow-ups) during 2006 -- **113 (all men)**

Total number of initial IRR examinations since 1978 -- **23,590 (including 151 women)**

Total number of IRR examinations since 1978 -- **24,620 (including 158 for women)**

VA TO SURVEY VETERANS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE AWARD PROGRAM

Later this year VA will make the second round of presentations of the coveted Environmental Health

Center of Excellence Awards. These awards are based on survey responses and other input received from veterans. The individual veterans being sent the survey had received the Agent Orange, Gulf War, or Ionizing Radiation Registry examination.

The survey will ask veterans to name a VA staff person, including an Environmental Health Clinician or Coordinator (formerly known as Registry Clinician or Coordinator) that has provided them with "outstanding customer service." Veterans may wish to acknowledge the VA facility rather than an individual.

The following 13 centers were identified as "exceptional" in a similar survey conducted in 2004:

- VA Medical Center (VAMC) Boise, ID;
- VAMC Cheyenne, WY;
- VAMC Durham, NC;
- VAMC Fargo, ND;
- VAMC Fresno, CA;
- VAMC Grand Junction, CO;
- VAMC Manchester, NH;
- W.G. (Bill) Hefner VAMC Salisbury, NC;
- VAMC San Francisco, CA;
- VAMC White River Junction, VT;
- VA Outpatient Clinic Oakland Park, FL;
- VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic Williamsport, PA; and
- VAOPC Winston-Salem, NC.

Lawrence W. Deyton, M.S.P.H., M.D., recently appointed Chief Public Health and Environmental Hazards Officer (see article beginning on page 1), will sign each certificate and request that the Center Directors arrange for display in areas where it will be seen by many veterans and easily recognized.

Environmental Agents Service (EAS) Director, Mark A. Brown, Ph.D., indicated that EAS has decided to open up the process and welcome nominations from registry participants who do not receive a formal survey. Consequently, any veteran who has received excellent service from VA in the last year or two and

would like to share his or her experience with EAS officials can write to EAS, AWARDS, VA Central Office, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., DC 20420. We welcome your input. Please be specific.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MET IN JUNE

The Veterans' Advisory Committee on Environmental Hazards (VACEH) met June 26 and 27, 2006, in Washington, D.C. The advisory group, established in accordance with Public Law 98-542, enacted in 1984, was originally formed to give advice to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on herbicide/dioxin and ionizing radiation matters. That changed in 1991, when Congress reassigned the herbicides/dioxins responsibilities to National Academy of Sciences, in Public Law 102-4.

The Committee is composed of scientists and public members. The June meeting was the first meeting as part of the committee for new "public" member, Shannon Middleton. Middleton serves as Assistant Director for Health Policy for The American Legion in Washington, DC. Secretary Nicholson appointed her to the Committee in December 2005. (See article about Middleton below). As required by the VACEH Charter, there are 6 scientists and 3 public members currently on the Committee.

Skin and prostate cancers were a major focus of the June meeting. During the meeting, the Committee's Scientific Council evaluated more than 60 scientific studies relating to the possible adverse effects of exposure to ionizing radiation.

Neil S. Otchin, M.D., Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Program Chief for Clinical Matters, Office of Public Health and Environment Hazards, provided an update to the Committee on several issues, including this newsletter. The Office of Public Health and Environmental Hazards provided medical opinions on 284 radiation cases referred by the VA's Veterans Benefits Administration from November 17, 2005 through June 9, 2006.

In most cases, the Interactive Radio Epidemiological Program (IREP) computer software of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), available at the following Web site,

http://198.144.166.6/irep_niosh/, was used. Favorable opinions were provided on about eight percent of the cases.

Dr. Otchin also reported that the VA Business Office and a Department of Defense unit, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), are working to make it easier for veterans to establish eligibility for Ionizing Radiation Registry (IRR) examinations and Priority Group 6 enrollment for VA health care.

Lieutenant Colonel Mark Wrobel, Chief, Radiation Protection Division, U.S. Air Force Medical Support Agency, presented information about the Occupational Radiation Exposure on behalf of the Air Force and gave a brief summary of the Army and Navy's occupational radiation exposure as well.

Isaf Al-Nabulsi, Ph.D., Program Administrator, Veterans' Advisory Board on Dose Reconstruction (VBDR), reported on the progress the VBDR has made. The VBDR has 16 members, including nationally recognized medical and scientific experts, veterans, and representatives of the DTRA and VA. The VBDR provides guidance and independent oversight of the dose reconstruction program for Atomic Veterans. Additional information about the VBDR, including meetings and how to contact the board, may be found on its Web site: www.vbdr.org.

While the Committee spent a great deal of time discussing whether skin cancer and/or prostate cancer should be added to the list of conditions presumptively recognized for service-connection based on evidence of an association with radiation, the Committee decided to review a previous letter that it had sent to the Under Secretary for Benefits regarding radiation and cancers in general before it will make a recommendation regarding the skin cancer and/or prostate cancer.

The next VACEH meeting will be held on November 13-14, 2006, in Washington, DC.

Isidro Reyna, 2006 Summer Intern from the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities assigned to EAS, drafted the above article.

PROFILE: SHANNON MIDDLETON–PUBLIC MEMBER

In December 2005, VA Secretary R. James Nicholson appointed Shannon Middleton, Assistant Director for Health Policy at The American Legion, to the Veterans' Advisory Committee on Environmental Hazards (VACEH) as a "public" member for a three-year term.



S. Middleton

The VACEH, established by Public Law 98-542 in 1984, was formed to give advice to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the possible health-related effects of certain environmental exposures experienced by some military veterans, including ionizing radiation.

"My job is to facilitate veterans getting the benefits they deserve and need," says Middleton. She would like to accomplish this through decisions that are made in the Committee.

Middleton served in the U.S. Navy for four years as an intelligence specialist. As a veteran and American Legion official, she hopes to alleviate frustrations that veterans experience when trying to receive benefits for war related health problems that have not been included on the list of presumptive illnesses as determined by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In her capacity as assistant director, Middleton works with war related health issues that affect veterans. She constantly communicates with veterans directly through telephone calls, e-mails, and letters.

In 1997, Middleton earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Morgan State University in Baltimore, MD. Originally from Baltimore, MD, Middleton currently resides in Woodbridge, VA. When not working, she is busy with her family.

Veterans needing assistance from The American Legion may wish to call her or others at **(202) 861-2700**.

Isidro Reyna, 2006 Summer Intern from the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities assigned to EAS, drafted the above article.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The "Review" occasionally includes a questions and answer section in which VA officials respond to inquiries from readers regarding possible health problems and concerns of veterans exposed to ionizing radiation and their families and about programs initiated by VA and other Federal departments and agencies to help these veterans.

QUESTION: MR of Spring Hill, FL, asked if being in the tanks during the Vietnam era exposed a veteran to radiation or substances that could lead to ionizing radiation exposure.

ANSWER: Presumably, this question relates to depleted uranium (DU) which was used as armor in some tanks and in armor-piercing munitions for the first time in 1991 in the Gulf War. Tanks in Vietnam were not equipped with DU, and DU armor-piercing munitions were not used there.

Questions should be sent as follows:

Environmental Agents Service (131)
ATTN: IRR – Q's & A's
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20420

NAAV CONVENTION UPDATE

The National Association of Atomic Veterans (NAAV) is holding its national convention in St. Louis on September 24-27, 2006.

The convention headquarters: Clarion Hotel, St. Louis Airport, 4545 N. Lindbergh Blvd., Bridgeton, MO 63044. Telephone: **314-731-2100**. Information Contact: Bernie Clark, 2439 East 47th Street, Tulsa, OK 74105, Clark's telephone number: **918-749-2034**.

According to Clark, the convention is scheduled to include presentations by the Veterans Board Dose Reconstruction; National Military Personnel Records Center; Veterans Advisory Committee on Environmental Hazards; several Congressmen; and radiation fallout downwinders.

Additional convention information will be posted on the Internet at www.NAAV.com.

WHERE TO GET HELP

Veterans concerned about their exposure to radiation and its possible long-term health consequences -- Nearly every VA medical center offers the VA's Ionizing Radiation Registry health examination. Eligible veterans who were exposed to radiation during their military service are encouraged to participate in this voluntary program. Call the nearest VA medical center for an appointment. The telephone number should be included in your local telephone directory under the "U.S. Government" listings. VA medical centers have designated an Environmental Health Clinician and an Environmental Health Coordinator. The Clinician performs (or supervises) the registry examination; the Coordinator is responsible for handling the administrative aspects of the program.

For general information about VA health benefits and enrollment in the VA health care system, call **1-877-222-8387**. Eligible veterans are not required to enroll in the system in order to receive the registry examination. They can contact the nearest VA medical center or look at our Web site at www.VA.gov/EnvironAgents to find out who the Environmental Health Coordinator and Clinician are.

Veterans who need prompt medical treatment for conditions that may be related to their exposure to radiation during military service – contact the nearest VA medical center for eligibility information and possible medical treatment. Atomic Veterans seeking care solely for health problems associated with exposure to radiation have been assigned to category six in the enrollment priorities system. Call **1-877-222-8387**, for information on this subject.

Veterans with illnesses possibly incurred in or aggravated by exposure to radiation or some other aspect of military service – Contact a VA veterans services representative (VSR) at the nearest VA regional office or health care facility and apply for disability compensation. The national toll-free telephone number for information regarding VA benefits is **1-800-827-1000**. Also, VA applications are available on the Internet at <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp>.

Veterans who encounter difficulties at a VA medical center – Contact the Patient Advocate or Patient Representative at that facility for assistance in resolving the problem.

Representatives of various Veteran Service Organizations, including The American Legion (**1-800-433-3318**, www.legion.org), Paralyzed Veterans of America (**1-800-424-8200**, www.pva.org) Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (**1-800-VFW-1899**, www.vfw.org), Disabled American Veterans (**1-877-426-2838**, or www.dav.org), National Association of Atomic Veterans (www.naav.com), and others have been helpful to veterans exposed to radiation who are seeking disability compensation. (These organizations are cited as examples. There are many other very helpful organizations. VA does not endorse or recommend any specific group over another.)

Country and State **Veteran Service Officers** also have been of great help to many military veterans.



VA CARES

ABOUT VETERANS EXPOSED TO IONIZING RADIATION WE HAVE PROGRAMS TO HELP YOU

- ◆ Ionizing Radiation Registry Health Examinations
- ◆ Outreach and Education
- ◆ Research
- ◆ Special Eligibility Medical Care
- ◆ Depleted Uranium Screening
- ◆ Disability Compensation

IF YOU ARE A VETERAN AND YOU WERE EXPOSED TO IONIZING RADIATION

in the atmospheric nuclear weapons testing program (1945-1962); during certain underground tests at Amchitka, Alaska; during the occupation of Hiroshima or Nagasaki, Japan (8/6/45-7/1/46); as a POW in Japan during World War II when atomic bombs were dropped; at the Department of Energy plants in Paducah, KY, Portsmouth, OH, and the K-25 Area, Oak Ridge, TN (for at least 250 days before 2/1/92); as a result of nasopharyngeal radium treatment while in service; or through contact with depleted uranium during the Gulf War or in subsequent conflicts, we have programs to help you.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE, CONTACT THE NEAREST VA MEDICAL CENTER , VET CENTER, OR REGIONAL OFFICE

CALL 1-800-827-1000

www.va.gov/irad

Local contact information:

Ionizing Radiation Review *Information for Veterans Exposed to Ionizing Radiation and Their Families*

September 2006

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Penalty for private use \$300

**Department of
Veterans Affairs
Environmental Agents Service (131)**
VA Central Office
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20420

