

To whom it may concern,

In December of 2011 after yet another near death work accident I was sent to my local general practitioner for a check-up due to the lack of emotions displayed before I was allowed to return to work. It was during this check-up that my life was drastically altered due to my military service.

On the 28th May 2002 I was involved in a gun accident whilst training at high range where the cannon I was firing blew up with a high explosive round in the barrel. This was the beginning of my PTSD although as I found out in 2012 was actually really late onset. I was diagnosed in 2002 at the time which fortunately was enough for DVA to accept the claim through their system.

It was however not until 2012 that I was informed that I was actually able to claim for services around my house and other benefits. I was also not told at the time that I was entitled to claim existing injuries from other events during my service.

In 2012 I put in claims for my back, shoulder, left and right ankles, and left and right knees. This process was drawn out and lengthy and the amount of stress that was placed on me at the time due to the physical pain I was experiencing after my body started to revert back to being unfit because I was now retired medically due to my PTSD. The drain that I was causing on my family and friends around me became so bad that I did in fact consider and attempt suicide a few times. I on one occasion I have been told was so close that the Ambulance was so close to losing me that they were within the last half an hour of my life after the police found me passed out in a park after a pill overdose.

The claims eventually got processed and for some reason they accepted the injuries to my right knee and left ankle but not the alternating joints as well. I found this ludicrous at the time as I know for a fact that I passed all medical requirements to join the defence forces and in my time of service I never once saw any personnel doing pack marches with only one knee and one ankle working. Even when I went and did my parachute training I didn't see anyone using only one knee and one ankle to assist with the training.

I am presently going through another round of claiming under SRCA and the new delegate looking at my case has received a report from the DVA approved specialist that has linked the alternative joints to military service being a causality of between 1 and 9 % and this has somehow meant that the claims have been denied.

With the two rounds of DVA claims and the future rounds I am probably going to have to go through in the future the process has driven me to a total of 5 suicide attempts, my wife telling me that she can't do it anymore and me being a former soldier promising her I won't try anymore. The unfortunate part about that is that every day that goes by with the bureaucratic red tape and utter bull shit decision making process there is no pain management or surgeries that I can go through to get my legs better because I can only get one knee and ankle done which is affecting both of the

opposing joints too. Because of these reasons I pray daily that I get to go to sleep and not wake up therefore I would not have gone against my word but also don't have to deal with the constant nightmares of reliving the accident where I nearly ended 6 personnel's lives, the pain of waking up and being less mobile than what I imagine a 50-year-old is, and I don't have to deal with the disappointment of being a sub-standard citizen in a world I don't belong in.

I welcome this inquiry and hope that they can start assessing situations on a case by case basis rather than a sorry but you don't fit this basket scenario. For ease of reference I am allowing this inquiry full access to my DVA file.

Kindest Regards

Michael Bush