

Subject: Re: Vietnam Veteran's Family Health Study

From: "Rod Bain" <roderickbain@gmail.com>

Date: Fri, 10 Oct 2008 10:30:52 +1100

To: "Rod Bain" <roderickbain@gmail.com>

1.

NOTICE TO ARMY

Intergenerational Health Effects of Service in the Military aka Vietnam Veterans' Family Health Study.

Dear Sir

I appreciate this reminder should have been sent to you some time ago but the urgency of the situation has only just been outlined to me and you are an obvious ambassador to help, the Vietnam Veterans' Family Health Study aka. The Intergenerational Health Effects of Service in the Military, to be a success.

Ten thousand soldiers have been selected by the research group to register for the study which has been allocated \$11.5M over eight years and the response rate to date is sadly quite low. Many admit to receiving the request for assistance but have been a little too idle to post back their participating replies. Please could you remind your members and their families whom you see, that this is very important, as it will determine how future military generations are treated by governments not just the Vietnam Veterans alone. This study will become a model for future military generations so we must have it right for ourselves and for them.

The consultative forum advising the above study met for the first time on Monday, 22nd September in Melbourne and the low response rate was a point well discussed. The participating numbers need to rise considerably. This study applies to those who served overseas in Vietnam during the sixties and seventies as well as those who remained in the Army on the Australian mainland. Without this latter fine comparison group the results will lose their value to prove the point that a soldier's overseas service can contribute to that soldier's family difficulties; be they his own, his wife, or his children and grand children. If your colleagues are requested to help, even though people feel uninvolved, it is vital that they do so. Much time and effort has been spent designing this study and to have it fail through lack of numbers will be a tragedy that reverberates throughout the whole country for many generations to come.

There are ten of us on the forum and we're determined to gain a useful result for those who have done military service along with their families, but we can do it only with the support of all those soldiers requested to be part of the study. This invitation does not mean only those with some lasting difficulties. We need everyone requested to take part in the study to return the information as per the letters; be you exceeding well or less so.

To register again if papers are lost or misplaced OR to be part of the study because you realise it is important even though not one of the ten thousand selected participants, visit www.dva.gov.au/vvfs or for any further information and assistance phone Family Study Program 1800 502 302.

Kind regards,

Rod.

Dr Roderick Bain MBBS FRCA FANZCA
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PS Every one (be you officially selected or not) who served in the AUSTRALIAN ARMY during the

sixties and seventies and served in Vietnam OR remained in Australia is invited to contribute to this study. National Service personnel are very much part of this program. Your contribution to the information collected will significantly enhance the study's depth and outcome which I'm happy to discuss with anyone who is anxious about this matter. THIS STUDY HAS NO RELATIONSHIP TO ANY PENSIONABLE STATUS YOU MAY BE ENTITLED TO HOLD AND PERSONAL PHYSICAL INFORMATION WILL NOT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ANY GOVERNMENT AGENCY. THE STUDIES, OF WHICH THERE ARE FIVE DIVISIONS, WILL BE CONDUCTED BY SEPARATE UNIVERSITY BASED GROUPS NOT DVA. THE LATTER IS FOR NAME AND ADDRESS REGISTRATION PURPOSES ONLY.

2.

From: Rod Bain <<mailto:roderickbain@gmail.com>>
Sent: Wednesday, 1 October 2008 3:31 PM
Subject: A CHANCE TO SERVE YOUR COUNTRY, AGAIN! BY BEING PART OF THE VVFHS.

I enter the discussion, at this time, with some trepidation. Despite my determined efforts to gain a positive result for the Intergenerational Health Study aka V.V. Family Health Study, I will be seen by someone as an advocate for the DVA; when nothing can be further from the truth. The only client I advocate for is the serving and ex-serving person and their families. That, I can promise you, gets me a sufficiently high official disapproval rating without taking on any other causes.

Now all interested parties must be very clear in their own minds about what the VVFHS is trying to achieve and not mix it up with the way DVA has chosen to go about implementing it; as seems to be the case with a number of writers to date.

NOTE WELL:

1. This is a world first study. No one has ever done this type of work study before. All previous research done on these various topics does not cover the brief given to the VVFHS group. Be very clear in your own minds about that. I could go into greater detail but you would be asleep in under 60 seconds. Be it sufficient to say we're looking at many potential topics. Eg. epigenetics and how this could be playing a roll in inherited outcomes in service families. Go look it up!
2. \$13.5M has been set aside specifically for this study and a similar prospective smaller one for current serving troops. It will be spent on this study whether we like the methodology or not and whether there is a useable result at the end or not. Be that end eight years away or whenever. I want a useable result and that can ONLY come about if we have a sufficient number of participants. Therefore go and register as requested. Pretend I'm begging you and not some government department.
3. The work will be done by tertiary University bodies who tendered for the studies and are yet to be selected. The research work will not be done in house by the DVA.
4. The Repatriation Commissioner Chairs an Advisory Committee of interested and effected persons, to which I belong and on which I intend to remain. None of us; I repeat none of us is in complete agreement with what has occurred so far but we do believe that the way forward is to work with the various research groups and DVA to achieve the best outcome possible for the family health study.
5. One of our committee members has had to resign for family reasons and took the opportunity to underline to the other members, the Minister and the Chairman what she felt were the short comings of the procedural methods so far. There is little in what she said that any of the members disagreed with; however, we MUST work through any bureaucratic rigidity we encounter and not as the committee retreat like a spoilt child.
6. To refuse, if requested, to even participate in the VV Family Health Study is unworthy of any Army person I've met. You can be unhappy

about it, resentful maybe but belligerent, never. This study is not just about ourselves and our families, which is reason enough to be in it; but will finally be the model for the generations of Australian Defence Force personnel who will follow.

7. The advisory committee is there to be consulted, to be your watchdog and act on your behalf when you express disquiet. We will, however, not stand, idly by and squander this one opportunity, presented to us by government, that can deliver a positive outcome to long suffering military families both of this and future generations.

8. All the information you need to be aware of at this stage of proceedings for registration is available at the following site and phone in centre.

Visit www.dva.gov.au/vvfs <<http://www.dva.gov.au/vvfs>> or for any further information and assistance phone Family Study Program 1800 502 302. Sitting at home refusing to help other ex-service mates is a very unproductive way to spend the time we have remaining to us.

Kind regards,

Rod.

Dr Roderick Bain MBBS FRCA FANZCA

Member VVFHS Consultative Forum

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