

(i) The reasons why Australian veterans are committing suicide at such high rates.

.I believe veterans are also self harming due to concerns about dealing with a range of medications, inoculations, substances and chemicals that they came in contact with during service life, but The Defence Department and/or Department of Veterans Affairs do not appear to want to acknowledge medical conditions, mental harm or worry that may or has occurred to those persons.

. I contacted the Directorate of Customer Access Management – DCAM Defence Service Centre Ph: (1800 333 362) in January 2012 with concerns about my contact with Asbestos (both fibers and dust), Range Fuel, Jet Fuel, and 3M AFFF(PFOS) and lodged a report (Incident Number) voicing my concerns. DCAM Defence did provide information on asbestos, range and jet fuel and I did attend Medibank Solutions, Newcastle for an asbestos screening program organized through DCAM. They (Medibank Solutions) had me complete a questionnaire, checked recent lung x-rays and carried out a lung function test. They stated, there was no evidence of any problems with my lungs at that time and there was only a very slight chance I would have asbestos disease related problems. When I inquired about tests for exposure for jet fuel (avtur) or AFFF, they replied that no information or testing was available. I gave the interviewing Medical Officer copies of information about AFFF and have not been contacted by anybody since. I have this week contacted DCAM to update my contact details and also to inquire as to any outcome regarding the incident report I had lodged.

NOTE:

.Back in 1977/78 No Safety Data Sheets or information was available on 3M AFFF and we had been told whilst on P4 Introduction Course the diluted AFFF was safe enough to drink.

.The 3M AFFF (PFOS) I have mentioned above is the very same chemical that has been in many news reports of late, associated with land and soil contamination in and around RAAF and ARMY aviation bases. This soil contamination is the result of **diluted AFFF** being used/sprayed in a watered down and diluted state, from fire vehicles and my concerns are for Defence Force members, including myself, who have been either had skin contact or breathed in the fumes of full **strength AFFF** whilst replenishing or repairing Fire Fighting Vehicles. There appears to be more concern being shown to landholders who have had their land contaminated by AFFF (PFOS) than concern for the mental health and wellbeing of the serving members who handled the concentrated product. Why has there been a big silence in this regard?

.3M AFFF was developed for use in the Oshkosh P4 Truck Fire Aircraft (TFA) which were introduced into RAAF Service in the mid 70's. Prior to that Protein Foam (liquid blood and bone) had been used without incident in the older fire vehicle fleet.

.AFFF in its concentrated/undiluted form caused 2 pack epoxy paint to lift or strip from the LHS rear chassis rail on the P4TFA. The foam pump required a slight drip rate to occur to enable the pump drive shaft and seal to remain lubricated. A bundle of wires and hoses were located within this drip area and after 2 high pressure power steering hoses burst in this location, the RAAF developed a deflector chute/panel to divert the AFFF away.

.Whilst serving at RAAF Point Cook, a Maintenance Officer threatened to charge and discipline me for having worked on lead acid batteries without proper protective

clothing, as I had small holes in my overalls. I had not worked on any vehicle batteries and the damage to my clothing had in fact been caused by concentrated AFFF when maintaining the fire vehicles.

.Extracts from 3M AFFF Material Safety Data Sheet at Annex A, B and C

(ii) Previous reviews of military compensation arrangements and their failings.

(iii) The Repatriation Medical Authority's Statements of Principles, claims administration time limits, claims for detriment caused by defective administration, authorised medical treatment, level of compensation payments, including defence abuse, as contained in all military compensation arrangements.

(iv) To investigate the progress of reforms within DVA.

(v) The administration of claims by DVA and the legislative or other constraints on effective rehabilitation and compensation for veterans.

. I submitted claims for medical conditions along with the following with DVA May 2012:

Sinusitis and Psoriasis claiming chemical contact with 3M AFFF and Fuels as a causal link and both claims were declined. I have since researched DVA SOP 031 (PSORIASIS) more thoroughly and have discovered my claim would have been successful if I had linked my smoking whilst in the RAAF as a contributing factor.

Considering DVA had full access to my service medical records including notes on how many cigarettes I smoked each day, I would have expected they might actually try to assist a claimant if another causal link existed. It is distressing and disheartening to go through a lengthy claim process, both administratively and medically and to have that claim dismissed. If smoking has only recently been added as a cause to the SOP, surely some form of revision of claims needs to be developed to ease the pain and stress on Service Veterans.

.I suffered from dermatitis (redness and cracking of the skin) throughout my Service Career and it was considered to be just part of the job, use barrier cream more often and get on with your tasks. My psoriasis was first diagnosed early 2001 and has been the cause of severe embarrassment – not too many people want to shake your hand or have contact if blood is dripping from your finger tips, back of hands, elbows

or knees and skin can crack and bleed with the slightest pressure/tension
e.g. trying to loosen a jar lid.

and
(vi) any other related matters.

I have struggled to complete this submission due to my illness and disability, and hope this submission will not harm any future claims that may occur. Please feel free to contact me for further evidence and information on my individual case.

Annex A

3M AUSTRALIA PTY LIMITED
2-74 Dunheved Circuit ST MARYS NSW 1790
Phone: 136 136
Fax: (02) 9677-5170 (Toxicology Department)
EMERGENCY PHONE: (02) 9677-5333 (available 24 hours)

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MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEET

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This MSDS has been prepared by 3M Australia Pty Limited
Toxicology Department

1 IDENTIFICATION

NOTE: Hazardous according to criteria of NOHSC Australia.

PRODUCT NAME

3M FC-3034 LIGHT WATER(TM) AFFF FIRE FIGHTING FOAM 6% CONCENTRATE

3M Product ID

AJ-9000-3034-4 0140178 0158410 0391904
9054362

DIVISION

SPECIALTY CHEMICALS DIVISION

INTENDED USE OF PRODUCT

Fire fighting

UN NUMBER NONE ALLOCATED

PROPER SHIPPING NAME NONE ALLOCATED

DANGEROUS GOODS CLASS NONE ALLOCATED

SUBSIDIARY RISK NONE ALLOCATED

PACKING GROUP NONE ALLOCATED

POISONS SCHEDULE NONE ALLOCATED

2 PHYSICAL/CHEMICAL PROPERTIES

Appearance and Odour Clear, amber coloured liquid

Annex B

3M FC-3034 LIGHT WATER(TM) AFFF FIRE FIGHTING FOAM 6%
CONCENTRATE

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Effects from Eye Contact

Irritating to the eyes. Signs/symptoms can include redness, swelling, pain, tearing and hazy vision.

Effects from Skin Contact

May cause mild skin irritation (more likely after prolonged or repeated contact). Signs/symptoms can include redness, swelling and itching.

Effects from Inhalation

Single overexposure, above recommended guidelines, may cause:
Central Nervous System Depression: signs/symptoms can include headache, dizziness, drowsiness, lack of coordination, slowed reaction time, slurred speech, giddiness and unconsciousness.
Irritation to upper respiratory tract: Signs/symptoms can include sore nose and throat, coughing and sneezing.

Effects from Ingestion

Animal studies conducted on organic fluorochemicals which are present in this product indicate effects including liver disturbances, weight loss, loss of appetite, lethargy, and neurological, pancreatic, adrenal and hematologic effects. There are no known human health effects from anticipated exposure to these organic fluorochemicals when used as intended and instructed. Ingestion may cause: Aspiration Pneumonitis: signs/symptoms can include coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, coughing up blood and pneumonia, which can be fatal.

Other Toxicological Information

This product contains one or more organic fluorochemicals that have the potential to be absorbed and remain in the body for long periods of time, either as the parent molecule or as metabolites, and may accumulate with repeated exposures. There are no known human health effects from anticipated exposure to these organic fluorochemicals when used as intended and instructed. The presence of organic fluorochemicals in the blood of the general population and subpopulations, such as workers, has been published dating back to the 1970's. 3M's epidemiological study of its own workers indicates no adverse effects.

5 FIRST AID

EYE CONTACT

In case of contact with eyes, rinse immediately with plenty of water. Get immediate medical attention.

Annex C

3M FC 3034 ITOM WASH YOU WITH THE FIGHTING FOAM 66 CONCENTRATE

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SKIN CONTACT

Flush skin with large amounts of water. If irritation persists, contact a doctor.

INHALATION

If signs/symptoms occur, remove person to fresh air. If signs/symptoms continue, seek medical attention.

SWALLOWED

If swallowed, call a doctor or Poisons Information Centre immediately. Only induce vomiting at the instruction of a doctor. Never give anything by mouth to an unconscious person.

6. FIRE FIGHTING RESPONSE

SUITABLE EXTINGUISHING MEDIA

Product is a fire-retardanting agent.

FIRE FIGHTING PRECAUTIONS

Not applicable.

UNUSUAL FIRE AND EXPLOSION HAZARDS

None known.

EXPLOSION AVOIDANCE

Non flammable.

7. ACCIDENTAL RELEASE RESPONSES (SPILL)

Personal Precautions

Observe precautions from other sections of this Material Safety Data Sheet.

Spill Response

Ventilate area. Contain spill. Remove spill. Collect spilled material. Clean up material with water. Place residue in a closed container. For information on the full range of Sochem materials, call 3M Global on Freecall 1888 824 464.

Methods for Disposal

Slowly discharge spent solutions and small quantities (less than 20L) to a wastewater treatment system. Reduce discharge rate if foaming occurs. Large quantities may adversely affect biological.

