VIETNAM VETERANS
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

SUBMISSION TO THE REVIEW COMMITTEE OF THE
VETERANS’ ENTITLEMENT ACT

Part 5
VETERANS’ CHILDRENS’ EDUCATION SCHEME
(VCES)

18 April 2002

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Introduction

Eligibility

The present scheme restricts eligibility to children of veterans, or members of the defence forces:

(a) who is receiving (or was receiving prior to their death) a disability pension at:
   - The Special rate (T&PI) or
   - The Extreme Disability Adjustment rate, or
   - At a rate which is increased because of certain amputations or blindness, or
(b) whose death was war caused, or
(c) who was a former Australian prisoner of war and is now deceased.

Also eligible is a student whose veteran parent had operational service, are deceased (not war caused) and whose other parent has also died or is not supporting them.

A student who is the child of a Vietnam veteran (or who is or has been dependant on a Vietnam veteran) but who does not qualify under any of the above criteria may be eligible in certain circumstances.

The anomaly

An anomaly exists in that there are young Australians who are disadvantaged because of their parent’s military service. These children, with assistance in their education can reach a level of academic achievement that they may not otherwise achieve due to their parent’s war-caused disabilities.
Discussion

Current criteria discriminate

The current criteria do not allow for assistance to children of veterans where the veteran’s disabilities do not allow them the resources to educate their children to the level of their competence although the level of accepted disability may be as high as 100%.

Means test

The VVAA recognises that the benefits of child education through the VCES should be targeted at those in need, and therefore acknowledges that the extension of the delivery of this program should be means-tested.
5. The VVAA recommends that the VCES be expanded to include the children of veterans whose disabilities are assessed at not less that 70% and who are in receipt of Service Pension or part Disability pension from CENTRELINK.