



WAR DISABLEMENT CLAIMS SURVEY

2008



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Issued by:

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1. Introduction

The Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) is an executive Agency of the Ministry of Defence (MOD). SPVA formed on 1 April 07, bringing together the former Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency and Veterans Agency to provide services to both serving personnel and veterans. Combining the resources and expertise of these two Agencies paves the way for a more integrated and efficient service to both serving personnel and veterans, providing a through-life service.

The mission of SPVA is '**To deliver reliable, trusted and efficient personnel services to the serving and veteran communities**'. For the first time, personnel will be supported throughout their relationship with the MOD by a single organisation, SPVA.

The mission is underpinned by the following key principles:

- Customer Focus - understanding and responding to their needs.
- Efficiency - cohesion, coherence and optimal use of resources.
- Business Excellence - continually seeking improvement.
- Employer of choice - well trained, valued and fully engaged staff.

2. Objective

The objective of this survey is to assist SPVA in establishing the current and future needs of a distinct customer group and focuses on those claiming a War Disablement Pension and aims to identify:

- The level of satisfaction with the services SPVA provide
- The cause(s) of any dissatisfaction
- Customer choices
- Customer preferences
- Customer priorities
- Customer ideas for improvement

3. Approach

By conducting regular surveys we are able to draw comparisons on services and identify trends. This report details results from this year's survey and provides comparisons with the results from the previous survey conducted in 2007 and the earliest comparable survey from 2002.

Questionnaires were issued in April 2008 to 2000 randomly selected customers who received an outcome to their claim between August 2007 and January 2008. Customers were targeted based on the outcome of their claim for both awarded (50%) and rejected (50%) decisions.

Customer groups contacted included first claims, deterioration and further conditions, with outcome types of favourable, increased, maintained, reduced and rejected.

4. Management Summary

Response Rates

Overall 1039 (52%)

Comprising of:

Awarded 582 (56%)

Rejected 457 (44%)

The Claims Process

- 81% found it very easy or easy to obtain information regarding the claims process.
- 67% of respondents found completion of the claim form either very easy or easy. Additionally 14% were assisted by the Veterans Welfare Service.

Service Quality

- 93% found the standard of communication with SPVA very satisfactory or satisfactory.
- 88% of respondents said their queries were answered to their satisfaction.
- 94% said they were dealt with in a professional manner throughout the process of their claim.

The Internet

- 19% of respondents had accessed the Veterans UK website, of which 78% found the content of information excellent or good. 17% found the information to be adequate.
- 74% found the design of the website to be excellent or good. 23% found the design to be adequate.

Overall

- 91% rated the overall service provided as either very satisfactory or satisfactory.

5. Conclusions/Recommendations

The only area of concern from the results was the difficulty encountered when completing claim forms. Following further interrogation of data it is apparent that this is mainly attributable to individuals having difficulty remembering dates and locations.

However, individual comments did identify potential improvements to forms and as a result the following recommendation has been made.

Comments:

“Could be told of the Veterans Welfare Service by SPVA on initial claims form”.

“A more detailed advice letter or something detailing info on entitlement and who can claim. More advice on agencies that can help”.

Recommendation 1:

Highlight on selected claim forms the availability of the VWS to assist individuals completing the form.

In addition to this respondents identified several potential subject matters which could be included or expanded on the Veterans UK website. This will be followed up with the appropriate areas.

6. Next Steps

Hard copies of this report will be issued to Key Stakeholders. An electronic copy will also be placed on the Veterans UK website and SPVA infoCentre.

Recommendations for improvement will be considered and taken forward where appropriate.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Outcome of Claim

	2002	2007	2008
Awarded	62%	58%	56%
Rejected	38%	42%	44%

Age Group

	2002	2007	2008
16 - 30		3%	2%
31 - 50		25%	22%
51 - 70		31%	32%
Over 70		41%	44%

Service

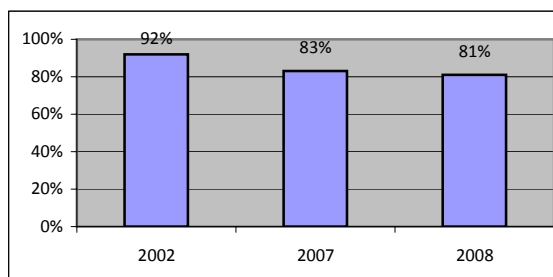
	2002	2007	2008
Army		61%	59%
Royal Navy		18%	16%
Royal Air Force		16%	19%
Royal Marines		NA	4%
Other		5%	1%
			99%

THE CLAIMS PROCESS

1. How did you find getting information about the claims process?

	Awarded	Rejected	Overall
Very Easy	30%	25%	28%
Easy	54%	52%	53%
Difficult	14%	18%	16%
Very Difficult	2%	5%	3%

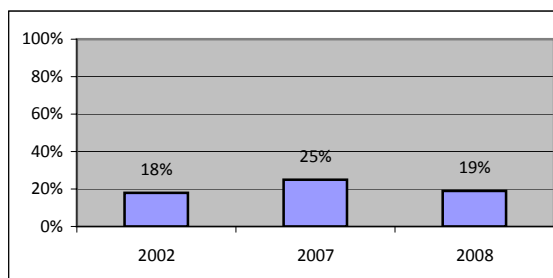
% with no difficulties obtaining information



2. How did you find completion of the claim form?

	Awarded	Rejected	Overall
Very Easy	17%	13%	15%
Easy	54%	49%	52%
Difficult	16%	19%	17%
Very Difficult	1%	4%	2%
Assisted by VWS	12%	15%	14%

% having difficulties completing claim form

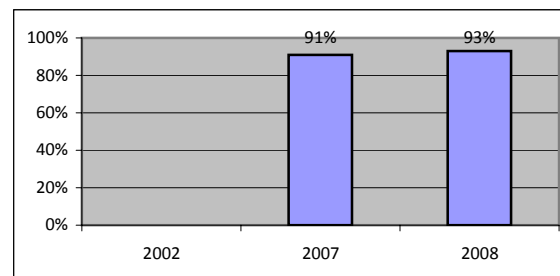


SERVICE QUALITY

3. How did you find your communication with SPVA?

	Awarded	Rejected	Overall
Very Satisfactory	59%	40%	51%
Satisfactory	39%	49%	42%
Unsatisfactory	1%	8%	5%
Very Unsatisfactory	1%	3%	2%

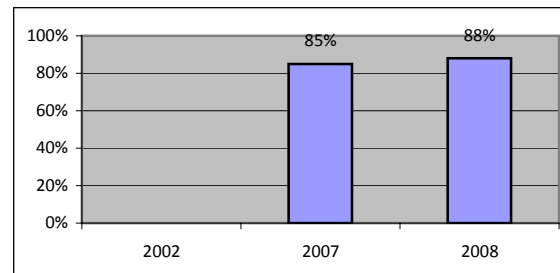
% with positive communication experiences



4. Did we answer any queries to your satisfaction?

	Awarded	Rejected	Overall
Yes	93%	81%	88%
No	7%	19%	12%

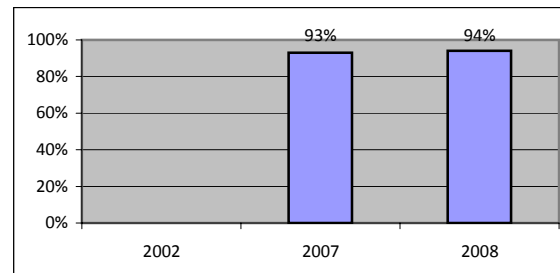
% of queries answered satisfactorily



5. Were you dealt with in a professional manner?

	Awarded	Rejected	Overall
Yes	97%	91%	94%
No	3%	9%	6%

% dealt with professionally



THE INTERNET

6. How do you rate the Veterans UK website?

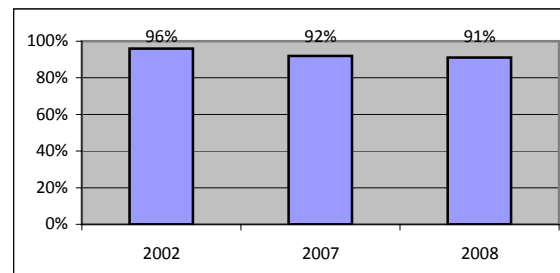
	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Inadequate
Content	19%	59%	17%	5%
Design	16%	58%	23%	3%

OVERALL

7. How do you rate the overall service received from SPVA?

	Awarded	Rejected	Overall
Very Satisfactory	59%	39%	50%
Satisfactory	36%	48%	41%
Unsatisfactory	3%	9%	6%
Very Unsatisfactory	2%	4%	3%

% of overall satisfaction rate



Annex 1

Samples of free text comments provided by customers with regards to improvements to the service provided.

The Claims Process

- Perhaps on one or two questions put an i.e. and give an example. I completely misread one question. Maybe it comes with age.
- There seemed to be a lot of repetition requested.
- A list of documentation suitable to authenticate a claim would be useful.
- Could be told of the Veterans Welfare Service by SPVA on initial claims form.
- It would be helpful to others if you could put articles in magazines like 'Yours' and 'Choice'.
- Some questions could be written clearer so that we can understand what is being asked in plain English and without too much repetition of the same question.

Service Quality

- A more detailed advice letter or something detailing info on entitlement and who can claim. More advice on agencies that can help.
- I find it difficult to understand why no one will discuss my claim with my daughter - even in my presence.
- I think when you are making a final decision you should ask people if they have any further medical info. This might prevent tribunals.
- If there is a long delay staff should contact you to let me know the position.

The Internet

- A secure area should be set up so you can view the progress of your case rather than phone up.
- The website doesn't tell you specifically about medical claims.
- I would like to see part of the website dedicated to housing for forces veterans in all areas of the UK.
- Make available volunteer telephone no's and any vacancies.

Overall

- Why cannot individuals access details of a claim online? Each vet could be issued their own password and logon details, banks can do it, why not Vets agency. It would save money and release phone operators to do other jobs.
- It would help if the forms could be printed in larger font.
- I feel that there needs to be a review of the rather complex questions requested in forms similar to WPA0002 Apr03 and WPA0012 Aug04. In fact a basic form with common info there on that does not need duplication i.e. Master form for basic info.
- I find it difficult to communicate with the agency on the phone as I am profoundly deaf and no one at the agency will speak to my daughter on my behalf.
- When asked for data under the Freedom of Information act it should be sent in an appropriate secure package.