



# WAR DISABLEMENT CLAIMS SURVEY

2007



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## Issued by:

### Service Personnel and Veterans Agency

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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 surveys conducted in 2002 and 2005.

Questionnaires were issued in April 2007 to 1995 randomly selected customers who received an outcome to their claim between August 2006 and January 2007. Customers were targeted based on the outcome of their claim for both favourable (50%) and non-favourable (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	973	(49%)
Favourable	561	(58%)
Non-favourable	412	(42%)

### Access and Contact

- 83% found it easy or very easy to obtain information regarding the claims process.
- 75% of respondents found completion of the claim form either very easy or easy. This is a decrease of 8% from 2005.
- 57% of respondents were aware SPVA had a Welfare Service to assist them when completing forms.
- 91% found the standard of communication with SPVA very satisfactory or satisfactory.

### The Internet

- 16% of respondents had accessed the Veterans UK website, of which 61% found the content of information excellent or good. 35% found the information to be adequate.
- 70% found the design of the website to be excellent or good. 26% found the design to be adequate.

### Service Quality

- 85% of respondents said their queries were answered to their satisfaction.
- 93% said they were dealt with in a professional manner throughout the process of their claim.
- 94% of respondents would recommend to others the service provided by SPVA.
- 39% of respondents considered regularly informing the customer of the progress of their case as the most important of SPVA's Targets and Service Standards.
- 92% rated the overall service provided as either very satisfactory or satisfactory. This is a decrease of 1% from 2005, although very satisfactory in particular has increased from 38% in 2005 to 55% in 2007.

## 5. Recommendations

1. Look into the feasibility of completing and submitting claim forms online.

### Key Comments:

*“More interaction when completing forms with an option to return online”.*

*“Should be able to complete claim forms online”.*

2. Highlight the availability of the Welfare Service to assist claimants when completing forms.

### Evidence:

**Q4.** *Are you aware SPVA has a Welfare Service to assist you in completing claim forms?*

**Response:** 43% unaware

## 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.

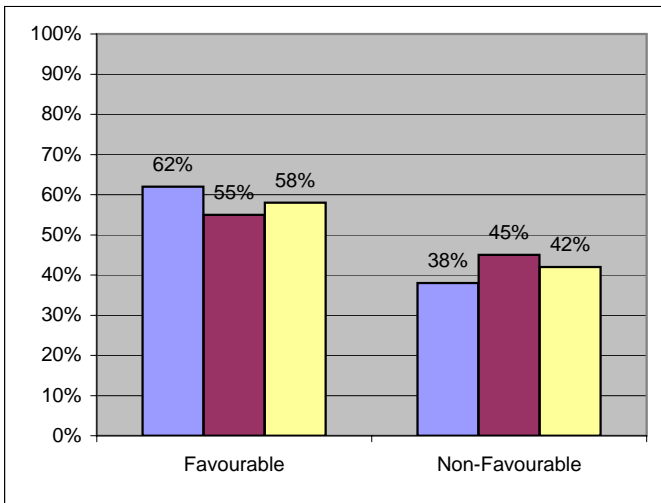
Recommendations for improvement will be considered and taken forward where appropriate.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

## Outcome of Claim

Total Respondents

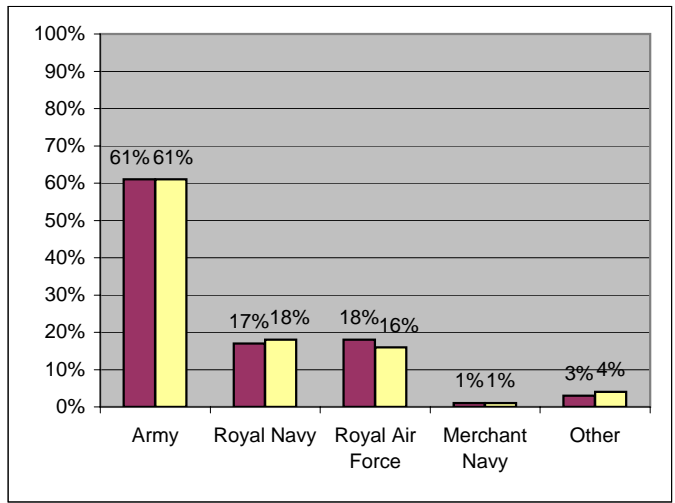
2002	2005	2007
1026	1040	974



## Which of the following did you serve in?

Total Respondents

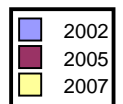
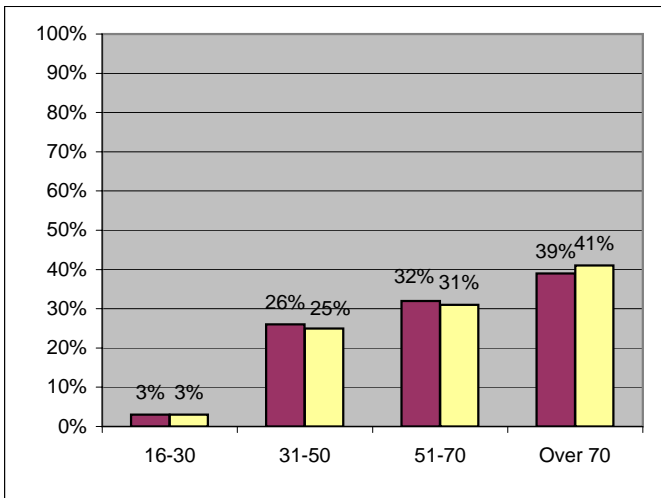
2002	2005	2007
NA	1040	969



## Age Group

Total Respondents

2002	2005	2007
NA	1036	962

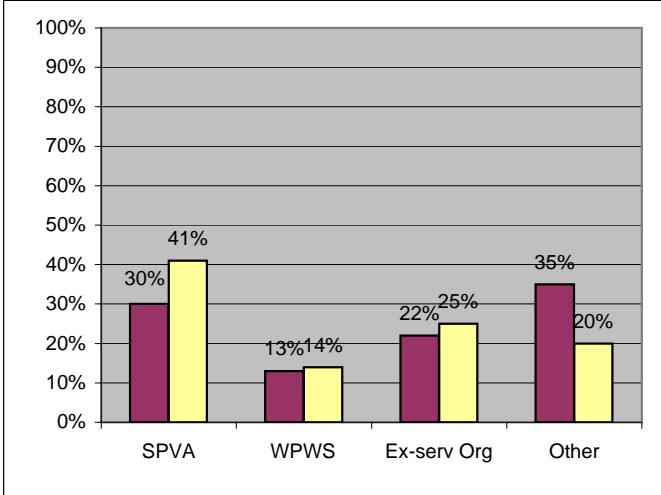


## ACCESS AND CONTACT

**1. When applying for a War Pension where did you get the information from?**

**Total Respondents**

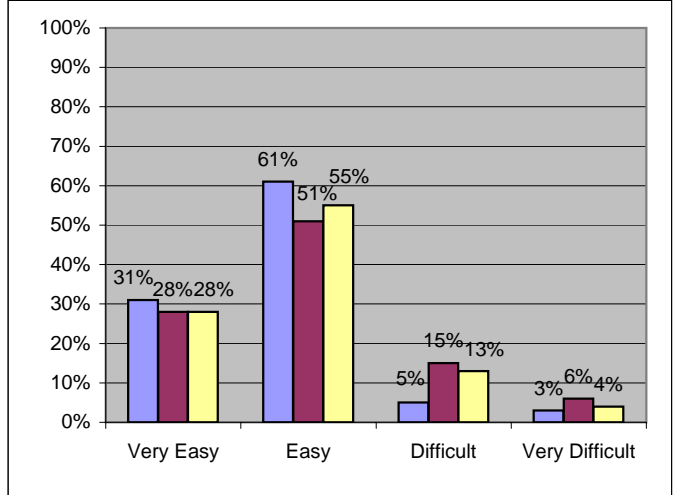
2002	2005	2007
NA	1014	961



**2. How did you find obtaining information regarding the claims process?**

**Total Respondents**

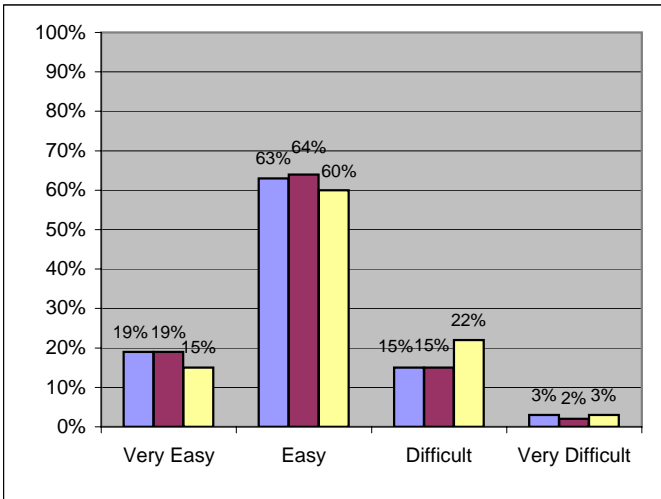
2002	2005	2007
976	947	953



**3. How did you find completing the claim form?**

**Total Respondents**

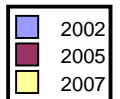
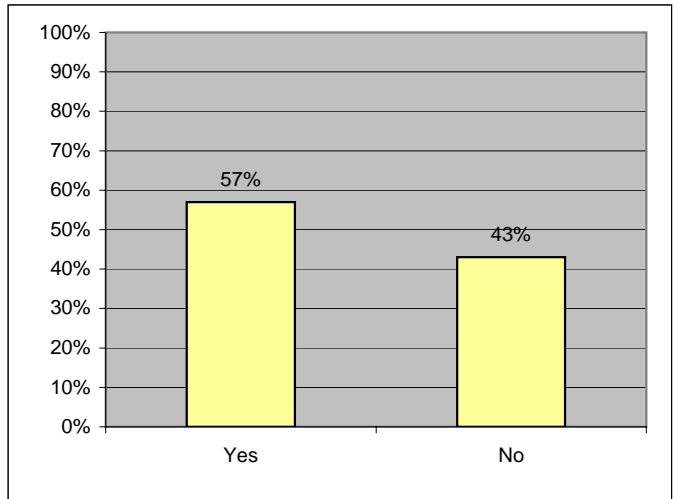
2002	2005	2007
996	1005	936



**4. Are you aware SPVA has a Welfare Service to assist you in completing claim forms?**

**Total Respondents**

2002	2005	2007
NA	NA	954

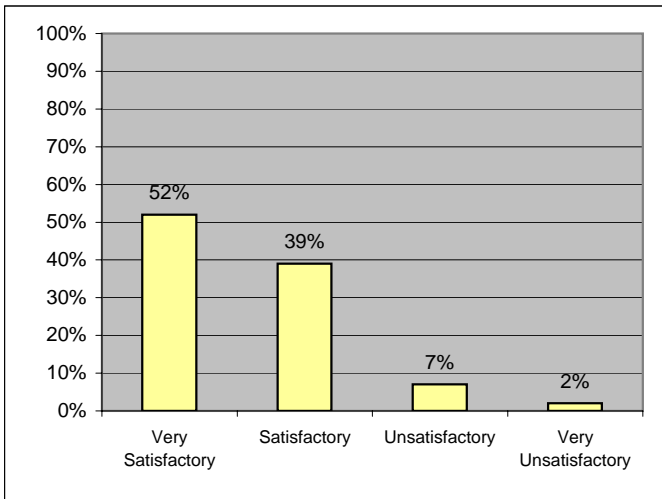


## ACCESS AND CONTACT

### 5. How did you find your communication with SPVA?

**Total Respondents**

2002	2005	2007
NA	NA	946

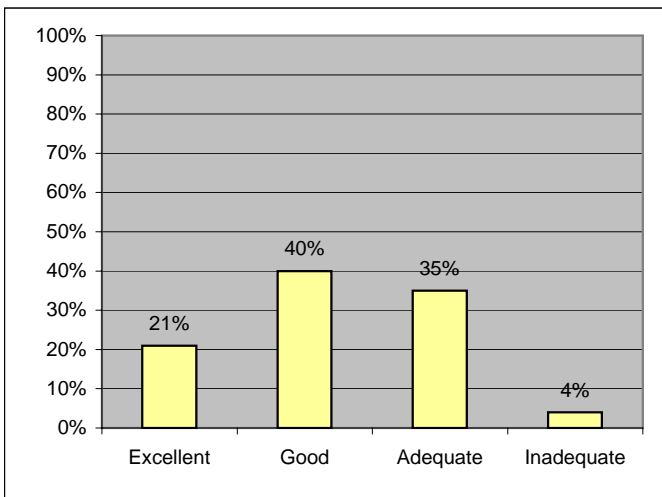


## THE INTERNET

### 6. If you use the Veterans UK website, how do you rate the content of information?

**Total Respondents**

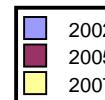
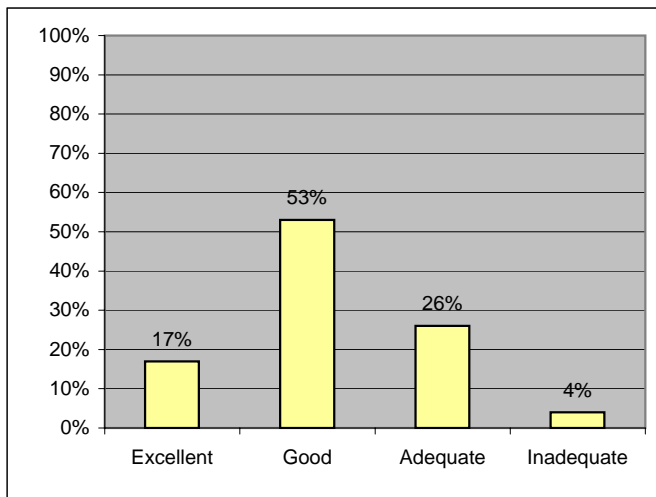
2002	2005	2007
NA	NA	156



### 7. If you use the Veterans UK website, how do you rate the design?

**Total Respondents**

2002	2005	2007
NA	NA	155

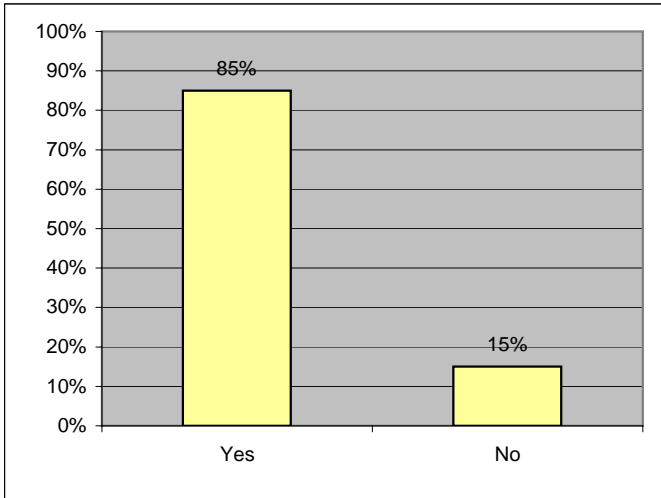


## SERVICE QUALITY

**8. If you have any queries did we answer them to your satisfaction?**

Total Respondents

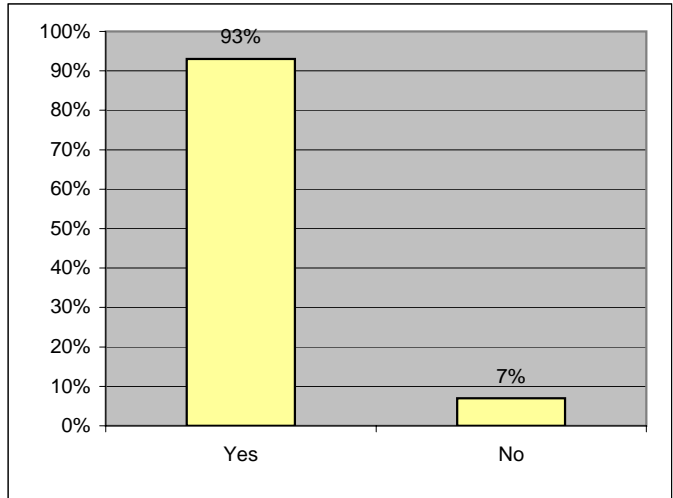
2002	2005	2007
NA	NA	786



**9. Were you dealt with in a professional manner throughout the process of your claim?**

Total Respondents

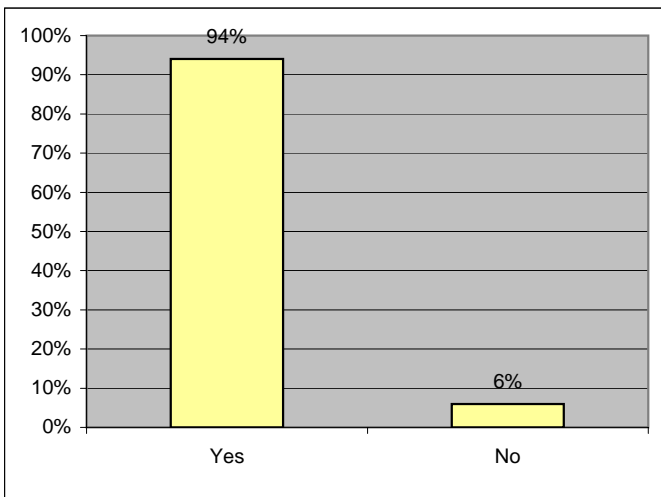
2002	2005	2007
NA	NA	941



**10. Would you recommend this service to others?**

Total Respondents

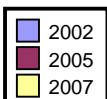
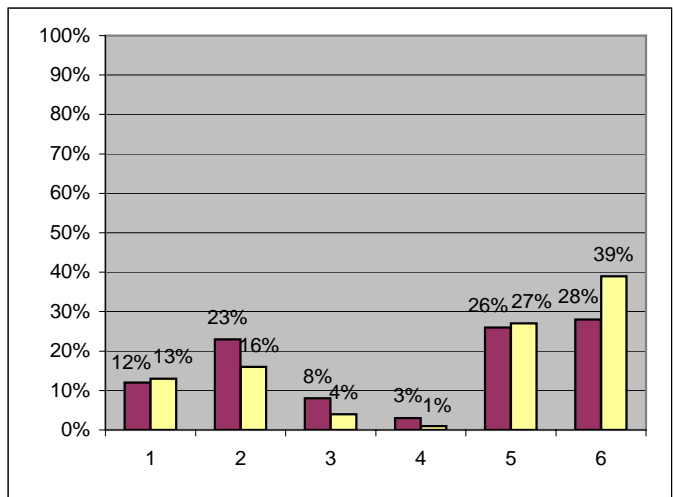
2002	2005	2007
984	1000	939



**11. SPVA has targets and service standards that it recognises as important to customers. Please choose the statement you feel is most important to you.**

Total Respondents

2002	2005	2007
NA	986	889



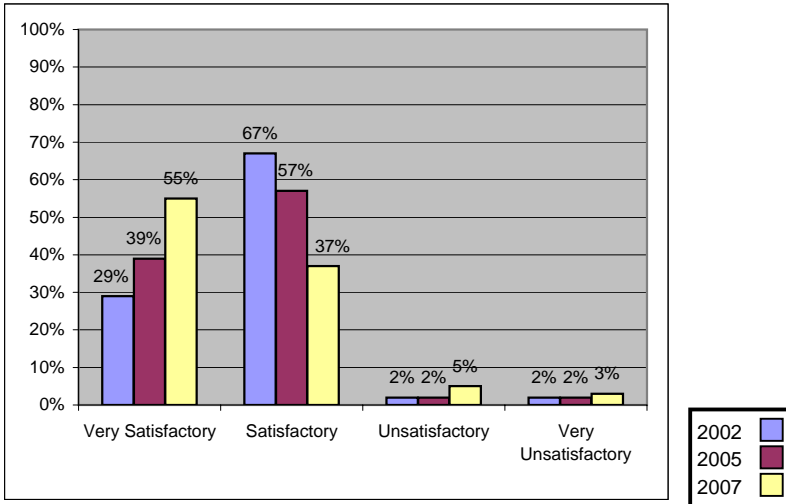
- 1 To acknowledge written enquiries and complaints within 5 working days
- 2 To respond to written enquiries and complaints within 10 working days
- 3 To answer calls to Veterans Helpline within an average of 20 seconds
- 4 To attend to visitors within 10 minutes of arrival/appointment
- 5 Friendly and helpful staff
- 6 To regularly inform customers of the progress of their case

## SERVICE QUALITY

### 12. Which of these words best describes the overall service you received from SPVA?

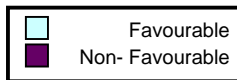
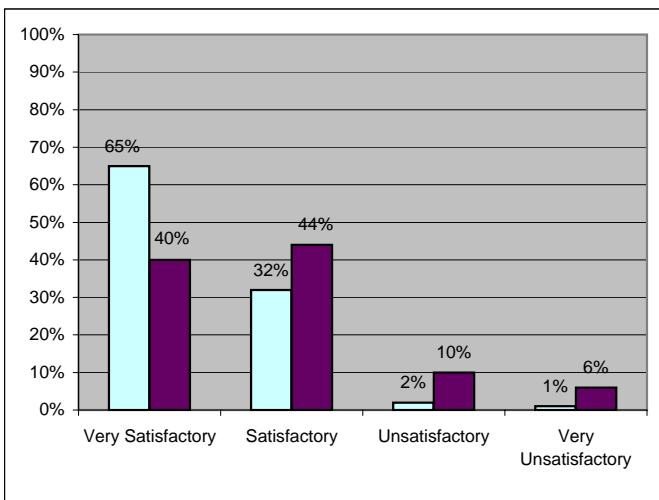
**Total Respondents**

2002	2005	2007
984	1000	945

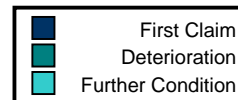
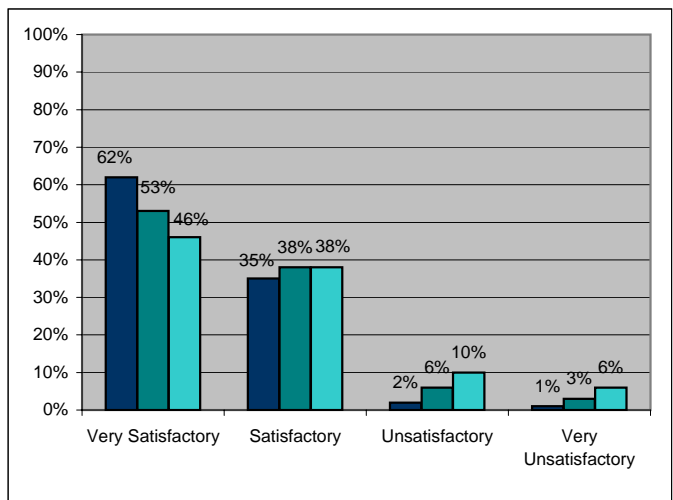


### 12. Which of these words best describes the overall service you received from SPVA?

**Breakdown by outcome of claim**



**Breakdown by claim type**



## FURTHER COMMENTS

The following is a list of additional comments completed by individuals in the free text area provided on the questionnaire. Where numerous similar comments were received they have been collated and summarised. Any further one-off comments of relevance or suggesting potential improvements to the service have also been included.

### 1. When applying for a War Pension where did you get the information from?

The hospital was the highest source (29%) for obtaining information regarding a War Pension for customers selecting the 'other' option.

### 2. How did you find obtaining information regarding the claims process?

11 people wanted more advertising and a greater awareness of what they could claim.

Educate serving soldiers, include it with pensions statement.

Allocate a named individual as a contact for each case.

Easy because of the Welfare Service, but there was no info given prior to discharge.

Let soldiers know both in service and at discharge what SPVA does.

On release all service personnel should be assessed and advised on their entitlement to a War Pension and issued with full medical records.

Once I contacted the Agency everything fell easily into place.

Over the years I have seen the service improve tremendously.

SPVA sent me a leaflet. I then contacted WPWS who completed the form for me. They were extremely helpful. If you stick with the WPWS there is no room for improvement.

### 3. How did you find completing the claim form?

38 people stated they were helped by WPWS when completing forms.

Many people had difficulty obtaining medical records and difficulties remembering dates.

I didn't realise the process was so easy.

WPWS visited me at home and helped me complete the form. I think this is the best system by a Government Department.

### 5. How did you find your communication with SPVA?

Of the individuals who wrote further comments, 30% stated the service was excellent/good.

Always friendly and willing to give advice.

Had to chase the claim all the way through as paperwork got lost.

Had to speak to numerous people about the same thing.

It would be advantageous to know the person at SPVA who is ultimately dealing with your claim.

Some personnel are very abrupt and not very informative.

They made me feel human and not just a service number.

Very quick, very efficient and very polite.

## FURTHER COMMENTS

### 7. How do you rate the design of the website?

More interaction when completing forms with an option to return online.

Search facility very picky when using caps or lower case.

Links to other welfare agencies.

Should be able to complete claim forms online.

Response to emails is good.

### 8. If you have any queries did we answer them to your satisfaction?

Allow me to speak to the nominated person in the letter and not being blocked by someone else.

I did not understand the reason for rejection of my claim, but do not want to appeal.

Make sure any letter in handwriting is legible.

Not made aware of other benefits available to me until I asked about them. I.e. lower standard of motobility etc.

Progress on my case was not always given with any detail. Had I been given more detail it could have helped.

The SPVA are polite, understanding, supportive and caring and listen to any problems I have had with my health.

### 9. Were you dealt with in a professional manner throughout the process of your claim?

I don't remember the process but I do remember the people. They accepted me as I was. They didn't judge me and that felt good and it was the first time I felt someone was on my side.

In all of my meetings with SPVA staff I was treated with respect and dignity.

It has given me quality of life and has taken the burden and worry away enabling me to support my family.

On one occasion I had to visit Norcross and they were so polite and helpful.

Once a claim is in it appears to be an uphill struggle to be awarded a pension.

Possibly the best service I have had from anyone at tribunal and on telephone.

### 10. Would you recommend this service to others?

I recommend you all the time and many are unaware of your service.

I think far too few people are aware of this service. I left the Navy in 1985 but have only just recently heard of you.

Only on the basis that people do miss out on entitlement.

Only on the recommendation that the service is more sympathetic to claimants needs.

Needs to be emphasised more at re-settlement.

## FURTHER COMMENTS

### 12. Which of these words best describes the overall service you received from SPVA?

There were over 150 comments stating the service received was excellent or good.

An SPVA representative came to see me and suggested I complete the forms even though I thought I did not qualify. She guided me through all aspects of the claim in a very professional way. I am very satisfied even though it came to nothing.

Although claims take some considerable time the service was always courteous, prompt and informative.

Why did I have 4 responses to different aspects of my claim. Maybe one person dealing with the problem would be more efficient and appreciative of my situation.

Delays and no satisfactory explanations given.

Didn't realise the SPVA had a website until receipt of this survey.

I was very happy with the service provided, but had I not been informed of the service by hospital staff I would not have known about SPVA.

I wish all Government Departments were run with the same efficiency. The level of service is top class and should be rewarded accordingly. Although my latest claim was unsuccessful the way it was explained somehow cushioned the blow. Thank you for all your help.

The personnel seemed at pains to make sure I was given the best advice and service possible. I cannot praise them too highly.

The service standards are only of value if the Agency can get the most important aspect of service quality correct, the quality of the product. No use being friendly but incompetent or replying within 5 days with rubbish.

The Welfare Officer who visited me was extremely helpful and is a credit to the organisation.

This service should be communicated to everyone on discharge.