

[11/03/02 Pilot Health Survey of Korean Veterans](#)

The Federal Government will commission a pilot health survey of surviving Australian veterans of the Korean War, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence, Danna Vale, announced today. The pilot will be undertaken by a team of medical researchers from Monash University. Minister Vale said the pilot program would involve about 150 veterans and a similar number of people from the general community who were of adult age during the Korean war period, to evaluate possible methodologies for a health study of Australia's Korean War veteran population. "The Government has recognised concerns among Korean War veterans about the effects on their health and well-being arising from the conditions they had to endure while serving in Korea," she said.

"These conditions included both extreme heat in summer and cold in winter, as well as exposure to chemicals such as DDT. The size of Australia's Korean War veteran population poses major challenges in conducting an accurate study of the health of surviving veterans. This pilot will help us assess the most effective way to study this group. " Minister Vale said the health survey would be the third in a series of studies into health and mortality rates among Korean War veterans. "The Department of Veterans' Affairs is already conducting studies into the causes of death and the rates of various cancers affecting Korean War veterans," she said. "The health survey will fill the gap in the study of the Korean War veterans cohort."

"The results from all three studies will be used by the Government to confirm that the repatriation benefits available to Korean War veterans meet their health care needs." The mortality and cancer incidence studies have involved data-matching against DVA's nominal roll of Korean War veterans. For the health survey pilot, a sample group of veterans and people in the community of similar age will be invited to complete a written questionnaire about their physical and mental health. "The success of the pilot and any subsequent study will depend on the support of the veterans and I encourage anyone contacted by the study team to assist us in gathering this important information," the Minister said.

Minister Vale said the Korean War Veterans Consultative Committee and the Scientific Advisory Committee, which have overseen the first two studies, met today with the research team to plan the health survey pilot and would be involved throughout the study process.

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