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CHAPTER 9

SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE

This chapter describes social welfare services provided by the Commonwealth Government (through the Departments of Social Security, Aboriginal Affairs and Veterans' Affairs), the State Governments and voluntary welfare organisations. Details of services administered by the Commonwealth Department of Health are given in the Health chapter. For information on the many important welfare services provided by the State and local governments, especially in the fields of child and Aboriginal welfare, reference should be made to the State Year Books and annual statistical bulletins, and the annual reports of the State departments concerned. Details of pension and superannuation schemes for government and semi-government employees, mine workers, parliamentarians, and employees of private business are included in the Private Finance chapter.

AUTHORITIES OF THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT, SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE CASH BENEFITS TO PERSONS (\$'000)

	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
Assistance to aged persons—					
Age pensions	680,322	887,750	1,146,387	1,612,451	2,129,366
Delivered meals	226	398	958	968	1,288
Personal care	1,830	3,273	4,949	7,651	9,493
Telephone concessions	3,806	4,172	5,394	7,053	10,577
Total	686,184	895,593	1,157,688	1,628,123	2,150,724
Assistance to incapacitated and handicapped persons—					
Invalid pensions	138,194	184,699	226,022	306,477	407,056
Sheltered employment allowances	742	1,161	1,418	3,075	9,778
Handicapped children's benefits	438	429	582	2,469	9,678
Rehabilitation services	3,945	4,658	6,203	9,329	11,564
Total	143,319	190,947	234,225	321,350	438,076
Assistance to unemployed and sick persons—					
Unemployment benefits	25,997	46,553	58,246	251,740	506,000
Sickness benefits	15,906	26,610	41,407	62,833	90,961
Special benefits	2,851	4,368	6,983	10,992	17,154
Structural adjustment assistance . . . . .	..	..	..	51,040	8,489
Other . . . . .	..	80	44	20	24
Total	44,754	77,611	106,681	376,625	622,628
Assistance to ex-servicemen(a)—					
Disability and dependants pensions and allowances	260,150	297,087	355,561	469,537	559,556
Other benefits	4,058	3,720	4,025	4,227	4,095
Total	264,208	300,807	359,586	473,764	563,651
Assistance to widowed and deserted spouses—					
Widows' pensions	104,627	140,505	180,957	241,389	325,260
Assistance to families and children—					
Family allowances	216,581	253,860	225,360	224,848	265,462
Maternity allowances	8,617	7,970	7,782	7,506	7,211
Supporting mothers' benefits . . . . .	..	..	40,586	76,092	127,230
Orphans' pensions . . . . .	..	..	458	1,381	1,775
Total	225,198	261,830	274,186	309,827	401,678
Other social security and welfare programs—					
Funeral benefits	1,583	1,579	1,578	1,641	1,526
Telephone rental concessions n.e.c.	802	863	1,024	1,299	1,762
Emergency assistance to wool-growers(b)	187	..	..	..	..
Compassionate allowances	98	104	104	95	94
Assistance to homeless persons . . . . .	..	..	..	275	677
Other	132	134	378	505	511
Total	2,802	2,680	3,084	3,815	4,570
Total social security and welfare	1,471,092	1,869,973	2,316,407	3,354,893	4,506,587

(a) For details see section on Veterans' Affairs in this Chapter.
Book No. 61.

(b) For details see Chapter 22, Rural Industry, Year

GOVERNMENT OUTLAY ON SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE

	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
	(\$Million)				
Final consumption expenditure	113	135	170	257	333
Expenditure on new fixed assets	10	9	21	21	28
<i>Final expenditure</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>144</i>	<i>191</i>	<i>278</i>	<i>361</i>
Cash benefits to persons—					
Commonwealth	1,471	1,870	2,316	3,355	4,507
State and local	32	46	43	54	71
Other transfers to private sector for social security and welfare (a)	21	31	34	72	115
Other outlay	2	1	3	1	6
Total outlay	1,648	2,092	2,586	3,761	5,060
	(Per cent)				
As per cent of government outlay, all purposes	13.7	15.6	16.0	16.5	18.4
	(\$)				
Final expenditure per head	9.3	10.8	14.2	20.3	26.1
	(\$)				
Commonwealth, State and local cash benefits per head	115.0	144.3	174.9	248.9	330.6
	(Per cent)				
Final expenditure as per cent of gross domestic product	0.33	0.34	0.38	0.46	0.51

(a) Mainly grants for private capital purposes.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Commonwealth Government expenditure on social security services

This section deals with various government payments for the relief of the aged, indigent, infirm, widowed, orphaned and unemployed; assistance to families; etc. For summary statements of cash payments to persons made by public authorities under various functional heads, see *Public Authority Finance* and other annual bulletins listed at the end of this chapter.

Under the provisions of Section 51 of the Constitution, the Commonwealth Government is empowered to legislate on:

'(xxiii) Invalid and old age pensions:

'(xxiiiA) The provision of maternity allowances, widows' pensions, child endowment, unemployment, pharmaceutical, sickness and hospital benefits, medical and dental services (but not so as to authorize any form of civil conscription), benefits to students and family allowances;'.
'

On 1 July 1947, with the passage of the *Social Services Consolidation Act 1947*, all Acts providing social service benefits were amalgamated. The Act is at present styled the *Social Services Act 1947*.

The social security benefits provided by the Commonwealth Government under the *Social Services Act 1947*, and the date on which each came into operation, are shown on page 421 of Year Book No. 61. In addition, a Supporting Parent's Benefit, replacing the Supporting Mother's Benefit, was introduced in November 1977.

Age and invalid pensions and associated payments

Age pensions are payable to residentially qualified men and women who have reached the ages of 65 and 60 respectively. They are subject to an income test unless the person is permanently blind or has reached the age of 70. They are also subject to tax.

To be residentially qualified for age pension a person must generally be living in Australia on the date of application for the pension and have lived in Australia for ten years continuously at some time. If a person has completed five years but not ten years continuous residence at some time, and has lived in Australia for periods which exceed a total of ten years, the period of continuous residence otherwise required is reduced by the total of his periods of residence in Australia in excess of ten years. Any periods of absence during which a person's home remains in Australia and absences in certain other circumstances may be counted as residence, and any absence in an external Territory other than Norfolk Island counts as residence in Australia. Residence in New Zealand or the United Kingdom may be treated as residence in Australia.

Invalid pensions are payable to persons sixteen years of age and over who are permanently incapacitated for work to the extent of at least eighty-five per cent, or permanently blind. In the former case, they are subject to an income test.

There is no residence qualification for invalid pension if the incapacity or permanent blindness occurred within Australia (including an external Territory other than Norfolk Island) or during temporary absence from Australia. As a result, some people not residentially qualified for age pension but who have reached age pension age receive an invalid pension. Invalid pension is subject to tax in these cases but not in others.

A wife's pension is payable to the wife of a pensioner not entitled, in her own right, to an age, invalid or repatriation service pension. There is no residence qualification, but an income test applies. A wife's pension is taxable only if her husband has reached the age of 65.

Rates of pension. The maximum standard rate was increased to \$2,449 per annum (\$47.10 a week) from May 1977. This is payable to a single, widowed or divorced pensioner, or a married pensioner whose spouse is not receiving a pension or a tuberculosis allowance. The standard rate may also be paid to each of a married pensioner couple who are living apart for an indefinite period due to illness or infirmity of either or both. The maximum rate for a married pensioner couple (known as the married rate) was increased to \$4,082 per annum (\$78.50 a week) from May 1977 (i.e. \$2,041 per annum or \$39.25 a week each). For a married person whose spouse receives a tuberculosis allowance or a service pension, the maximum rate is also \$2,041 per annum (\$39.25 a week).

Additional pension for each dependent child under 16 years is payable, subject to the income test, at the rate of up to \$390 per annum (\$7.50 a week). Widowed or other unmarried age or invalid pensioners with a dependent child may receive a guardian's allowance of up to \$4 a week, or up to \$6 a week if the child is under 6 years of age or is an invalid child requiring full-time care. A guardian's allowance is also subject to the income test. Eligibility for the additional pension for children is extended to include a child over sixteen years provided he is wholly or substantially dependent on the pensioner and is receiving full-time education at a school, college or university. Supplementary assistance of up to \$5 a week (standard rate pensioners) and \$2.50 a week (married rate pensioners) subject to a special income test, is available to pensioners if they pay rent or pay for board and lodging or for lodging.

On the death of one member of a married pensioner couple, the surviving pensioner spouse becomes entitled to receive, for up to six fortnightly instalments, the equivalent of the two pensions that would have been paid if the spouse had not died. For the purpose of this provision the term 'pensioner' includes a person in receipt of age, invalid, wife's or repatriation service pension, or a sheltered employment allowance.

A table showing the maximum rates of pension operating since 1 July 1909 at dates prior to 14 October 1965 is included on page 608 of Year Book No. 51. Details of the respective rates and allowances payable in recent years are shown in the Annual Reports of the Department of Social Security.

The income test is the same for age and invalid pension purposes. As already noted, it does not apply to the permanently blind or, in the case of age pensions, to people who have reached 70 years of age. In other cases, the income test operates to reduce pension payable if a claimant's *income as assessed*—in effect, the claimant's annual income including income from property—exceeds prescribed limits. In the case of a person entitled to the standard rate of pension, the limit is \$1,040; in other cases, it is \$897. If income as assessed exceeds these figures, half the excess is subtracted from the appropriate maximum rate of pension. If income as assessed does not exceed these figures, the appropriate maximum rate is payable.

The effect of the income test is to preclude from entitlement to any pension a person subject to the income test and whose income exceeds \$114.20 a week. The corresponding figure for a married couple without children is \$95.75 a week (each partner).

Supplementary assistance is subject to a special income test, the effect of which is to reduce the maximum annual rate by the excess of a person's income as assessed over \$52 (standard rate pensioner) or half the excess of income as assessed over \$52 (married rate pensioners).

Certain types of income are exempted. The main exemptions are: gifts or allowances from children, parents, brothers, or sisters; benefits from friendly societies; child or student endowment; Commonwealth Government health benefits and amounts received from registered hospital or medical benefit organisations. The amount of a pensioner's income included in income as assessed may also be reduced by up to \$312 per annum (\$6 per week) for each dependent child under sixteen years or full-time student in the pensioners' care.

For the purposes of the income test, the income as assessed of a married person is normally taken to be half of the combined income as assessed of the married couple. Exceptions may be made where the spouses are legally separated or where other special circumstances exist.

AGE AND INVALID PENSIONERS, BY MARITAL STATUS: 30 JUNE 1977
(^{'000})

<i>Marital status</i>	<i>Age pensioners</i>			<i>Invalid pensioners</i>		
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
Single(a)	36.8	84.2	121.0	47.0	31.7	78.7
Married	271.8	295.5	567.3	71.0	19.7	90.7
Widowed	73.9	412.5	486.4	9.9	13.0	22.9
Divorced	7.9	22.7	30.6	5.3	5.4	10.7
Total	390.5	814.9	1,205.3	133.2	69.8	203.0

(a) Includes married but permanently separated.

AGE PENSIONERS, BY AGE: 30 JUNE 1977

	<i>60-64 years</i>	<i>65-69 years</i>	<i>70-74 years</i>	<i>75 years and over</i>	<i>Total</i>
			^{'000}		
Males		121.1	135.7	133.7	390.5
Females	158.6	189.4	181.5	285.5	814.9
Persons	158.6	310.5	317.2	419.1	1,205.3
			(Per cent)		
	13.2	25.8	26.3	34.8	100.0

INVALID PENSIONERS, BY AGE: 30 JUNE 1977

	<i>16-19 years</i>	<i>20-44 years</i>	<i>45-59 years</i>	<i>60-64 years</i>	<i>65 years and over</i>	<i>Total</i>
				^{'000}		
Males	3.7	28.3	49.5	37.1	14.7	133.2
Females	3.2	23.1	37.8	4.8	0.8	69.8
Persons	6.9	51.4	87.3	42.0	15.5	203.0
				(Per cent)		
	3.4	25.3	43.0	20.7	7.6	100.0

AGE AND INVALID PENSIONS: SUMMARY

	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
Age pensions—					
Number admitted during year	159,564	155,577	140,966	127,980	111,986
Number at end of year	931,812	1,027,582	1,097,225	1,158,657	1,205,347
Per cent of aged population(a)	67.8	72.9	76.1	75.4	n.a.
Total payments during year(b) \$'000	887,750	1,146,387	1,612,468	2,129,366	2,483,563
Average weekly pension at end of year(b) \$	19.70	23.99	33.09	37.68	43.04
Invalid pensions—					
Number admitted during year	33,265	29,303	32,394	37,446	40,403
Number at end of year	149,609	156,783	168,784	183,787	202,963
Total payments during year(b) \$'000	184,699	226,022	306,478	407,056	511,019
Average weekly pension at end of year(b) \$	22.67	26.73	36.28	41.68	45.81

(a) Percent of persons of pensionable age (males aged 65 years and over and females aged 60 years and over). (b) Includes allowances, supplementary assistance and wives' pensions where applicable.

Sheltered employment allowance and associated payments

Sheltered employment allowance is payable to disabled people who are employed in sheltered workshops and are otherwise qualified to receive an invalid pension or would become so qualified if they ceased to be provided with sheltered employment. The allowance is subject to the same income test as applies to invalid pension and is paid at the same rate. It is payable in the form of a supplement to the sheltered employee's wages. The allowance is not taxable unless the sheltered employee has reached age pension age.

A sheltered employee is entitled to the same additional payments as an invalid pensioner except that no supplementary assistance is payable. Instead, all people in receipt of sheltered employment allowance receive an incentive allowance of \$5 a week. There is no income test on the allowance, but a person precluded by his or her income from receiving sheltered employment allowance is not entitled to incentive allowance.

All sheltered workshops are required to pay sheltered employment allowances on behalf of the Department of Social Security. At 30 June 1977, 134 workshops were paying the allowances to 5,713 disabled employees. Expenditure during the year 1976-77 was \$13,835,000.

Widows' pensions and associated payments

There are three categories of widow pensioners:

Class 'A'. A widow who has the custody, care and control of one or more qualifying children under the age of sixteen years or full-time dependent students;

Class 'B'. A widow who, because she has no qualifying children or students in her custody, care and control, is not eligible for a Class 'A' widow's pension but is either at least 50 years of age or, after having reached the age of 45, has ceased to receive a Class 'A' pension by reason of ceasing to have the custody, care and control of a qualifying child or student; and

Class 'C'. A widow not eligible for Class 'A' or Class 'B' widow's pension, is under 50 years of age but is in necessitous circumstances following her husband's death (in normal circumstances, the Class 'C' pension is not payable after 26 weeks have elapsed from the death of the husband, but if the widow is pregnant the period is extended until the child's birth, whereupon the widow may then become eligible for a Class 'A' widow's pension).

For classes 'A' and 'B', the term 'widow' includes: a wife who has been deserted by her husband for a period of at least six months; a divorcee; and a woman whose husband has been in prison or in a mental hospital for at least six months. A woman who, although not legally married, has been living with a man for at least three years as his wife on a *bona fide* domestic basis and subsequently loses her partner by reason of death, desertion or his imprisonment or admission to a mental hospital is treated as though she had been legally married to him.

A period of residence in Australia before claiming a pension is not required if a woman and her husband were residing permanently in Australia when she became a widow. In other circumstances, five years continuous residence preceding lodgment of the claim may be required, but this is waived in the case of a woman whose husband has died overseas if she has resided continuously in Australia for ten years at any time and returns to Australia to live.

A widow's pension is not payable to a woman receiving an age or invalid pension, a sheltered employment allowance, or a war widow's pension. A deserted wife or a divorcee who has not taken reasonable action to obtain maintenance from her husband or former husband may be ineligible for a widow's pension.

Current rates of pension. With effect from May 1977, the maximum rate of pension for all classes of widow is \$2,449 per annum (\$47.10 a week) plus, in the case of widows with children, a mother's allowance of \$208 per annum (\$4 a week) or \$312 per annum (\$6 a week) where at least one child is under 6 or is an invalid requiring full-time care, plus \$390 per annum (\$7.50 a week) for each dependent child who is under 16 years or is a full-time dependent student. Supplementary assistance of up to \$260 a year (\$5 a week) is also available to widows who pay rent, or for board and lodgings or for lodgings, and who are wholly or substantially dependent on their pension. The amount of this assistance cannot exceed the amount of rent paid.

Income test. Widow's pensions are subject to an income test and are taxable. The income test for widows' pensions also applies to recipients of the supporting parent's benefit described below. The rate of pension payable depends on the claimant's income as assessed. As for age and invalid pensions, some types of income are disregarded for purposes of calculating income as assessed. For Classes 'A' and 'B' widows and supporting mothers, the annual maximum standard rate of pension plus any additional allowances is reduced by half of the amount of any income as assessed in excess of \$1,040. There is no specific income test for the Class 'C' pension, which is paid only where it is evident that a widow has insufficient means of support. Supplementary assistance is reduced by the amount by which income as assessed exceeds \$52.

It should be noted that a deserted wife ineligible for Class 'A' or Class 'B' widow's pension because six months have not expired from the date of desertion by her husband may be eligible for assistance from the Government of the State in which she lives. The Commonwealth Government subsidises the State Governments for this purpose under the *States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act*. It also assists deserted wives in the Territories during the first six months after desertion.

CLASS A AND B WIDOW PENSIONERS, BY AGE AND MARITAL STATUS: 30 JUNE 1977

Category	Under 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and over	Total	Per cent
	('00)							
Class 'A'—								
Widowed	0.4	17.1	53.5	96.1	77.2	4.3	248.7	17.9
Divorced	0.2	38.7	85.1	47.7	13.9	0.2	185.9	13.4
Deserted	1.4	92.4	131.2	69.8	20.2	0.5	315.4	22.7
Other	0.1	2.4	3.0	3.1	1.9	..	10.6	0.8
<i>Total</i>	2.1	150.8	272.8	216.6	113.3	5.1	760.6	54.7
Class 'B'—								
Widowed . . . . .	..	..	..	12.0	333.9	123.3	469.2	33.6
Divorced . . . . .	..	..	..	4.6	71.7	6.4	82.7	5.9
Deserted . . . . .	..	..	..	5.8	63.8	4.8	74.4	5.3
Other . . . . .	..	..	..	0.2	5.9	0.9	7.0	0.5
<i>Total</i> . . . . .	..	..	..	22.6	475.3	135.3	633.3	45.3
Total Class 'A' and 'B'	2.1	150.8	272.8	239.2	588.6	140.4	1,393.9	100.0
	(Per cent)							
	0.2	10.8	19.6	17.2	42.2	10.1	100.0	

For the year ended 30 June 1977, 76,462 widow pensioners received additional pension for 154,019 children.

SUPPORTING MOTHER'S BENEFIT: SUMMARY

	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
Number admitted during year	29,904	17,939	20,952	20,528
Beneficiaries current at end of year—				
Unmarried mothers	13,684	17,365	20,086	21,909
Deserting wives	6,358	10,043	13,793	14,952
Separated de facto wives	3,065	4,081	4,893	5,586
Other	3,179	4,526	6,770	8,507
<i>Total</i>	26,286	36,015	45,542	50,954
Average weekly benefit at end of year(a) \$	38.66	52.68	58.44	65.09
Amount paid in benefits during year(a) \$'000	40,586	76,092	127,230	158,483

(a) Includes supplementary assistance and allowances

Fringe benefits

The Commonwealth Government makes available to pensioners (and, in certain cases, recipients of supporting parent's benefits) several 'fringe benefits'. In most cases these are subject to a special income test. These benefits include:

- a one-third reduction in telephone rental—this is available to the blind without an income test (the cost for concessions during 1976-77 was \$11,890,000);
- a 50 per cent reduction in fares for Commonwealth Government railway and shipping services; certain postal concessions;
- a 10 per cent discount on book purchases from Australian Government Publishing Service Bookshops (this is available free of income test);
- free hearing aids;
- the availability without charge of certain pharmaceutical prescriptions;
- free optometrical consultations; and
- additional nursing home benefits.

State Governments, local government authorities and private organizations also provide certain fringe benefits. The most valuable of these are reductions in local government rates and in public transport charges.

The income test operates on the basis of income as assessed as defined for pension purposes. A standard-rate pensioner whose income as assessed is less than \$1,716 qualifies for those fringe benefits subject to the income test. A married pensioner couple qualify if their combined income as assessed is less than \$2,990.

Funeral benefits

A benefit of up to \$40 is payable to an eligible age, invalid, wife or widow pensioner who is liable for the funeral costs of another such deceased pensioner, a deceased child or a deceased spouse. A benefit of up to \$20 is payable to any (other) person liable for the funeral costs of a deceased age or invalid pensioner in respect of whose burial a funeral benefit may be granted. These benefits are subject to the 'fringe benefits' income test, applied in the first case to the person liable for the funeral costs and in both cases to the income of the deceased pensioner or beneficiary (where relevant) prior to his or her death.

FUNERAL BENEFITS GRANTED

	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
\$20 grants in respect of—					
Age or invalid pensioners	26,119	25,279	27,333	24,190	25,436
Others	7	16	18	17	13
<i>Total</i>	26,126	25,295	27,351	24,207	25,449
\$40 grants in respect of—					
Age or invalid pensioners	23,841	24,995	25,879	24,195	24,720
Others	2,836	2,277	2,233	1,898	1,447
<i>Total</i>	26,677	27,272	28,102	26,093	26,167
<i>Total grants</i>	52,803	52,567	55,453	50,300	51,616

Total cost of funeral benefits granted during 1976-77 was \$1,528,000.

Portability of social service payment

Age, invalid and widows' pensions and supporting parent's benefits continue in force for recipients who have left Australia unless they left before 8 May 1973 or their pension or benefit is subject to the provisions of either of the reciprocal agreements with New Zealand or the United Kingdom. In certain cases of hardship, the pension or benefit may continue for people who left before 8 May 1973.

Maternity allowances

A maternity allowance is payable to a woman who gives birth to a child if she resides, or intends to reside, permanently in Australia and gives birth to the child in Australia, and to a woman who gives birth to a child while travelling to Australia if she intends to reside permanently in Australia and provided she receives no benefit similar to a maternity allowance from the country from which she came. A woman who gives birth to a child during a temporary absence from Australia may also be eligible. An alien mother may receive the allowance if she or her husband resided in Australia for at least twelve months immediately prior to the birth of the child, or if she is likely to remain in Australia permanently. Payment may be made in respect of the birth of a still-born child, or a child who lives for less than twelve hours, if at least five and a half months have elapsed from the date of conception.

Rates of allowance. The allowance is \$30 if the mother has no other children under sixteen, \$32 if she has one or two other children under sixteen, and \$35 if she has three or more other children under sixteen. In the case of multiple births the allowance is increased by \$10 for each additional child born. An advance payment of \$20 may be made four weeks before the expected date of birth. The balance is payable immediately after the birth.

MATERNITY ALLOWANCES: CLAIMS PAID

	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
Claims paid during year—					
Single births—					
No other children	99,125	96,047	94,380	88,728	85,592
1 or 2 other children	120,027	118,641	119,365	116,034	114,127
3 or more other children	30,188	28,687	22,386	19,742	18,393
<i>Total</i>	<i>249,340</i>	<i>243,375</i>	<i>236,131</i>	<i>224,504</i>	<i>218,112</i>
Multiple births	2,544	2,527	2,407	2,337	2,208
<i>Total</i>	<i>251,884</i>	<i>245,902</i>	<i>238,538</i>	<i>226,841</i>	<i>220,320</i>
Amount paid during year . . . \$'000	7,970	7,782	7,506	7,211	6,923

Family allowances

An approved institution of which children are inmates or a person who is resident in Australia and has the custody, care, and control of one or more children under the age of sixteen years or of a full-time student sixteen or more but under twenty-five years, is qualified to receive a family allowance in respect of each such child or student. Full-time students are those receiving full-time education at a school, college or university and who are not in employment or engaged in work on their own account. There are provisions to meet cases of families divided because of divorce, separation, unemployment or death of a parent. There is no income test.

Twelve months residence in Australia is required if the claimant and the child were not born here, but this requirement is waived if the Department of Social Security is satisfied that they are likely to remain in Australia permanently. Where the child's father is not a British subject, family allowance is payable if the child was born in Australia, if the mother is a British subject, or if the Department is satisfied that the child is likely to remain permanently in Australia. Under certain conditions, family allowance may be paid to Australians who are temporarily absent overseas.

Rates of allowance. Since June 1976 the weekly rates have been: \$3.50 for the first or only child; \$5.00 for the second; \$6.00 for the third; \$6.00 for the fourth; and \$7.00 for each subsequent child. The rate payable for each child or student in an approved institution is \$5.00 a week.

The following table shows, as at 30 June 1977, the number of families and the number of children under sixteen years and students aged 16 to under 25 years in respect of whom family allowance is paid, in family groups classified according to the number of children or students in the family group. The families included in the table are not necessarily made up entirely of the children of one marriage, but may include step-children, foster children, adopted children, and any other children in the custody, care and control of the claimant.

FAMILY ALLOWANCES: NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND STUDENTS IN FAMILIES
30 JUNE 1977

<i>Number of children and students in family group</i>			<i>Number of children and students in family group</i>		
<i>Families</i>		<i>Children and students</i>	<i>Families</i>		<i>Children and students</i>
1	682,658	682,658	10	199	1,990
2	787,775	1,575,550	11	60	660
3	385,438	1,156,314	12	27	324
4	136,517	546,068	13	7	91
5	39,250	196,250	14	2	28
6	13,164	78,984	15 or more	3	54
7	4,364	30,548			
8	1,642	13,136			
9	567	5,103	Total	2,051,673	4,287,758

FAMILY ALLOWANCES: SUMMARY

	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
Children and students at end of year in—					
Families	4,218,435	4,240,211	4,264,649	4,274,072	4,287,758
Approved institutions	20,447	20,528	18,867	18,618	14,586
Total	4,238,882	4,260,739	4,283,516	4,292,690	4,302,344
Families at end of year	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	2,051,673
Approved institutions at end of year	505	511	513	527	504
Amount paid during year	\$'000 253,889	225,392	224,850	265,463	1,023,303

(a) Prior to the introduction of the revised family allowances system in June 1976, statistics of child and student endowments were recorded separately. Consequently the combined number of families is not available.

Double orphan's pension

This pension is payable to the guardian of a child whose parents or adoptive parents are both dead, or one of whom is dead and the other missing. It is also payable in cases where one parent is dead and the other is a long-term inmate of a prison or mental hospital. Payment is made for orphans who are under 16 years or who are full-time students under 25. There is no income test. The pension is payable at the rate of \$11 a week for each eligible child. A double orphan's pension is not payable if the child attracts a war orphan's pension under the Repatriation Act. The number of double orphan's pensions at 30 June 1977 was 4,473. The expenditure on these pensions during the year 1976-77 was \$2,402,000.

Handicapped child's allowance

Parents or guardians of a child under 16 years who is severely handicapped mentally and/or physically, is living in the family home, and needs constant care and attention, are entitled to a handicapped child's allowance of \$15 a week. The allowance is not subject to an income test, but a residence qualification similar to that for family allowance applies. The allowance is also available to persons on low income who are caring for a substantially handicapped child and are suffering severe financial hardship as a result of expenditure associated with the child's disability. The number of handicapped child's allowances being paid at 30 June 1977 was 21,936. The total amount paid through these allowances during the year 1976-77 was \$14,096,000.

Unemployment and sickness benefits and associated payments

Unemployment and sickness benefits are paid to men over sixteen and under sixty-five years of age, and to women over sixteen and under sixty years of age, who are unemployed or temporarily incapacitated for work and are thereby suffering loss of income. They must have been living in Australia during the preceding twelve months or be likely to remain permanently in Australia. Both benefits are subject to an income test. A person cannot receive both benefits simultaneously, nor can a person receive either benefit at the same time as an invalid, widow's or repatriation service pension.

For unemployment benefit purposes, a person must establish that he is unemployed, that his unemployment is not due to his being a direct participant in a strike, that he is capable and willing to undertake suitable work, and that he has taken reasonable steps to obtain such work. Registration for employment with the District Employment Office of the Commonwealth Employment Service is necessary. For sickness benefit purposes, a person must establish that he is temporarily incapacitated for work because of sickness or accident and that he has thereby suffered a loss of salary, wages or other income.

Rates of Benefit. The maximum weekly rates of unemployment and sickness benefit payable, and the permissible income in respect of benefit periods which commenced after the introduction of increased benefits in May 1977, are as follows:—

	<i>Maximum weekly rate</i>	<i>Permissible weekly income</i>
	\$	\$
Married man (includes additional benefit for wife)	78.50	6.00
Single person aged 21 years or more	47.10	6.00
Single person aged 18 to 20 years	47.10	3.00
Single person aged 16 or 17 years	36.00	3.00

These amounts are increased by \$7.50 for each child under 16 years or full-time student in the care of the beneficiary.

After the benefit has been paid for six consecutive weeks a sickness beneficiary who is paying rent or is paying for lodgings may be entitled to supplementary allowance of up to \$5.00 a week. The amount of any such allowance cannot exceed the amount of rent paid.

The weekly rate of benefit is reduced by the amount by which a beneficiary's other income exceeds the amount of permissible income. The income of the spouse is also taken into account unless the claimant and his spouse are permanently separated. For sickness benefit purposes the income from an approved friendly society or other similar approved body in respect of the incapacity for which sickness benefit is payable is disregarded. 'Income' does not include family allowance or other payments for children, health benefits and payments from Medibank or registered benefit organisations, or an amount paid in reimbursement of medical, dental or similar expenses. The supplementary allowance is reduced by the amount by which a beneficiary's other income exceeds \$1.00 a week in the case of a single person and by half of the excess of the beneficiary's income over \$2.00 a week in the case of a married person.

The amount of compensation, damages or similar payment, or war pension, if paid in respect of the same incapacity as that for which sickness benefit is claimed, is deducted from the sickness benefit if it is paid in respect of the same period. If it is not paid in respect of the same incapacity, compensation in respect of the same period is regarded as income and war pension is ignored.

There is a waiting period of seven days during which unemployment or sickness benefit is not usually payable, but this waiting period is not required to be served more than once in any period of thirteen weeks.

Special benefit

A special benefit may be granted to a person not qualified for unemployment or sickness benefit who is not receiving an age, invalid or widow's pension, a service pension or a tuberculosis allowance and who, because of age, physical or mental disability or domestic circumstances, or any other reason, is unable to earn a sufficient livelihood for himself and his dependants. Recipients of special benefits include, among others, unmarried women for a period before and after the birth of a child, persons caring for invalid parents or sick relatives/children, persons ineligible for a pension because of lack of residence qualifications and persons remanded in custody pending court proceedings.

Special benefits are also paid to immigrants who are in Commonwealth Government centres or hostels awaiting their first placement in employment in Australia. During this time they receive a short instruction in English and in Australian conditions to facilitate their assimilation into the community and employment.

No income test or residence requirement is laid down, but there is an overriding requirement that a person must be suffering hardship to be granted a special benefit.

The maximum rate of special benefit is the same as for unemployment benefit.

UNEMPLOYMENT, SICKNESS, AND SPECIAL BENEFITS: SUMMARY

Year	Number admitted to benefit during year			Average number of persons on benefit at end of each week			Amount paid in benefits		
	Unem- ployment	Sickness	Special (a)	Unem- ployment	Sickness	Special (a)	Unem- ployment	Sickness	Special (a)
							(\$'000)	(\$'000)	(\$'000)
1972-73 . . .	280,573	101,249	16,267	39,580	16,163	4,090	46,553	26,610	4,368
1973-74 . . .	229,231	118,190	16,698	34,148	20,655	4,480	58,246	41,407	6,983
1974-75 . . .	701,302	131,377	19,633	116,603	24,346	5,331	251,740	62,833	10,992
1975-76 . . .	891,904	153,869	36,805	191,723	28,081	6,821	513,923	92,215	17,198
1976-77 . . .	803,461	148,508	41,502	215,871	32,385	8,181	618,074	105,408	21,913

(a) Includes immigrants in Government centres or hostels awaiting their first placement in employment in Australia.

Appeals Tribunals

Appeals Tribunals operate in all States, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. The purpose of the Tribunals is to provide an independent avenue of redress for people who feel aggrieved by decisions of the Department of Social Security, which administers payments made under the *Social Services Act*. Each Tribunal consists of two independent members, usually a lawyer and a welfare worker, and a seconded officer from the Department of Social Security. The Tribunals operate as informally as possible. Appeals may be lodged by personal attendance, telephone, letter or on a special form.

The Tribunals do not have the power themselves to overturn decisions by the Department of Social Security, but they make recommendations to the Department.

Reciprocal social services agreements with other countries

New Zealand. An agreement between the Governments of Australia and New Zealand for reciprocity in social services came into operation on 3 September 1943 and was amended from 1 July 1949. The reciprocal arrangements cover age and invalid pensions, widow's pensions, family allowance and unemployment and sickness benefits, and apply to both permanent and temporary changes of residence. Residence in one country may be treated as residence in the other country in relation to entitlement to benefits in which a residential qualification applies. Persons from one country taking up a permanent residence in the other country become eligible for any of the specified benefits of the new country under the same conditions (with one or two exceptions) as apply to citizens of that country. Persons in receipt of any of the specified benefits in one country may continue to receive those benefits while temporarily absent in the other country.

United Kingdom. Under a reciprocal agreement on social services between the United Kingdom and Australia, residence in one country may be treated as residence in the other country as the basis for entitlement to benefits in which a residential qualification applies. Australians going to the United Kingdom for permanent residence are treated in the United Kingdom as if they have been insured under the National Insurance Scheme while in Australia, so that they can qualify for various National Insurance benefits. There is also provision for the safeguard of social service rights for persons going from one country to the other for temporary residence.

Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service

The Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service assists people who are unable to work because of long-term disability or who have had to give up their employment because of sickness or injury. It aims to help disabled people to reach their maximum physical, mental and social usefulness and to assist them to live as independently as possible. Towards this aim, it provides co-ordinated programs of treatment and training to meet the special needs of each disabled person. Responsibility for the delivery of these services rests with the twelve residential and day-attendance centres and the thirteen regional rehabilitation units which are currently operated by the service.

Rehabilitation may be provided free to people receiving, or eligible to receive, invalid or widow's pension, or unemployment, sickness or special benefit; to people receiving tuberculosis allowance; to people aged 14 or 15 years who, without treatment or training, would be likely to qualify for invalid pension at age 16; to national servicemen and members of the permanent forces who are disabled at time of discharge but are ineligible for rehabilitation assistance from the Department of Veterans' Affairs; and to people who become disabled while working for the Commonwealth Government and

are covered by the *Compensation (Commonwealth Employees) Act*, 1971. People from these groups may be selected for rehabilitation if their disabilities are a substantial handicap for employment but can be overcome by treatment or training, and if there are reasonable prospects that they will be able to take up employment following rehabilitation. In addition, rehabilitation may be provided without cost not only to those who have reasonable prospects of undertaking employment, but also to all those within the broad working age group who, in spite of substantial residual handicaps, have reasonable prospects, with rehabilitation assistance, of resuming a former role as housewife/mother or increasing their capacity to lead an independent or semi-independent life at home.

For those eligible, payment of pension or benefit continues during treatment. When vocational training begins, pension or benefit is suspended and replaced by training allowance. This allowance is determined by the Director-General, Department of Social Security, having regard to the adult male average award wage. Living-away-from-home allowance is paid where necessary. Fares and living expenses (including those of an attendant where required) in connection with treatment, training or attendance for an interview or for medical examination may also be paid. Necessary artificial replacements, surgical aids and appliances may be provided free of charge to a person receiving treatment and training or who needs them to assist him to engage in a suitable vocation after the discontinuance of his treatment and training or who needs them otherwise to assist in his rehabilitation.

Treatment, training and assessment programs are undertaken at rehabilitation centres where occupational therapists, vocational counsellors and qualified trade and commerce teachers determine the skills which make best use of ability and which are best adapted to the person's needs. In addition to the services provided at each centre, technical schools, business colleges, universities, training on-the-job in commerce or industry and correspondence courses are all used for training purposes. Essential text books and equipment may be provided during treatment or training; alternatively, these may be supplied after treatment or training is discontinued to enable a rehabilitee to engage in employment.

Throughout the process of rehabilitation, counsellors maintain contact with the disabled person and provide guidance and encouragement where necessary. The Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service currently employs 80 such counsellors who play a significant role in the co-ordination of the non-medical aspects of rehabilitation.

Between its inception in 1948 and 30 June 1977, the Rehabilitation Service has assisted some 49,586 severely handicapped people.

Compassionate allowances

These allowances are paid by the Commonwealth Government on a discretionary basis to certain people who are unable to qualify for pensions or other benefits under provisions of the *Social Services Act*. Expenditure on compassionate allowances and payments of a similar nature, excluding war relief measures, during 1976-77 was \$17,500.

Commonwealth Government assistance to welfare organisations

The *Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act* 1954 is designed to encourage the provision of homes in which aged persons may reside in conditions approaching normal domestic life.

To be eligible for assistance under the Act an organisation must be:

- (a) carried on otherwise than for the purposes of profit or gain to the individual members; and
- (b) a religious organisation, an organisation of which the principal objects or purposes are charitable or benevolent, an organisation of former members of the defence forces established in every State or a State branch of such an organisation, an organisation approved by the Governor-General for the purposes of the Act, or a local governing body.

An organisation conducted or controlled by, or by persons appointed by, the Commonwealth or any State Government is not eligible for assistance under the Act.

The Director-General of the Department of Social Security or his delegate may make a grant of money to an organisation as assistance towards meeting the cost of the construction or purchase of a home, including land, to be used permanently for the accommodation of aged persons. The grant is made on a basis of \$2 for each \$1 raised by the organisation but is limited to \$11,130 for a single unit of accommodation and \$12,910 for a double unit plus up to \$1,920 per unit for land. Money which the organisation received from a governmental body other than a local governing body does not attract subsidy.

Before a grant is made the Director-General must be satisfied that the sum of the money expended and the money at present available for expenditure by the organisation towards the capital cost of the home, together with the amount of the grant, will be not less than the capital cost of the home.

The following table gives information regarding grants approved for each of the past five years. The amounts granted in each year include new grants approved in that year together with adjustments made during the year in respect of grants originally approved in earlier years.

AGED OR DISABLED PERSONS HOMES: GRANTS AND AMOUNTS APPROVED AND BEDS PROVIDED

	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
Grants approved	228	171	228	33	71
Amount approved \$'000	19,741	18,999	37,299	10,531	21,381
Beds provided—					
Self-contained	2,008	1,899	2,243	385	233
Hostel	827	669	675	181	769
Nursing	1,154	849	992	52	1,015
<i>Total</i>	<i>3,989</i>	<i>3,417</i>	<i>3,910</i>	<i>618</i>	<i>2,017</i>

Since the commencement of the Act in December 1954, 3,242 grants amounting to \$256,713,062 have been approved, and accommodation has been provided for 58,769 aged and disabled persons.

The *Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act* also provides a *personal care subsidy* of \$15 a week paid to eligible organisations for persons of eighty years of age or over and other persons requiring and receiving approved personal care while living in hostel type accommodation provided by organisations eligible under the *Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act*. The following table gives details of the premises approved, payments made and number of residents aged eighty years or over residing in the approved premises.

AGED OR DISABLED PERSONS HOMES ACT: PERSONAL CARE SUBSIDIES, 30 JUNE 1977

	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Approved premises . . No.	159	150	95	71	61	19	2	2	559
Residents qualifying . . No.	3,887	4,128	3,089	2,039	1,801	466	8	28	15,446
Percentage of qualifying residents to total residents . .	47.87	68.42	63.42	66.00	77.83	87.10	40.00	52.83	62.93
Subsidies paid, 1976-77 \$'000	3,129	2,900	1,782	1,474	1,402	358	7	21	11,073

The *Aged Persons Hostels Act* 1972 was introduced to stimulate the provision of more hostel-type accommodation for needy aged people.

Under the scheme the Commonwealth Government will meet the full cost of providing new hostel accommodation for two aged people for every one at present in an eligible unsubsidised home, or for one additional person for every two in a home previously subsidised on a dollar-for-dollar basis between 1954 and 1957. The organisation will not be required to make any contribution from its own resources unless the capital cost exceeds \$16,700 per person accommodated, or the bed capacity of the new home exceeds the number of 'free' beds to which the organisation is entitled. A further grant of up to \$250 for each person accommodated is available for furnishing the new hostel plus an additional \$2,400 per person for land and/or site development where applicable.

The scheme was limited to a period of three years expiring on 27 September 1975 to encourage organisations to move quickly in taking advantage of the benefits the scheme offered.

This Act had the effect of placing the old established organisations which conducted homes prior to the introduction of the \$2 for \$1 scheme in the same relative position as that achieved by newer organisations which had received a \$2 for \$1 subsidy, i.e. where two-thirds of their accommodation was provided by the Government.

Admission to these homes is based strictly on need with regard to the applicant's health, age, accommodation and financial situation. Since the commencement of the Act, 209 grants have been approved, totalling \$100,079,036 as at 30 June 1977.

Although the Act was terminated for the purposes of approving new projects, amending legislation has preserved the rights of organisations whose projects have been accepted under the Act, but which for one reason or another did not proceed.

AGED PERSONS HOSTELS ACT: SUMMARY OF GRANTS

	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
Number of grants during year	12	55	148	12	51
Beds provided—					
Hostel beds	349	2,111	5,385	393	1,574
Staff beds	7	64	174	17	56
Total	356	2,175	5,559	410	1,630
			(\$'000)		
Amount paid during year—					
Capital grants	2,766	16,500	57,385	11,527	26,562
Furnishings grants	62	535	1,357	104	396
Total	2,827	17,035	58,742	11,631	26,957

The *Handicapped Persons Assistance Act* 1974 replaced both the *Sheltered Employment (Assistance) Act* 1967 and the *Handicapped Children (Assistance) Act* 1970. Under this legislation, eligible organisations may apply for subsidies towards the cost of providing capital projects, maintenance and equipment. Grants are also available in respect of rental and certain salary payments.

Grants on purchases of buildings, equipment etc. take the form of a \$4 subsidy for each \$1 raised by an eligible organisation from non-government sources. Rent is subsidised at a rate equal to 80 per cent of the approved rental paid subject to certain conditions. Salary costs may be subsidised to an amount equal to 100 per cent of salary paid to staff employed in new ventures, but this is reduced to 50 per cent after the premises have been providing the service for 2 years or more.

As well as assisting organisations with establishment and running costs, the legislation also provides financial encouragement to sheltered workshop administrators to provide the type of training for the handicapped which will prepare them, where possible, for open employment. A *training fee* of \$500 is paid to organisations providing approved sheltered employment for each handicapped employee who, having received at least 6 months training in the workshop, graduates to open employment and remains there for at least 12 months.

Introduction of the *Handicapped Persons Assistance Act* in December 1974 also saw the transfer of the administration of Handicapped Children's Benefit from the Commonwealth Department of Health to the Department of Social Security. Where an organisation provides approved residential accommodation for mentally or physically handicapped children under 16 years, it becomes entitled to receive a Commonwealth benefit of \$5.00 per day in respect of each resident child.

HANDICAPPED PERSONS ASSISTANCE ACT: SUMMARY OF GRANTS

	1972-73(a)	1973-74(a)	1974-75(a)	1975-76	1976-77
Approved premises(b)	59	59	559	643	952
Number of grants during year—					
Capital(c)	1,138	1,420	1,789	2,451	2,021
Other(d)	207	239	1,991	2,209	719
Total	1,345	1,659	3,780	4,660	2,740
			(\$'000)		
Amount approved during year—					
Capital grants(c)	5,854	9,061	7,330	9,320	14,774
Other grants(d)	265	259	4,132	5,897	2,392
Total	6,119	9,320	11,462	15,217	17,166
Total expenditure during year	5,896	7,588	14,934	29,991	29,984

(a) Includes Sheltered Employment (Assistance) Act and Handicapped Children (Assistance) Act both repealed December 1974. (b) Total approved sheltered workshops, activity therapy centres, training centres and premises providing residential accommodation as at 30 June. (c) Residential and non-residential buildings, equipment and maintenance. (d) Training fee, salary subsidy and rent.

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN'S BENEFIT

	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
Approved handicapped persons homes(a)	53	55	69	86	92
Handicapped children accommodated(a)	1,185	1,560	1,360	1,392	1,497
Days of benefit paid during year	286,060	273,052	263,141	335,863	380,249
Total amount paid during year	\$ 429,090	582,137	890,823	1,191,075	1,589,264

(a) As at 30 June.

The *Homeless Persons Assistance Act* was introduced in December 1974 to help non-profit organisations and local governing bodies which provide accommodation, food and social welfare services for homeless men and women.

The Act enables grants to be made to eligible organisations to meet the cost of purchasing, constructing, altering or renting buildings to be used as homeless persons' assistance centres, as well as to meet the cost of purchasing furniture, furnishings and equipment for such centres. Grants also meet half the salary of a social welfare worker employed at a centre. The amount of grants made for these purposes during 1976-77 was \$1,486,654.

A subsidy is also available to help meet the cost of providing food and accommodation for homeless persons at an approved centre, or of meals provided at such centres for non-resident homeless persons. The rate of the food and accommodation subsidy has been prescribed at 75 cents per day and the rate of meals subsidy as 25 cents per meal. During 1976-77 the amount of this subsidy totalled \$756,240.

The *Delivered Meals Subsidy Act* 1970 helps organisations to establish, maintain, expand and improve 'meals on wheels' services. The subsidy is at the rate of \$2.50 for every ten meals provided by approved organisations. At 30 June 1977, 560 organisations had received a total subsidy of \$1,911,173 under the Act. During 1976-77 the amount of this subsidy totalled \$111,920. Organisations eligible for grants under the Act are the same as those specified under the *Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act*.

Commonwealth Government assistance to States

The *States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act* 1968 provides for assistance to be given by the Commonwealth Government to the States in respect of aid for needy mothers with children where there is no breadwinner and the mothers are not eligible for benefits under the *Social Services Act*. Broadly, these include deserted wives during the first six months of desertion, wives during the first six months of the husband's imprisonment, deserted de facto wives, de facto wives of prisoners, other separated wives and unmarried mothers.

The type of assistance attracting a grant may be provided in the form of cash, food or clothing. The grant is made by the Commonwealth Government to the States on the basis of half the cost of the approved assistance paid to the mother, or half the amount of Class 'A' widow's pension or supporting parent's benefit which would have been payable had she been qualified to receive it, whichever is the lesser.

All States are now receiving assistance under the scheme. In 1976-77 payments by the Commonwealth Government amounted to \$13,346,614.

The *States Grants (Home Care) Act* 1969 provides that the Commonwealth Government will share with participating States on a \$2 for \$1 basis the cost of developing approved housekeeping or other domestic assistance provided wholly or mainly for aged persons in their homes. The Commonwealth Government will also share on a \$2 for \$1 basis with participating States up to a maximum of one-third of the capital cost of approved senior citizens' centres as well as meeting on a \$2 for \$1 basis with the States the cost of a salary of a welfare officer employed by such a centre. All States participate in this scheme. The Commonwealth Government share was increased to two-thirds of State expenditure from 1 July 1973.

PAYMENTS TO STATES FOR HOME CARE, SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRES, AND WELFARE OFFICERS, 1976-77

(\$)

State	Home Care Services	Senior Citizens' Centres	Welfare Officers	Total
New South Wales	1,566,667	890,800	252,978	2,710,445
Victoria	2,017,951	1,571,007	292,701	3,881,659
Queensland	1,990,047	916,316	37,487	2,943,850
South Australia	904,095	212,316	30,715	1,147,126
Western Australia	57,333	406,400	56,199	519,932
Tasmania	354,984	..	..	354,984
Total	6,891,077	3,996,839	670,080	11,557,996

SOCIAL WELFARE

The Role of the Department of Social Security

The Department of Social Security provides a professional social work service, a welfare service to migrants including a telephone interpreter service (*see also* Migrant Welfare, Settlement and Integration in Chapter 6), and after-care for refugees. It administers grants to the following bodies: Australian Council of Social Service, Australian Council on the Ageing, Australian Council for Rehabilitation of Disabled, Good Neighbour Councils, voluntary welfare agencies to employ social workers for work amongst migrant communities (Grant-in-Aid Scheme), Australian Council of Trade Unions to develop a research unit, Australian Branch of International Social Service, and locally-based community welfare agencies in serious financial difficulty (emergency funding only).

To assist in its role of advising the Government on welfare policy, the Department of Social Security initiates, develops and evaluates experimental projects in social welfare and undertakes research studies. The experimental projects currently being administered and evaluated by the Department are the Community Information Centres and Welfare Rights Program.

A pilot project of twelve Community Information Centres is being developed and evaluated to determine ways of establishing an effective system of information and referral for all members of the community.

The Welfare Rights Program consists of grants to 10 self-help organisations to enable them to employ a Welfare Rights Officer who aims to improve the access of disadvantaged persons to welfare services and entitlements.

With the abolition of the Social Welfare Commission, the Department of Social Security assumed responsibility for that Commission's Research Program which included approximately 50 projects and fellowships at a cost of around \$0.5 million. Those still current include studies of Voluntary Welfare Agencies, Work and Social Adjustment, and the Organisation of Social Welfare Education in Australia. Completed research includes "Indicators of Community Well-Being" by Vinson and Homel. Other projects for which the Department has assumed responsibility are a Social Welfare Research Bulletin, the maintenance of a Register of Research, and the provision of research and secretarial support to the Family Services Committee. This committee, which consists of Commonwealth and State Government Authorities and a representative of the voluntary sector, was established in 1975 to report on the current and future service needs of families in Australia.

The role of voluntary agencies

Voluntary agencies have played an important role in the provision of social welfare services in Australia since the earliest days of settlement. The oldest voluntary organisation in Australia is the Benevolent Society of New South Wales, founded in 1818 'to relieve the poor, the distressed, the aged and the infirm'. During the 19th century, voluntary agencies were active in all States providing: homes for orphan and abandoned children; industrial schools for older boys and girls often rescued from total destitution in the streets; relief in food and clothing for widows, old people and families of the unemployed; hospitals for the sick poor; and institutions for the aged and invalid.

Although in this century the Commonwealth and State Governments have taken over many tasks formerly carried out by voluntary agencies, this has not led to any diminution in voluntary activity. The voluntary sector is probably more active today than it has ever been, not only in carrying out its traditional role, but also in opening up new fields of activity.

In caring for the aged, voluntary agencies are co-operating with the Government in providing aged persons homes, retirement villages, hostels for the frail aged and nursing homes for the sick aged. In addition to the provision of residential care, voluntary agencies are increasingly offering services to the aged in their own homes to enable them to be independent as long as possible. Services include 'Meals on Wheels', home help, leisure programs in senior citizens centres, friendly visiting to the lonely aged, sheltered workshops to provide meaningful activity, and many similar services designed to enhance the well-being of the aged.

The same pattern of activity is seen in services for the mentally and physically handicapped. Voluntary agencies provide day and residential schools for handicapped children, sheltered workshops for those able to undertake some employment and hostels for the handicapped in both sheltered and open employment. Many organisations provide home visiting services and occupational therapy for the home-bound, special training centres for various forms of rehabilitation, and recreational programs for those unable to participate in general community activities. The handicapped field is also noted for its activities in bringing together self-help groups of the handicapped and their families to promote the well being of the handicapped and to encourage study and research into both prevention and rehabilitation.

Besides the various forms of health services described above, many major hospitals are provided by the voluntary sector. Of the approved hospitals in Australia, almost 15 per cent are run by voluntary organisations. Such hospitals cover a wide range of needs and, in addition, provide nursing training which may ultimately be of service to the full range of hospitals and nursing homes.

Family and child welfare has long been an important area for voluntary activity. Children's homes provide for children deprived of normal home life because of serious problems within the family, in a wide variety of units ranging from the small family group home in an ordinary house in the suburbs to the large unit of cottage homes grouped together. As with other services, recent years have shown a marked emphasis on preventive services through family welfare agencies and a greater use of substitute families in adoption and foster care programs.

Within the modern family welfare agency, assistance is given not only with money and food as in the last century, but also with marriage guidance, parental counselling and home-maker services, all designed to keep the family together as a unit. Other voluntary agencies run services for the single mother or provide day-care services to assist working mothers, in particular the one parent family or the family under special strain.

The well-being of Australian youth is also a matter of concern to the voluntary sector which runs youth activities of many varieties, offers adolescent counselling services and is showing a growing concern for those suffering serious emotional disturbance and those becoming addicted to drugs.

As well as these general community services, special services for Aborigines have been a feature of voluntary activity. Formerly, these were mainly concerned with the mission area, but of late many agencies have been formed, often run wholly by Aborigines, to assist urban dwellers. Legal aid services, "head start" programs, nutrition programs and many others are now being made available through voluntary effort.

The care of immigrants is also a significant activity and, again, much of this work is now undertaken by settled immigrants in conjunction with longer-established Australians.

Prisoners and ex-prisoners also receive their share of attention. Organisations exist to visit prisoners and assist their families. These will also assist prisoners on discharge to re-settle in the community, either at home, in lodgings or in hostels provided by the agency. Other agencies concern themselves with alcoholics, homeless men and women and others who are temporarily destitute.

This list of activities by no means covers all the work done by the voluntary sector. New and experimental services such as Lifeline and Samaritans, drug contact centres, drop-in coffee houses, street workers for alienated youth and many others are evidence of the continuing ability of the voluntary sector of social welfare to develop and meet new social needs.

Another area of developing interest involves the participation of various kinds of citizen groups in social welfare services. These include Community Information Centres and Community Aid services largely manned by volunteers; groups of clients of social welfare services who provide both a service for their members and liaison with Departmental services on questions of the way service is offered to people in need; and Resident Action groups who are concerned to participate in any replanning of their neighbourhood. This area of citizen involvement can be expected to become more and more important over the next few years.

Studies of social needs and of the quality and the adequacy of present services are a continuing concern of the voluntary sector which, through the work of Councils of Social Service at the State, Territory and national levels, promotes the well-being of the deprived and disadvantaged sections of the community and the general social development of Australia.

Welfare Services in the Territories

Provision of social security and welfare services in the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government. In so far as welfare items can be identified for territorial accounting purposes, the following table shows the cost of providing these services.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE^(a) NORTHERN TERRITORY AND AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY (\$'000)

	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
Northern Territory—					
Current outlay	8,479	10,569	11,463	20,228	19,492
Gross capital formation ^(b)	348	622	220	500	473
Total	8,827	11,191	11,683	20,728	19,965
Australian Capital Territory—					
Current outlay	635	757	874	1,376	2,101
Capital outlay—					
Gross capital formation ^(b) . . . . .	..	..	..	501	358
Total	635	757	874	1,877	2,459

(a) Includes expenditure on aboriginal affairs.

(b) Expenditure on fixed assets and increase in stocks.

Aboriginal welfare

A referendum in May 1967 led to the repeal of Section 127 of the Constitution which provided that, in reckoning the numbers for census purposes, Aborigines should not be counted, and to the deletion of the words 'other than the Aboriginal race in any State' from Section 51 (xxvi) which relates to the power of the Commonwealth Parliament to make laws in respect to people of any race. The Commonwealth Government's aim is to help Aborigines become self-managing and self-sufficient while, at the same time, to preserve and to develop their own distinctive culture. It now shares with the States power to legislate in respect of Aboriginal people. The Commonwealth Government has assumed full responsibility for policy, planning and co-ordination in respect of Aboriginal affairs at the national level, and has established a Department of Aboriginal Affairs with regional offices in all States and the Northern Territory. In November 1973, an election was held by Aborigines throughout Australia to establish the first National Aboriginal Consultative Committee, a group of forty-one Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders elected to advise the Government on Aboriginal needs. At the request of the Committee, the second election, which was scheduled for November 1975, was deferred for nine months. Subsequently, the Government established an independent inquiry into the role of the Committee. As a result of the findings of this Committee of Inquiry, a National Aboriginal Conference (NAC) has been established composed of thirty-five members who meet annually at national level. Members also meet at least twice each year in their State or Territory as State or Territory Branches of the NAC, and choose their representatives on the ten-member NAC Executive.

The role of the NAC is to provide a forum in which Aboriginal views can be expressed at State and national level and, in particular, to express Aboriginal views on the long term goals and objectives which the Government should pursue, the programs it should adopt in Aboriginal affairs, and on the need for new programs in Aboriginal affairs. The NAC also participates, through its entitlement to choose five of the ten members, in the work of a new body, the Council for Aboriginal Development. This Council is the body from which the Government seeks formal advice.

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Repatriation Commission, established under the *Repatriation Act* 1920, consists of three fulltime members. It is responsible for the administration of the *Repatriation Act* and associated legislation, all matters of policy, and the general administration and overall supervision of the provision of benefits under the legislation. The Chairman of the Commission is also the Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Affairs (formerly the Department of Repatriation), which provides the administrative machinery through which the Commission operates. The central office is in Canberra and there is a branch office, under the control of a Deputy Commissioner, in each State.

The principal functions of the Department are: the payment of disability and dependants' pensions (previously called war pensions) and service pensions and allowances to eligible veterans and their dependants; the provision of medical treatment for veterans for injuries and illnesses caused or aggravated by their service; the provision of medical treatment in certain circumstances for veterans who are suffering from injuries and illnesses not caused or aggravated by service; the provision of medical treatment for widows and dependants of deceased veterans whose deaths are service-related; and a wide range of other benefits for eligible persons. Since 5 October 1976, the *Defence Service Homes Act* 1918 has been administered by the Defence Service Homes Corporation (previously the Australian Housing Corporation) within the departmental framework. At the same time, the Department was given responsibility for the Office of Australian War Graves.

Repatriation benefits are provided in respect of service not only in the 1914-18 and 1939-45 Wars but also in the South African War 1899-1902, in the Korea and Malaya operations, in prescribed areas with the British Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve and the Special Overseas Forces and, in certain circumstances, in the Regular Defence Forces.

For information on war service land settlement see Year Book No. 61 (Chapter 22, Rural Industry) and for statistics relating to defence service homes see Chapter 19, Housing and Construction, of this Year Book.

For detailed information about repatriation pensions, allowances, benefits and services reference should be made to the annual reports of the Repatriation Commission.

REPATRIATION: TOTAL EXPENDITURE(a) (\$'000)

Class	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
Pensions, allowances and other benefits	303,183	362,196	477,608	568,068	662,876
Medical treatment	97,297	120,446	162,340	201,488	223,058
Administration	20,791	24,807	32,143	37,130	39,556
Works, rent and maintenance	6,870	8,903	14,792	19,332	14,020
Total expenditure	428,141	516,352	686,883	826,018	939,510

(a) Includes expenditure by Departments other than Repatriation as follows: 1972-73, \$6,645,558; 1973-74, \$8,369,015; 1974-75, \$14,088,376; 1975-76, \$18,846; 1976-77, \$13,710.

Disability and dependants' pensions

The first provision for the payment of disability pensions to veterans and pensions to their dependants was made by the Commonwealth Parliament in the *War Pensions Act* 1914. This Act was repealed in 1920 by the *Australian Soldiers' Repatriation Act* 1920 (amended from 31 December 1950 to the *Repatriation Act*). Amendments to the Act in 1943 considerably widened the eligibility provisions, to the benefit mainly of members of the Citizen Military Forces who had not served outside Australia during the 1939-45 War.

For a brief description of eligibility for disability and dependants' pensions, the conditions for payment of the various rates and allowances, and of the operation of the Appeals Tribunals, see Year Book No. 55, pages 91-93.

Main pension rates vary each six months; current rates are available from Department of Veterans' Affairs Branch Offices.

Summary of disability and dependant's pensions

The following tables provide a summary of disability and dependants' pensions for the 1914-18 War, the 1939-45 War (including pensions payable under the *Interim Forces Benefits Act 1947*), the Korea and Malaya operations and the Far East Strategic Reserve, and Special Overseas Service and the Regular Forces. Statistics relating to miscellaneous disability and dependants' pensions are included collectively in each table, with further details being provided later in this section.

DISABILITY AND DEPENDANTS' PENSIONS: SUMMARY 1975-76

		1914-18 War	1939-45 War(a)	Korea, Malaya and F.E.S.R.	Special Overseas Service	Serving Members	Miscel- laneous	Total
New claims granted	No.	115	7,826	466	1,393	597	20	10,417
Restorations	No.	27	3,287	148	67	2	1	3,532
Claims disallowed(b)	No.	185	2,495	87	299	654	..	3,720
Pensions cancelled (gross)	No.	100	15,608	972	369	50	12	17,111
Deaths of pensioners	No.	4,697	7,506	79	21	4	16	12,323
Pensions in force at 30 June 1976	No.	53,892	412,947	12,878	17,722	884	538	498,861
Annual pension liability at 30 June 1976	\$'000	79,228	267,617	3,926	3,327	239	604	354,941
Amount paid in pensions during the year 1975-76	\$'000	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	340,839

(a) Includes Interim Forces. (b) Number of veterans who had their claims for all their disabilities disallowed
(c) At 30 June 1976 includes 12,225 student children over 16 years of age.

DISABILITY AND DEPENDANTS' PENSIONS(a): SUMMARY

	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
New claims granted	17,859	12,688	11,302	10,417	9,856
Restorations	2,259	2,356	2,984	3,532	2,607
<i>Total additions</i>	<i>20,118</i>	<i>15,044</i>	<i>14,286</i>	<i>13,949</i>	<i>12,463</i>
Pensions cancelled (gross)	15,629	18,164	19,131	17,111	14,449
Deaths of pensioners	11,692	11,665	12,600	12,323	11,637
<i>Total reductions</i>	<i>27,321</i>	<i>29,829</i>	<i>31,731</i>	<i>29,434</i>	<i>26,086</i>

(a) Including miscellaneous pensions

Classes of disability and dependants' pensions

The following tables provide an analysis of the total number of new claims granted, pensions in force, and class of pension for 1975-76.

DISABILITY AND DEPENDANTS' PENSIONS: NEW CLAIMS GRANTED, 1975-76

Class	1914-18 War	1939-45 War(a)	Korea, Malaya and F.E.S.R.	Special Overseas Service	Serving members	Miscel- laneous	Total
Veterans	33	2,034	78	217	193	8	2,563
Wives and widows of veterans	73	2,577	112	311	155	9	3,237
Children	3	3,148	270	861	249	3	4,534
Other dependants	6	67	6	4	..	..	83
Total	115	7,826	466	1,393	597	20	10,417

(a) Includes Interim Forces.

DISABILITY AND DEPENDANTS' PENSIONS IN FORCE: 30 JUNE 1976

<i>Class</i>	<i>1914-18 War</i>	<i>1939-45 War(a)</i>	<i>Korea, Malaya and F.E.S.R.</i>	<i>Special Overseas Service</i>	<i>Serving members</i>	<i>Miscel- laneous</i>	<i>Total (b)</i>
Veterans	13,396	173,592	4,890	5,882	322	181	197,463
Wives	20,502	157,612	3,342	4,469	220	163	186,308
Children	157	46,141	5,002	6,938	301	36	58,575
War widows	19,591	29,908	216	126	16	145	50,002
Children of deceased veterans	16	1,609	117	223	25	1	1,991
Orphans	2	100	6	1	..	2	111
Parents	18	3,337	93	81	..	8	3,537
Others	210	648	12	2	..	2	874
Total	53,892	412,947	12,878	17,722	884	538	498,861

(a) Includes Interim Forces. (b) Includes 12,225 student children over 16 years of age.

DISABILITY PENSIONS FOR INCAPACITATED VETERANS IN FORCE: BY CLASS OF PENSION
30 JUNE 1976

<i>Class</i>	<i>1914-18 War</i>	<i>1939-45 War(a)</i>	<i>Korea, Malaya and F.E.S.R.</i>	<i>Special Overseas Service</i>	<i>Serving Members</i>	<i>Miscel- laneous</i>	<i>Total</i>
Special Rate (T. & P. I.) or equivalent	3,499	13,479	142	45	10	18	17,193
Intermediate Rate	131	1,706	29	7	1	..	1,874
General Rate—from 10 per cent to 100 per cent assessed disability(b)	9,766	158,407	3,919	5,830	311	163	178,396
Total	13,396	173,592	4,090	5,882	322	181	197,463

(a) Includes Interim Forces. (b) Excludes 75 veterans who also receive benefits under items 1-6 of Schedule 5 and are included above under Special Rate (T. & P.I.) or equivalent.

Number of disability and dependants' pensions and annual liability, States, etc.

The following table shows the number of pensions in force and annual liability at 30 June 1976, according to place of payment.

DISABILITY AND DEPENDANTS' PENSIONS: NUMBER OF PENSIONS
AND ANNUAL LIABILITY, 30 JUNE 1976

<i>Number of disability and dependants' pensions in force at 30 June 1976(a)</i>						<i>Annual pension liability at 30 June(b) (\$'000)</i>
<i>Place of payment</i>	<i>Incapacitated veterans</i>	<i>Dependants of incapacitated veterans</i>	<i>Dependants of deceased veterans</i>	<i>Total</i>		
New South Wales(c)	71,354	86,372	20,896	178,622	131,595	
Victoria	50,422	63,904	15,525	129,851	93,508	
Queensland	32,040	40,807	7,916	80,763	57,438	
South Australia(d)	18,246	22,406	4,762	45,414	29,469	
Western Australia	16,438	20,211	3,970	40,619	24,585	
Tasmania	8,126	10,674	1,978	20,778	15,748	
Overseas	837	1,308	669	2,814	2,598	
Total	197,463	245,682	55,716	498,861	354,941	

(a) Includes Interim Forces 1939-45 War. (b) Includes domestic allowance payable to widows. (c) Includes Australian Capital Territory. (d) Includes Northern Territory.

Summary of disability and dependants' pensions, 1972-73 to 1976-77

The following table shows the number of pensions granted, claims rejected, pensions in force and the annual liability for pensions in each of the years ended 30 June 1973 to 1977.

DISABILITY AND DEPENDANTS' PENSIONS: SUMMARY

Year	<i>Number of disability and dependants' pensions in force at 30 June(a)</i>						<i>Annual pension liability at 30 June(c) (\$'000)</i>
	<i>Pensions granted</i>	<i>Claims disallowed (b)</i>	<i>Incapacitated veterans</i>	<i>Dependants of incapacitated veterans</i>	<i>Dependants of deceased veterans</i>	<i>Total</i>	
1972-73	17,859	3,853	211,559	276,266	58,446	546,271	227,744
1973-74	12,688	3,680	207,055	267,136	57,664	531,855	272,556
1974-75	11,302	3,187	202,047	255,537	56,783	514,367	331,491
1975-76	10,417	3,720	197,463	245,682	55,716	498,861	354,941
1976-77	9,856	3,951	193,123	237,237	54,804	485,164	390,139

(a) Includes Interim Forces 1939-45 War. (b) The number of claimants who had the claims for all their disabilities disallowed. (c) Includes domestic allowance payable to widows.

The following table shows, for the years 1972-73 to 1976-77, the amounts paid in pensions and the place of payment.

**DISABILITY AND DEPENDANTS' PENSIONS: AMOUNT PAID(a)
(\$'000)**

<i>Place of payment</i>	<i>1972-73</i>	<i>1973-74</i>	<i>1974-75</i>	<i>1975-76</i>	<i>1976-77</i>
New South Wales(b)	81,599	91,874	115,502	128,335	136,198
Victoria	60,739	67,329	83,673	89,249	97,934
Queensland	36,821	41,174	50,685	54,622	61,161
South Australia(c)	18,405	20,962	26,525	27,908	30,974
Western Australia	15,428	17,338	21,812	23,077	25,541
Tasmania	9,851	11,176	13,698	14,827	16,637
Overseas	1,646	1,832	2,162	2,068	2,161
Total	224,489	251,685	314,058	340,086	370,606

(a) Includes domestic allowances paid to widows.

(b) Includes Australian Capital Territory.

(c) Includes Northern Territory.

Miscellaneous disability and dependants' pensions

The Commission is also responsible for the payment of pensions and allowances to beneficiaries under the *Seamen's War Pensions and Allowances Act* 1940, the *Papua New Guinea (Members of the Forces Benefits) Act* 1957 and Cabinet decisions granting eligibility to persons who were attached to the armed forces during war-time.

The following table shows the number and class of pensions and the annual liability at 30 June 1976, and the table thereafter shows the amounts paid during the years 1972-73 to 1976-77 and the place of payment.

MISCELLANEOUS DISABILITY AND DEPENDANTS' PENSIONS: NUMBER OF PENSIONS AND ANNUAL LIABILITY, 30 JUNE 1976

Class	<i>Number of pensions in force at 30 June 1976</i>				<i>Annual pension liability at 30 June(b) (\$'000)</i>
	<i>Veterans(a)</i>	<i>Dependants of veterans</i>	<i>Dependants of deceased veterans</i>	<i>Total</i>	
Act of grace	115	130	49	294	256
Seamen's war pension	63	69	53	185	190
New Guinea civilians	3	..	56	59	158
Total	181	199	158	538	604

(a) 'Veterans' in this context is a person in respect of whose war-time experience a pension is paid. (b) Includes domestic allowances payable to widows.

MISCELLANEOUS DISABILITY AND DEPENDANTS' PENSIONS(a)
(\\$'000)

Place of payment	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
New South Wales(b)	216	212	286	319	358
Victoria	124	130	164	200	223
Queensland	72	71	108	118	139
South Australia(c)	46	47	58	63	69
Western Australia	34	25	33	40	45
Tasmania	5	6	9	10	17
Overseas	1	1	1	1	1
Total	498	492	659	751	852

(a) Includes domestic allowance payable to widows.
(c) Includes Northern Territory.

(b) Includes Australian Capital Territory.

Service pensions

The *Repatriation Act* 1920 provides for a service pension to be paid (subject to an income test where the person is neither blind nor at least 70 years of age) to the following persons:

- male veterans who served in a theatre of war (or in a designated *Operational or Special Overseas Service* area) and have attained the age of sixty years or are permanently unemployable;
- female veterans who suffer from tuberculosis, or who served in a theatre of war, or served abroad or embarked for service abroad and have attained the age of fifty-five years, or are permanently unemployable;
- veterans of the South African War 1899-1902 who were members of a naval or military force or contingent raised in Australia for active service in that war;
- veterans of other British Commonwealth Forces who served outside the country of enlistment or within that country if a campaign medal has been awarded in respect of such service. Ten years residence in Australia is a necessary qualification.

Main pension rates vary each six months; current rates are available from the Department of Veterans' Affairs' Branch Offices.

A veteran in receipt of a service pension is entitled, with certain exceptions, to free medical benefits for disabilities not service-related. These benefits include general practitioner service, specialist service where necessary, full pharmaceutical benefits, surgical aids and appliances (including spectacles), dental treatment, and treatment in Repatriation General Hospitals.

SERVICE PENSIONS, SUMMARY, 1975-76

	South African War	1914-18 War	1939-45 War	Korea-Malaya operations	Special Overseas Service	Act of Grace	British of Commonwealth	Total
New claims granted	..	435	27,009	151	17	37	2,340	29,989
Restorations	..	32	468	4	..	..	6	510
Cancellations (gross)	6	499	2,713	31	2	3	189	3,443
Deaths	10	3,017	4,063	16	2	4	19	7,131
Pensions in force at 30 June 1976	24	25,841	112,999	497	26	140	2,148	141,675
Annual liability at 30 June 1976 \$'000	40	44,850	188,004	837	36	233	3,122	237,182
Amount paid in pensions during 1975-76 \$'000	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	218,926

SERVICE PENSIONS: SUMMARY

	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76(a)	1976-77
New claims granted	24,888	23,229	23,173	29,989	32,404
Restorations	1,384	641	414	510	378
Total additions	26,272	23,870	23,587	30,499	32,782
Cancellations (gross)	2,538	5,793	3,940	3,443	3,774
Deaths	5,238	5,692	6,447	7,131	6,875
Total reductions	7,776	11,485	10,387	10,574	10,649

(a) The increased number of new claims granted in 1975-76 was partly due to the abolition of the means test for persons 70 years and over and to an ageing population of ex-service personnel.

Class of service pensions

The following tables give an analysis of the total number of new claims granted and pensions in force for 1975-76.

SERVICE PENSIONS: NEW CLAIMS GRANTED, 1976

Class	South African War	1914-18 War	1939-45 War	Korea-Malaya operations	Special Overseas Service	Act of Grace	British Commonwealth	Total
Veterans	..	266	15,807	101	10	20	1,455	17,659
Wives and widows of veterans	..	169	11,198	50	7	17	885	12,326
Children	4	..	..	..	..	4
Total	..	435	27,009	151	17	37	2,340	29,989

SERVICE PENSIONS: NUMBER IN FORCE, 30 JUNE 1976

State	South African War	1914-18 War	1939-45 War	Korea-Malaya operations	Special Overseas Service	Act of Grace	British Commonwealth	Total
New South Wales(a)	6	8,244	36,573	207	12	39	555	45,636
Victoria	7	7,555	28,057	85	2	49	543	36,298
Queensland	3	3,985	21,294	109	6	29	385	25,811
South Australia(b)	2	2,845	10,847	26	4	14	384	14,122
Western Australia	3	2,230	10,972	47	..	8	212	13,472
Tasmania	3	972	5,109	19	2	1	57	6,163
Overseas	..	10	147	4	..	..	12	173
Total	24	25,841	112,999	497	26	140	2,148	141,675

(a) Includes Australian Capital Territory.

(b) Includes Northern Territory.

Number, by class, of service pensions and amount paid

The following tables show the number of each class of service pension in force, the annual liability and the amounts paid for the years 1972-73 to 1976-77.

SERVICE PENSIONS: NUMBER OF EACH CLASS OF PENSION AND ANNUAL LIABILITY

Number of service pensions at 30 June payable to—								
Year	Veterans who are—			Dependants(a) of veterans where the veteran is—			Total	Annual pension liability at 30 June (\$'000)
	Aged veterans	Permanently unemployable	Suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis	An aged veteran	Permanently unemployable	Suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis		
1972-73	47,430	19,121	1,333	9,539	17,635	1,067	96,125	82,011
1973-74	56,119	19,191	1,417	15,532	15,393	853	108,505	119,181
1974-75	62,523	19,298	1,425	22,153	15,438	889	121,726	181,364
1975-76	72,432	20,224	1,424	30,773	15,973	849	141,675	237,182
1976-77	82,567	21,652	1,466	40,104	17,045	881	163,715	310,512

(a) Includes dependants of deceased service pensioners.

NOTE. See footnote (a) last table previous page.

SERVICE PENSIONS: AMOUNT PAID

(\$'000)

<i>Place of payment</i>	<i>1972-73</i>	<i>1973-74</i>	<i>1974-75</i>	<i>1975-76</i>	<i>1976-77</i>
New South Wales(a)	23,011	33,105	49,985	73,181	90,577
Victoria	18,033	26,532	40,180	55,141	72,127
Queensland	13,567	19,070	28,033	39,181	52,419
South Australia(b)	7,467	10,340	15,133	21,406	28,668
Western Australia	7,394	10,191	15,149	20,560	26,933
Tasmania	2,827	4,356	6,669	9,314	12,327
Overseas	17	32	58	143	230
Total	72,316	103,626	155,207	218,926	283,281

(a) Includes Australian Capital Territory.

(b) Includes Northern Territory.

Medical treatment for veterans and dependants of veterans

Medical treatment is provided for all disabilities which have been accepted as service-related, and for pulmonary tuberculosis and cancer not related to service. In addition, and subject to certain conditions, treatment is provided for most non-service-related disabilities for: incapacitated veterans receiving disability pensions at or above the maximum (100 per cent) General Rate; veterans or nurses who served in the 1914-18 War; veterans of the Boer War; ex-prisoners-of-war; war widows and certain other dependants of deceased male veterans whose deaths have been accepted as service-related, and of deceased T. & P. I. pensioners; and certain service pensioners.

Treatment is provided at six Repatriation General Hospitals (one in each State) and five auxiliary hospitals and an ANZAC hostel in Victoria. The total number of available beds for patients in wards or parts of wards open for use in all these institutions at 30 June 1976 was 3,210 and expenditure during 1975-76 amounted to \$89,510,829. In addition, expenditure of \$109,989,468 was incurred during 1975-76 on medical services outside these institutions.

Community patients. Where spare bed capacity exists in the Repatriation General Hospitals, patients may be admitted from the general community (mainly veterans with conditions that are not service-related, hospital staff and the local community).

Repatriation hospitals and institutions

Details of full-time staff in Repatriation general hospitals and other Repatriation institutions are given in the following table.

REPATRIATION HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS: FULL-TIME STAFF
30 JUNE 1976

<i>Type of institution</i>	<i>N.S.W.</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>S.A.</i>	<i>W.A.</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>Aust.</i>
General hospitals—							
Medical staff(a)	165	87	46	41	18	9	366
Nursing staff	872	416	384	280	265	59	2,276
Other staff	1,297	896	585	413	499	137	3,827
Total, general hospitals	2,334	1,399	1,015	734	782	205	6,469
Other in-patient institutions(b)	281	137	219	..	57	..	694
Out-patient clinics(b)	159	56	..	33	35	..	283
Limb and appliance centres(b)	85	75	31	23	16	13	243
Grand total	2,859	1,667	1,265	790	890	218	7,689

(a) Medical Officers only, excludes psychologists, speech therapists, etc.

(b) Total staff.

The following table gives details of in-patients treated at Repatriation General Hospitals and other Repatriation institutions in each State. The figures shown refer to treatment episodes, e.g. a person who is admitted to hospital twice during a year is counted twice.

**REPATRIATION GENERAL HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS: IN-PATIENTS
TREATED, 1975-76**

	<i>N.S.W.</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>S.A.</i>	<i>W.A.</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>Aust.</i>
REPATRIATION GENERAL HOSPITALS							
In-patients at beginning of year	913	502	380	281	337	84	2,497
Admissions and re-admissions during year	16,836	7,868	9,360	5,513	6,740	1,512	47,829
<i>Total in-patients treated</i>	<i>17,749</i>	<i>8,370</i>	<i>9,740</i>	<i>5,794</i>	<i>7,077</i>	<i>1,596</i>	<i>50,326</i>
Discharges	16,148	7,381	8,928	5,185	6,381	1,414	45,437
Deaths	861	619	393	347	370	96	2,626
In-patients at end of year	800	370	419	262	326	86	2,263
Average daily beds occupied	804	356	368	236	299	74	2,137
OTHER REPATRIATION INSTITUTIONS							
In-patients at beginning of year	193	105	152	23	39	..	512
Admissions and re-admissions during year	2,387	753	1,016	52	248	..	4,456
<i>Total in-patients treated</i>	<i>2,580</i>	<i>858</i>	<i>1,168</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>287</i>	<i>..</i>	<i>4,968</i>
Discharges	2,229	693	921	68	231	..	4,142
Deaths	145	65	110	7	10	..	337
In-patients at end of year	206	100	137	(a)	46	..	489
Average daily beds occupied	191	86	143	22	41	..	483

(a) Birlee closed 31 March 1976.

In addition to the Repatriation institutions, eligible patients are treated in other country and metropolitan hospitals and nursing homes at Repatriation expense. During 1975-76, 21,435 Repatriation in-patients were accommodated and treated in hospitals and 7,994 in nursing homes.

Repatriation psychiatric patients requiring custodial care are, by agreement with the State Governments, accommodated at the expense of the Department of Veterans' Affairs in separate wings of psychiatric hospitals administered by the State authorities. Excluding 60 on trial leave, there were 646 Repatriation patients in these hospitals at 30 June 1976.

Out-patient treatment is provided throughout Australia at Repatriation hospitals and clinics and through the Repatriation Local Medical Officer Scheme. During 1975-76, 608,864 out-patients were treated at Repatriation institutions, and visits to or by local medical officers totalled 2,505,016. The number of Repatriation local medical officers in Australia at 30 June 1976 was 6,976.

Artificial limb and appliance services

A wide range of artificial limbs and other surgical aids is supplied by the artificial limb and appliance centre in each State capital and Darwin. In addition, the Department maintains the Central Development Unit located in Melbourne, and engages in research and development in the prosthetic and orthotic field.

Since 1973, artificial limbs have been provided free of charge to all members of the community who need them, either through the Department's artificial limb and appliance centres or on order through commercial limb-makers. The number of limbs supplied through the Department has increased significantly as the community has taken advantage of the free-limbs scheme.

Details of production at all centres during 1975-76 are as follows: arms, 331; legs, 2,485; surgical and adapted footwear, 7,745; other surgical appliances, 1,575; and repairs, 28,745.

General Repatriation benefits and miscellaneous

Other activities of Department of Veterans' Affairs

In addition to the payment of pensions and the provision of medical treatment, the Department also provides various benefits and allowances designed to meet the needs of special classes of veterans and their dependants. These include the Soldiers' Children Education Scheme (see page 216).

In addition, gift cars and an annual allowance for their upkeep are provided for veterans who, as a result of service, have suffered the amputation of both legs above the knees or amputation of one leg above the knee plus any two other amputations (above the ankle or at or above the wrist) or complete paraplegia resulting in the total loss of the use of both legs. A grant of up to \$100 may be made towards the funeral expenses of eligible veterans and certain of their dependants. Payment of up to \$10 may be made to provide such necessities as meals, sleeping accommodation, etc. for veterans in need of immediate relief. Also, certain concessions in telephone rental charges are provided for some classes of veterans and their dependants, including blinded veterans, war and defence widows and certain service and Special Rate disability pensioners. Veterans who have been blinded as a result of service may be issued with talking book machines. The Australian Red Cross Society supplies 'book' records or cassettes for these machines free of charge, thus enabling the blinded to enjoy a wide range of literature.

Expenditure in 1976-77 on general Repatriation benefits for all wars was \$8,137,000, comprising Soldiers' Children Education Scheme, \$3,468,000; recreation transport allowance, \$838,000; and other benefits, \$3,831,000.

As at 30 June 1977, trust and other funds administered by the Department of Veterans' Affairs held \$18,555,269 in securities (face value) and \$1,337,166 in cash, a total of \$19,892,435.

Reciprocal arrangements with the United Kingdom, New Zealand and other countries provide for the payment of pensions, etc. to eligible Australian veterans living overseas and to eligible veterans from overseas who are living in Australia.

Soldiers' Children Education Scheme

The Soldiers' Children Education Scheme was established in 1921 and operates with the assistance of the voluntary Education Boards in each State. These Boards consist of representatives of government and non-government education authorities and of ex-service and other organisations which have a general interest in the welfare of the children of veterans. The objects of the Scheme are to assist and encourage eligible children in acquiring a standard of education compatible with their aptitude and ability, and to prepare them to enter an agricultural, commercial, professional, or industrial calling of their own choice. Eligible children are children of veterans whose deaths have been accepted as service-related; or of veterans who died from causes not service-related but who were receiving at the date of death a disability pension at a Special Rate for blindness, total and permanent incapacity, or amputation of two or more limbs; or of veterans who, as a result of service, are blinded totally and permanently incapacitated. From the commencement of primary education until the child reaches twelve years of age, school requisites and fares are provided. From the commencement of secondary education or from the age of twelve years, whichever is earlier, an education allowance is payable while the child is undertaking primary or secondary education. Assistance beyond secondary education is provided where an approved beneficiary continues with a course of specialised education or training necessary for a career. At this stage of training, in addition to the education allowance, fees are paid and text books, essential equipment and other minor benefits are provided.

All education allowances are subject to an income test, i.e. the amount of education allowance payable depends on the amount of income a child receives over the allowed limit. Weekly rates of allowances vary from time to time; current rates are available from the Department of Veterans' Affairs' Branch Offices.

The following tables show the costs of education under the scheme for the year ended 30 June 1976, and the number of children in receipt of benefit at 30 June 1976.

SOLDIERS' CHILDREN EDUCATION SCHEME: EXPENDITURE, 1975-76 (\$'000)

	N.S.W.(a)	Vic.	Qld	S.A.(b)	W.A.	Tas.	Aust.
Cost of education of beneficiaries—							
Under 12 years of age	3	4	4	1	1	1	14
12 years of age and over	1,462	918	532	297	186	128	3,523
Total expenditure	1,465	922	536	298	187	129	(c)3,537

(a) Includes Australian Capital Territory.
of \$16,000.

(b) Includes Northern Territory.

(c) Excludes overseas expenditure

**SOLDIERS' CHILDREN EDUCATION SCHEME: NUMBER RECEIVING BENEFITS(a)
AT 30 JUNE 1976**

<i>Type of training</i>	<i>N.S.W.(b)</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>S.A.(c)</i>	<i>W.A.</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>Over-seas</i>	<i>Total</i>
At school—								
Aged under 14 years(d)	352	184	187	73	59	78	6	939
Aged 14 and under 16 years	524	331	262	96	71	81	6	1,371
Aged 16 and under 18 years	420	274	138	89	49	38	8	1,016
<i>Total at school</i>	<i>1,296</i>	<i>789</i>	<i>587</i>	<i>258</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>197</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>3,326</i>
Professional	530	344	217	131	80	44	6	1,352
Agricultural . . . . .	..	..	..	2	3	..	..	..
Industrial . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<i>Grand total</i>	<i>1,826</i>	<i>1,133</i>	<i>804</i>	<i>389</i>	<i>259</i>	<i>241</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>4,678</i>

(a) Refers only to children in receipt of an education allowance. (b) Includes Australian Capital Territory.
(c) Includes Northern Territory. (d) From 12 years of age or the commencement of secondary education, whichever is the earlier.

Settlement of returned service personnel on the land

Reference to the settlement of returned service personnel on the land will be found in Chapter 13, Rural Industry.

Re-establishment benefits for former regular and former national servicemen

Subject to prescribed conditions, vocational training and business loans are provided for former regular and former national servicemen with a view to ensuring that they are not at a disadvantage when they return to civil life. Loans from \$5,000 (business and professional) and \$10,000 (agricultural) may be granted to veterans in these categories who satisfy prescribed requirements in respect of suitability of their proposed business propositions and adequacy of security. Agricultural loans are administered by the Department of Primary Industry.

Survey of Ex-service personnel, widows and children

In November 1971, a survey based on the quarterly population survey (see Chapter 8, Manpower) was conducted at the request of the then Department of Repatriation and the Services Canteen Trust Fund. Details of the survey were published in Year Book No. 59, page 112 and in the mimeographed bulletin *Ex-service Personnel, Widows and Children* (November 1971) (4403.0).

The Services Canteens Trust Fund

The Services Canteens Trust Fund was established under the *Services Trust Funds Act 1947*. Its funds are derived from the assets and profits of wartime services canteens, mess and regimental funds of disbanded units, and several other sources.

The total amount transferred to the Fund to 31 December 1976 was \$11,059,103. The Act prescribed that of this, \$5 million and such further amounts as the trustees of the Fund might from time to time decide should be devoted to the provision of education facilities for the children of eligible veterans, and that the balance of the Fund should be used to provide relief for veterans and their dependants in necessitous circumstances.

The Fund is administered by eight honorary trustees appointed by the Governor-General. The trustees have power to determine the persons or groups of persons to benefit from the Fund and the extent of the benefits to be granted within the provisions of the Act, and to appoint regional committees to assist with the administration. Members of regional committees are all persons who served in the 1939–45 War or are widows of men who served during the war. The trustees and members of regional committees serve in an honorary capacity.

Assistance from the Fund

Persons eligible for assistance from the Fund are those who, between 3 September 1939 and 30 June 1947, served in the Australian Naval, Military or Air Forces, including members of the canteens staff of any ship of the Royal Australian Navy, persons duly accredited to any part of the Defence Forces who served in an official capacity on full-time paid duty, and their dependants.

The trustees have introduced schemes for providing welfare relief for veterans who are eligible for benefits, and for their dependants; benefits for children of eligible veterans who are suffering from serious and incapacitating afflictions; and education benefits for the children of eligible veterans. The total assistance granted under these three schemes from the inception of the Fund to 31 December 1976 was \$14,354,516 (\$456,676 during 1976) distributed as follows: welfare relief, \$4,500,314 (\$164,379); assistance for afflicted children, \$345,746 (\$1,137); and educational assistance, \$9,508,456 (\$291,160).

For detailed information on the operation of the Fund, reference should be made to the annual reports of the Services Canteens Trust Fund.

Further information on subjects dealt with in this chapter is included in the annual bulletins *Australian National Accounts* (5204.0); *Public Authority Finance: Federal Authorities* (5502.0); *Public Authority Finance: State and Local Government Authorities* (5504.0); *Public Authority Finance: State Governments: Social Services* (5508.0); *Public Authority Finance: Outlay on Aboriginal Affairs by Federal Authorities* (5509.0); and *Social Indicators* (4101.0). Current and summarised information on Commonwealth Government social services is contained in the *Monthly Review of Business Statistics* (1304.0).