2000 No. 3180

PENSIONS

The War Pensions Committees Regulations 2000

Made - - - - -	*1st December 2000*
Laid before Parliament	*8th December 2000*
Coming into force - -	*1st January 2001*

The Secretary of State for Social Security, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by sections 25 and 29 of the Social Security Act 1989(**a**) and section 175(2) to (5) of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992(**b**), and of all other powers enabling him in that behalf, hereby makes the following Regulations:

Citation, commencement and interpretation

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the War Pensions Committees Regulations 2000, and shall come into force on 1st January 2001.

(2) In these Regulations—

"committee" means a war pensions committee or, where the context so requires, the war pensions committee for the relevant area;

"member" means member of a committee or, where the context so requires, a member of the relevant committee; and

"widow" means a widow in receipt of a war widow's pension.

(3) Any reference to Schedule 1 or to Schedule 2 is a reference to the Schedule so numbered in these Regulations, and any reference to the area of a committee is a reference to the area for which the committee is established pursuant to regulation 3, 4, 5 or 6.

Revocation of regulations and abolition of existing committees

2. The following Regulations are hereby revoked:

The War Pensions Committees Regulations 1990(**c**);

The War Pensions Committees (Amendment) Regulations 1995(**d**); and

The War Pensions Committees (Amendment) Regulations 1996(**e**),

and the committees established and operated thereunder shall be abolished.

Committees for England

3. In England, there shall be established for each group of local government areas specified in column 1 of Schedule 1 a committee bearing the name specified in respect of that group in column 2.

(**a**) 1989 c. 24. Section 29 was amended by the Social Security (Consequential Provisions) Act 1992 c. 6, section 4 and Schedule 2 paragraph 106.
(**b**) 1992 c. 4.
(**c**) S.I. 1990/1349.
(**d**) S.I. 1995/3119.
(**e**) S.I. 1996/1790.

Committee for Wales

4. There shall be established for Wales a committee named the Wales War Pensions Committee (Pwyllgor Pensiynau Rhyel Cymru).

Committee for Northern Ireland

5. There shall be established for Northern Ireland a committee named the Northern Ireland War Pensions Committee.

Committees for Scotland

6. In Scotland, there shall be established for each group of local government areas specified in column 1 of the following Table a committee bearing the name specified in respect of that group in column 2—

TABLE

1. *Group comprising—*	*2.* *Name of committee*
City of Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Angus, The Borders, Clackmannan, City of Dundee, City of Edinburgh, Falkirk, Fife, Highland, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian, Moray, Orkney Islands, Perthshire and Kinross, Shetland Islands, Stirling, Western Isles.	East Scotland War Pensions Committee.
Argyll and Bute, East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Dumbarton and Clydebank, East Dunbartonshire, City of Glasgow, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire.	West Scotland War Pensions Committee.

Membership, constitution, proceedings, etc of committees

7.—(1) Each committee shall consist of not fewer than 12 nor more than 20 members who shall be appointed by the Secretary of State.

(2) The provisions of Schedule 2 shall have effect with respect to committees.

Functions of a committee

8.—(1) In its area, a committee shall—

(a) enable and foster local consultation by the Secretary of State on issues affecting war pensioners or widows;

(b) help to increase awareness about war pensions;

(c) support, monitor and help to increase awareness about the services provided by the War Pensions Agency(**a**) and by other organisations with a view to ensuring that the welfare needs of pensioners, widows and their dependants are suitably addressed; and

(d) assist war pensioners and widows with any problem or complaint regarding pensions or the welfare services provided by the War Pensions Agency.

(2) In its area, a committee may, in particular—

(a) assist any individual war pensioner or widow in pursuing any problem or complaint mentioned in paragraph (1)(d);

(b) make representations and recommendations to the Secretary of State about any problem or complaint mentioned in paragraph (1)(d);

(c) report to the Secretary of State on any matter arising pursuant to its functions under paragraph (1); and

(d) receive and disburse funds from charitable or other sources for the sole purpose of provision of social activities for war pensioners and widows.

(**a**) An executive agency of the Department of Social Security.

(3) Where funds are received as mentioned in paragraph (2)(d), the committee shall keep proper accounts of all receipts and disbursements, and it shall provide a copy of those accounts to the Secretary of State as soon as is practicable after:

(a) the end of each financial year; and

(b) at any other time, on receipt of a written request from the Secretary of State.

Recommendations and representations

9. Any recommendations or representations which a committee makes to the Secretary of State shall be by way of a resolution submitted to him.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Social Security.

Hugh Bayley
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State,
Department of Social Security

1st December 2000

SCHEDULE 1

Regulation 3

COMMITTEES IN ENGLAND

1. *Group comprising—*	*2.* *Name of committee*
The counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk.	Eastern War Pensions Committee.
Greater London	London War Pensions Committee.
The counties of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, and Nottinghamshire.	East Midlands War Pensions Committee.
The counties of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire; and the metropolitan county of West Midlands.	West Midlands War Pensions Committee.
The counties of Cleveland, Durham, and Northumberland; and the metropolitan county of Tyne and Wear.	North East War Pensions Committee.
The counties of Cheshire, Cumbria and Lancashire; and the metropolitan counties of Greater Manchester and Merseyside.	North West War Pensions Committee.
The counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey, and West Sussex.	South East War Pensions Committee.
The counties of Avon, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset, and Wiltshire; and the Isles of Scilly.	South West War Pensions Committee.
The counties of Humberside and North Yorkshire; and the metropolitan counties of South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire.	Yorkshire and Humber War Pensions Committee.

SCHEDULE 2

Regulation 7(2)

PROCEEDINGS, ETC. OF COMMITTEES

MEMBERS

1. Subject to paragraphs 2 and 3, a member shall hold office for a period not exceeding 3 years in any term of appointment, and may be re-appointed.

2. A member may resign from a committee by notice in writing sent to the Secretary of State.

3. The Secretary of State may remove a member from office if he has reasonable grounds to believe that the member is unable, unfit or unsuitable to discharge the functions of a member.

4. The Secretary of State may, subject to regulation 7(1), appoint a new member at any time, whether to fill a casual vacancy or otherwise.

CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

5. The Secretary of State shall appoint a Chairman for each committee. The appointment shall be in writing, and shall specify the term of office, which shall not exceed the appointee's term as a member. A Chairman may be re-appointed.

6. The power in paragraph 5 is exercisable both on the establishment of a committee and to fill any vacancy arising thereafter.

7. The committee shall elect a Vice-Chairman from among their number, who shall hold office for such period (not exceeding the appointee's term as a member) as the committee by resolution determines.

8. An election of a Vice-Chairman shall be conducted by ballot.

9. The following shall preside over any committee meeting—

(a) the Chairman; or

(b) in the Chairman's absence, the Vice-Chairman,

but if neither of those officers is present, the members present shall elect one of their number to act as Chairman for the purposes of that meeting only.

PROCEEDINGS

10. The committee shall hold a meeting at least twice a year.

11. The Secretary of State shall decide the time and place of the first meeting of each committee. Thereafter, each committee shall decide the time and place of its meetings.

12. One-third of the members may requisition a meeting by giving written notice to the Chairman, who shall call the meeting within 4 weeks of receipt of the notice.

13. The quorum of a committee shall be one quarter of its members, disregarding any fractions, or 4 members, whichever is the greater.

14. Subject to paragraph 8, a committee shall make decisions by a simple majority of members present and voting. In the event of equality of votes, the person presiding over the meeting shall have a casting vote.

15. Minutes of a meeting shall:

(a) be recorded in a minute book;

(b) include the names of members present at the meeting;

(c) be signed by the person presiding at the meeting at which those minutes are approved as correct; and

(d) be open to inspection by the Secretary of State.

16. An official of the Secretary of State may attend any meeting of any committee as an observer.

SUB-COMMITTEES

17. A committee may, from among its members, appoint a sub-committee to assist the committee in carrying out any of its functions.

18. A sub-committee shall consist of no fewer than 3 members and no more than four fifths of the total number of members.

19. The committee shall appoint from among its number a Chairman for the sub-committee. The Chairman for the sub-committee shall preside over any sub-committee meeting, but in the Chairman's absence the members of the sub-committee present shall elect one of their number to act as Chairman for the purposes of that meeting only.

20. Decisions of the sub-committee shall be by a simple majority of the sub-committee members present and voting, and in the event of equality of votes the Chairman of the sub-committee shall have a casting vote.

21. Paragraphs 15 and 16 shall apply to any meeting of a sub-committee.

22. A sub-committee shall act in accordance with any directions of the committee.

23. A sub-committee which considers a complaint made to the committee by a person receiving or claiming a war pension shall, as soon as reasonably practicable, submit to the committee a report of any hearing it has held into the complaint together with a copy of any representations it has made to the Secretary of State.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations make changes to the constitution and functions of war pensions committees. Such committees were established by regulations pursuant to section 25 of the Social Security Act 1989. Existing committees are abolished and new ones set up. Except in the case of Northern Ireland (for which there continues to be one committee), the new committees generally cover larger areas, and they are fewer in number. There is one committee for Wales (regulation 4), one for Northern Ireland (regulation 5) and two for Scotland (regulation 6). Nine regional committees are set up for England (regulation 3 and Schedule 1).

Regulation 7 and Schedule 2 provide for the appointment of committee members, and for constitution and proceedings of committees, and regulation 8 sets out a committee's functions.

These Regulations do not impose a charge on business.

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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