



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Policy Development Branch

SOP Bulletin No. 224

6 September 2021

THE FOLLOWING RMA SOPS TAKE EFFECT ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2021

New conditions	Nil
Revocations & Replacements	Fibrosing interstitial lung disease Polycythaemia vera Primary myelofibrosis Essential thrombocythaemia Carpal tunnel syndrome Myeloma
Amendments	Ischaemic heart disease

NOTEWORTHY FEATURES

Fibrosing interstitial lung disease	Revocation – 85 & 86 of 2021 Replaces 53 & 54 of 2013 as amended
--------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------

- This SOP has formatting updates, some minor factor changes and two new factors.
- In the smoking factor the dose has been reduced by 1/3 in the RH SOP and the cessation period has been removed in both SOPs.

- There is now one combined silica dust factor (for both open and enclosed environments), with a shortened minimum latency (from 5 years to 1 year).
- The coal dust factor now also covers exposure in an open environment.
- In the ionising radiation dose factor the dose has been cut from 0.4 to 0.2 sieverts (RH & BOP).
- There are two additions to the list of drugs for the RH drugs factor: fluoxetine (Prozac - an antidepressant); and leflunomide (an anti-rheumatoid drug).
- There are new factors for:
 - chronic vapour, gas, dust, fume or smoke inhalation, from a specified list of substances (RH & BOP); and
 - chronic inhalation of smoke from indoor cooking/heating fires (RH only).

Polycythaemia vera	Revocation – 87 & 88 of 2021 Replaces 11 & 12 of 2013
---------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------

Primary myelofibrosis	Revocation – 89 & 90 of 2021 Replaces 17 & 18 of 2013
------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------

Essential thrombocythaemia	Revocation – 91 & 92 of 2021 Replaces 15 & 16 of 2013
-----------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------

- These three related conditions together make up a group known as the Philadelphia chromosome-negative myeloproliferative neoplasms. They are rare neoplasms that involve the excess production of blood cells (red cells, white cells, platelets) by the bone marrow.
- These SOPs have been reviewed together, with similar changes made to each SOP.
- The definitions have been updated, with further information on clinical manifestations and other features provided, in the form of notes.
- Each SOP previously had only an “inability to obtain appropriate clinical management” factor. A smoking onset factor has been added, for RH and BOP, for each of the conditions.

Carpal tunnel syndrome**Revocation – 93 & 94 of 2021**

Replaces 7 & 8 of 2013

- The definition is unchanged.
- Three previous factors concerning various activities involving the forearm/hand (repetitive/forceful hand activities, hand or forearm vibration, and wheelchair use) have been merged into one factor for specified activities. The factor now requires any combination of those activities for 8 hrs per week for 6 months. Previously the different categories of activities had to be assessed independently (and be performed for 130 hrs within 120 days). The specified activities now also include forms of weight bearing with the hands that were not previously covered.
- Four previous factors concerning injury, fracture/dislocation, surgery and burns have also been merged into one factor.
- The previous factor for obesity now also covers being overweight (RH & BOP).
- Previously separate factors for inflammatory arthritis and osteoarthritis have also been combined.
- There is a new factor for taking an immune checkpoint inhibitor (an immunotherapy drug for cancer).
- Hypothyroidism has been removed as a factor from the BOP SOP.

Myeloma**Revocation – 95 & 96 of 2021**

Replaces 69 & 70 of 2012 as amended

- The definition has been reformatted but is effectively unchanged. The previous exclusion for monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS) has been omitted, but the RMA has declared that condition not to be disease of injury (in 2019), so it remains excluded from this SOP.
- Previous RH only factors for working as a painter and exposure to phenoxyacid herbicides (2,4-D and 2,4,5-T) have been removed.
- Previous RH and BOP factors for exposure to 2,3,7,8 TCDD (dioxin) as shown by serum dioxin measurement have also been removed. A factor for exposure to a chemical agent contaminated by 2,3,7,8 TCDD remains (although all the specified chemical agents either became obsolete or were banned several decades ago).

- A factor for having HIV infection has been removed from the BOP SOP, but remains in the RH SOP.
- The previous organ transplant factor has been extended to cover tissue transplant.
- The BOP obesity factor is unchanged, but the RH factor now also covers being overweight.
- There is a new RH only factor for having a specified autoimmune disease.

Ischaemic heart disease**Amendment – 97 & 98 of 2021**

Amends 1 & 2 of 2016 as amended

- There has been a minor wording change to the factor for having an autoimmune disease, with “specified autoimmune collagen vascular disease” replaced by “specified list of autoimmune diseases”. The more consequential change is to the associated definition, with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis both added to the list of diseases covered by the factor.

Contact for this bulletin:[Dr Jon Kelley](#)