

9-2-2011

To whom it may concern.

This is my testimony about herbicides on Guam:

My name is Ed Jackson; I am a retired USAF MSgt. with 22 years of service. I was referred to you by some of the veterans of Guam I am in contact with. I was TDY to Andersen AFB, Guam in late 1972 to about mid-1973, in support of Bullet Shot and the Linebacker II bombing campaign. At the time I was a bus and truck driver assigned to the 43rd Transportation Squadron on Andersen AFB. Most of my assignments were to drive the B-52 and KC-135 crews to or from their aircraft for the missions they flew. On several occasions I would be assigned to drive a truck, load and unload 55 gallon ('minor' leaking) drums of Agent Orange, Blue, White, etc. to the US Navy Base where they were loaded aboard ships. I have no direct knowledge of what the Navy did with these drums but have assumed they were to be dumped at sea. On a few occasions, I would be assigned to transport drums of AO (and the other 'rainbow agents') to an area on Northwest Field, near the abandoned runways and dump these drums over a small cliff (about 20') in dumps on that portion of Andersen AFB. I did this only a few times, maybe 5-6 times, and we dumped about 20 to 25 or 30 drums as I recall. These were drums that had 'major' leaks and deemed to 'unsafe' to drive through the civilian areas of Guam to the Navy Base. We were never given any protective clothing, masks, etc. I would back the truck to the edge of

the cliff and we would 'manhandle' the drums off the back of the truck and down the cliff. The drums often broke open and spilled the contents further down the embankment (it was sloped down towards the ocean from the bottom of the small cliff, but there was a jungle about 100 yards, or so, down the slope, so I could not see where the slope met the ocean. Some of the drums when they broke open would splash the AO back up at us, and getting us wet. I never thought much about that. I believe the current name of these dump sites where I dumped the drums of AO on Northwest Field is the Urunao Sites #1 and #2. Both of these sites have the rusted remains of these drums I dumped and dioxin in the soils.

I also know for a fact that AO was used on Andersen AFB for vegetation control along the runways, taxiways, fuel lines, and around buildings, including my barracks at the Marbo Annex, as part of the 'normal' base maintenance. I was not involved in the spraying operations, but have been e-mailing someone who was, Retired USAF MSgt. Leroy Foster. He would spray the stuff around the fuel pipelines and pump stations on the island, and sometimes SSgt Ralph Station would come around to do his maintenance work (not spraying) on the pipeline and pumps while Leroy was spraying the same equipment with AO.

I should say that is until I was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Disease in 2007. I filed my AO claim with the VA in 2007 and have been fighting them ever since then. My claim has been denied by the Waco VARO, but I have appealed and now that appeal is at the BVA. I have been collecting data on AO in the

Western Pacific Region over the last 4 years and find that Guam was a major player in stockpiling AO for the Vietnam War, and other places, like Okinawa, Korea, Philippines, as well as Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. I have found out that New Zealand was a major shipper of the rainbow agents to Guam and the Philippines. Dow Chemical and Monsanto acknowledge in the 2004 and 2005 investor reports of their economic liability to those who handled, used, or were around AO on Guam.

I understand you are collecting data on the buried drums of AO in Korea and Okinawa from Soldiers, Airman, and Sailors involved in those 'military details'. I hope you can also use the story of my own experience and involvement on Guam, too.

I testify that my statement is accurate and factual.

Thank you,
Ed Jackson, MSgt. (RET), USAF
116 Grand Meadow Dr.
Fort Worth, TX 76108

Congressman Steve Buyer
Veterans' Affairs Committee
Ranking Republican Chairman
2230 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

2 November 2010

Dear Congressman Buyer,

I am deeply saddened to hear about your upcoming retirement from the United States Congress House of Representatives. I will pray for you and your wife's health. I know she will be in your good hands and care after your retirement.

Sir, like you, I am a proud retiree of the US Military Forces, I retired from the US Air Force as a MSgt. in 1992 after 22 years of service to this great nation. I still believe this is a great nation and our greatest moments are yet to come.

I am grateful for your service to the United States as a Col. in the US Army Reserves, the Congressman who has represented the great State of Indiana's 4th District, and the House Committee on Veteran's Affairs. You Sir, are one of the true hero's we have in the Congress.

I am not a citizen of your district, nor the State of Indiana, I live in Fort Worth, Texas, and Congresswoman Kay Granger represents me in the US House of Representatives. But, she is not on the committee you have been on, in the past the Chairman of that committee and currently the Ranking Member.

Please let me explain why I am writing to you. I am looking for information of herbicide storage (Agent Orange), shipments, use, and disposal on Guam.

During my service, I was deployed to Andersen AFB, Guam from Nov. 1972 to May 1973 as part of Operation Bullet Shot. Those of us deployed, and those permanently assigned to Andersen AFB were directly supporting B-52 and KC-135 combat operations, including Linebacker II, the 1972 Christmas bombing campaign of North Vietnam. My duties normally were to drive a bus transporting the B-52 and KC-135 crews to and from their aircraft.

I also was assigned to drive cargo trucks from time to time. On occasion I would be tasked to transport Agent Orange and the other "Rainbow Agent Herbicides" to or from the US Navy base for transport by ship, the flight line for transport by aircraft, and even to "Northwest Field" to be dumped by myself and several other USAF Airmen and NCOs. We were ordered to dump drums that were leaking over a small cliff into a trash/junk pile at the bottom of the 20 to 30 ft cliff. To my knowledge, in 1972 and 1973 those orders we followed were not illegal, and Northwest Field was USAF property.

These herbicides and their chemicals were splashed on me and my fellow Airman.

I developed Hodgkin's Disease in 2007 and filed a claim with the Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA) (claim # XXX-XX-XXXX) . My claim was denied, but I am appealing that decision and should be reviewed by the DRO at the Waco, TX VARO. As you know, Hodgkin's Disease is a rare form of cancer and one of the 14 illnesses the VA recognizes as being caused by exposure to Agent Orange and its chemical components 2,4-D, TCDD, and 2, 4, 5-T. Hodgkin's Disease effects less than 8,000 people annually, lucky me.

The VA's decision is based on the fact that no records were found of Herbicide Agent Orange was ever stored, used, or disposed of on Guam. It is my understanding that if the VA cannot find evidence that can dispute the veteran's claim and evidence, then the law requires the claim to be found in the veteran's favor. In other words, just because those records cannot be found does not mean they never existed. Therein lies the "fight" I am having with the VA. I have submitted a mountain of evidence to support my claim, as other veterans have. Recently, I have come across a letter written by, then, Principal Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (for Installations and Environment) Philip W. Grone dated 23 September 2003. In his letter,

The Honorable Mr. Grone said:

The Department has found no record of the use, storage, or testing of Herbicides Orange, Blue, or White on Guam. In 1952, roughly 5,000 drums of Herbicide Purple were transported to Guam and stored there in anticipation of use on the Korean Peninsula. The herbicide was never used and was returned to the United States. Although other herbicides may have passed through Guam during the Vietnam Conflict, we have no record of long-term storage or use of these herbicides on Guam.

He goes on to try to explain why the concentration of DIOXIN (DIOXIN is also known as TCDD and is one of many deadly chemicals that are ingredients of Agent Orange, and perhaps the deadliest, most toxic, chemical know) is so high at Andersen AFB. The EPA has said it is as high as **19,000 ppm** at one location, and very high concentrations at several other locations on the base, as well as other places on the Island of Guam.

Sir, as you know, the EPA considers a "safe" level of DIOXIN (TCDD) is **1 ppb**, making Andersen AFB some **19 MILLION times the "safe" level**. The TCDD is one of many other chemicals that have been found in the soils and water supply of the base between the mid 1970s and the early 2000s, along with TCE and PCE. We drank this water, and showered and cooked with it.

The Honorable Mr. Grone said:

The presence of dioxin contamination at a site does not necessarily indicate that Herbicide Orange was used or stored at that site. According to Air Force studies, the dioxins at sites references in the Public Health Assessment were associated with burned material. Access to sites on Guam with elevated dioxin levels is highly restricted and public exposure is not expected.

With all due respect to Mr. Grone, that is a lot of burning, I was there and he was not, in 1972 and 1973. I am not the only veteran that supported the Vietnam War from Guam that had the effects of herbicides and TCDD exposure and have it give terrible health problems 30, 35, or even 40 years after exposure. There are approximately 200 other veterans, that I have been told of, who served on Guam in the 1960s and 1970s, or later who have one, or more of the 14 diseases and illnesses, and still suffer the effects or secondary effects, the VA acknowledges are caused by Herbicide Exposure.

I am asking, Sir, what is Mr. Grone saying when he said “Although other herbicides may have passed through Guam during the Vietnam Conflict, we have no record of long term storage or use of these herbicides on Guam” mean?

I know from my own military career, “long term storage” means 10 or more years to the military. That is what some USN ships and USAF aircraft are in Arizona and California, long term storage.

Which herbicides is Mr. Grone talking about, Agent Orange, Agent Purple, Agent Blue, or other Rainbow Agents? When did these shipments of herbicides to Guam take place, and how long were they there? Why doesn't the DOD have records of dumping and disposal of some of these drums on Guam!

I know for a fact these herbicides were on Guam in 1972 and 1973, and were there before and after those years.

Northwest Field is an abandoned airfield that is still USAF property. It was abandoned shortly after WWII and has had very little use since then. If! this property is not needed (excess?), why does the USAF keep it? Is it because of all the herbicide drums containing TCDD veterans, including myself, dropped over the cliffs there, contaminating the soils, and water?

The US Army, US Air Force, and US Navy all say they have no records saying Agent Orange was shipped to, stored, used, or disposed of on Guam. That is a long way from saying Agent Orange was not on Guam during the Vietnam War. They said they have no records of it.

Military logistics would keep the stockpile of Agent Orange near South Vietnam during

the war, and it would also need to be stored somewhere after Operation Ranch Hand was stopped in 1972. It was also 1972 when the EPA ordered this herbicide no longer used (commercially) within the United States, so the DOD had to store it outside of the US. The USAF began transferring these deadly herbicides to Johnston Island, for disposal at sea (I believe it was burned on barges) in 1978 and completed in 1984. Guam would be the only place where DOD could store it, as it is a US Territory, although the US Navy had some stored in Gulfport, MS about that time.

Sir, does your committee have access to any such records and can you help find the records Mr. Grone was talking about when he said herbicides may have been shipped through Guam, or any other records? If they can be found, can I have a copy of those records to support my VA claim?

I know you work very closely with Chairman Bob Filner. He has told veterans that Guam will be included in his bill of presumptive locations updating the Agent Orange bill of 2009, HR-2254. But, I have not seen this happen, also, as far as I can tell, HR-2254 is still in your committee and Guam has not been added to the bill. Do you know when, or if that will be added to HR-2254, or is it essentially dead until the 112th Congress begins their first secession on 3 January 2011?

Sir, I wish you, your wife, and your family many happy years in your retirement. As I said earlier, her care is in good hands.

Thank you,

Edward W. Jackson,
MSgt. (RET), USAF
116 Grand Meadow Dr.
Fort Worth, TX 76108

Cc:

Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison
284 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator John Cornyn
517 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Congresswoman Kay Granger
320 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Eric Shinseki
Department of Veteran's Affairs
810 Vermont Ave, NW
Washington, DC! 20420

Attachment:

Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (for Installations and Environment) Philip
W. Grone dated 23 September 2003 letter



OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

3000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3000

ACQUISITION,
TECHNOLOGY
AND LOGISTICS

The Honorable Lane Evans
Ranking Member
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
335 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

SEP 23 2003

Dear Congressman Evans:

This is in response to your letter to the Secretary of Defense concerning the use and storage of Vietnam-era herbicides, including the contaminant dioxin on Guam. I am responding on his behalf.

The Department has found no record of the use, storage, or testing of Herbicides Orange, Blue, or White on Guam. In 1952, roughly 5,000 drums of Herbicide Purple were transported to Guam and stored there in anticipation of use on the Korean Peninsula. The herbicide was never used and was returned to the United States. Although other herbicides may have passed through Guam during the Vietnam Conflict, we have no record of long-term storage or use of these herbicides on Guam.

The presence of dioxin contamination at a site does not necessarily indicate that Herbicide Orange was used or stored at that site. According to Air Force studies, the dioxins at sites references in the Public Health Assessment were associated with burned material. Access to sites on Guam with elevated dioxin levels is highly restricted and public exposure is not expected.

A summary of information obtained from a search of the records at the U.S. Army's Center for Unit Records Research on the use Vietnam-era herbicides in the other locations you requested is attached and has already been supplied to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sincerely,

Philip W. Grone

Principal Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense
(Installations and Environment)

Attachment:
As stated



Attached are the highlights of the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) FY-2011 budget from the VA's own "FY-2011 Fast Facts".

As you can see, the VA has asked for \$2.149 Billion for administrative costs supporting VA Disability claims. This is an increase of about 27% (\$460 Million) over FY-2010. Included in the FY-2011 increase is a 9% increase in what the VA pays its 3,000 attorneys to fight veterans who file or appeal claims.

The VA also claims its disability compensation as an "entitlement program". It is not, it is compensation for illnesses, injuries, and wounds suffered by veterans while they were on active duty and in service to this country. Veterans do not receive an entitlement, what they receive is an earned benefit, particularly if they were exposed to hazardous situations due to performing their official military duties.

By requesting this increase in the VA FY-11 budget, the VA is really asking to increase the size of its bureaucracy, not providing compensation and benefits to those who gave up their health for the United States. What is the VA's priority, the veterans, or its own bureaucracy?

It is suppose to be the veteran. But it is not, and has not been the veteran as the priority.

The VA actually takes money from retired military veterans for the compensation they receive, if their disability rating is 50% or less. In other words, a veteran who served for 22 years, and has a 30% VA Disability rating loses \$376 per month from his military service retirement pay to collect that \$376 from the VA. The veteran is paying for his own compensation, the VA is not. No other group of retirees have to pay for their own disability ratings but the retired veteran. The US Senate recently removed an amendment from a bill already approved by the House that would have allowed retired military veterans to receive "concurrent receipt" of their full military retirement and their VA disability compensation. This amounts to a "tax increase" on retired and disabled US Veterans as the Senate wants to continue to take away an already earned benefit, even though it is not called a "tax".

Does this add to the overall federal budget? Yes, it does. However, the Congress can pay for veterans compensation and concurrent receipt by controlling the budget increases in the VA alone. The VA wants some \$3.3 Billion for "information technology". In the recent past, the VA has spent countless billions of information technology including computer systems and programs, only to find out these programs did not work, and canceled the project. There are many adjustments the Congress can make to the budget to pay for our veterans.

There are approximately 200 veterans from Guam who have filed claims, or have appeals pending on their exposure to Agent Orange, and the deadly dioxin in it. The vast majority of these claims have been denied or in some stage of the appeal process because they have been initially denied. These veterans have suffered from various cancers that even the VA acknowledges are caused by Agent Orange exposure, as well as diabetes and auto-immune diseases. There have been about 3 or 4 Guam Agent Orange exposure claims approved by the VA, or the VA Courts. Yet, the remaining 195, or so, Guam veterans are told no records of Agent Orange stored, used, disposed of, or transported to and/or from the island can be found. Andersen AFB on Guam was the major user and storage facility of Agent Orange. It was shipped to/from Guam aboard US Navy ships and US Air Force aircraft. The Guam Agent Orange stockpile was the main source for Agent Orange used in Vietnam. Many corroded and rusted drums of Agent Orange were simply dumped on Guam. Agent Orange was used to control vegetation all over Andersen, all the Navy installations, and other places on the island. Even the US EPA and Guam EPA acknowledge Andersen AFB still has dioxin contamination as high as 19,000 ppm. Andersen AFB was also a major B-52 base during the Vietnam War and conducted bombings in North or South Vietnam almost daily.

The Blue Water Navy, which conducted combat operations and operated of the coasts of Vietnam processed the water used aboard those ships from the waters off Vietnam. The water contained the overspray and runoff of Agent Orange and dioxin. That water, once processed aboard ship (and still contained dioxin) was used to drink, shower, cook, and laundry aboard these ships, of all types.

The extent of Agent Orange exposure to veterans who never stepped foot in Vietnam goes much further than the Vietnamese land mass.

It is long over due these veterans be compensated and cared for. There are currently about 300 Vietnam Era veterans dying each day, a rate even higher than veterans who fought the Korean War. The average age of the Vietnam Era Veteran today is only 62.

Ed Jackson,
MSgt (RET), USAF



VA 2011 Budget Fast Facts



Major Appropriation Issues

Transformation

- Provides resources to support the transformation of VA into a 21st Century organization to ensure Veterans are cared for over a life time, from the day the oath is taken to the day they are laid to rest.

Medical Care

- Secures timely, sufficient, and predictable funding for health care through 2012 with advance appropriations
- Continues gradual expansion of healthcare eligibility; providing access to more than 500,000 previously ineligible veterans by 2013
- \$5.2 billion (up \$410 million) to expand inpatient, residential, and outpatient mental health programs
- \$799 million (up \$265 million) to implement VA's comprehensive plan to reduce homelessness. This includes \$218 million for the Homeless Grants and Per Diem program and liaisons to assist community organizations
- \$250 million to improve access to care in rural and highly rural areas
- \$6.8 billion (up \$859 million) to expand institutional and non-institutional long term care services. Of this amount, \$163 million (up \$42 million) is for home tele-health to improve access to care.
- \$218 million (up \$19 million) to meet the needs of women Veterans
- \$2.6 billion (up \$597 million) for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom to meet the needs of over 439,000 Veterans

Claims Processing

- \$2.149 billion, (up \$460 million, or 27 percent) to support improved benefits processing through a combination of additional staff, improved business practices, and expanded technology.
- Supports the completion of more than 1.2 million disability compensation and pension claims, a 16 percent increase over 2010.
- Provides funding to meet increased education claims workload resulting from new Post-9/11 GI Bill
- \$13.4 billion in an FY 2010 supplemental for new presumptions related to Agent Orange exposure

National Cemetery Administration

- \$251 million for operations and maintenance to ensure VA's cemeteries are maintained as national shrines.
- The budget also provides effective stewardship of the environment through green and renewable energy projects.

Information Technology

- More than \$3.3 billion to support a reliable and accessible IT infrastructure, a high-performing workforce, and modernized information systems
- \$347 million for development and implementation of HealtheVet (electronic health record)
- \$145 million for paperless claims processing system

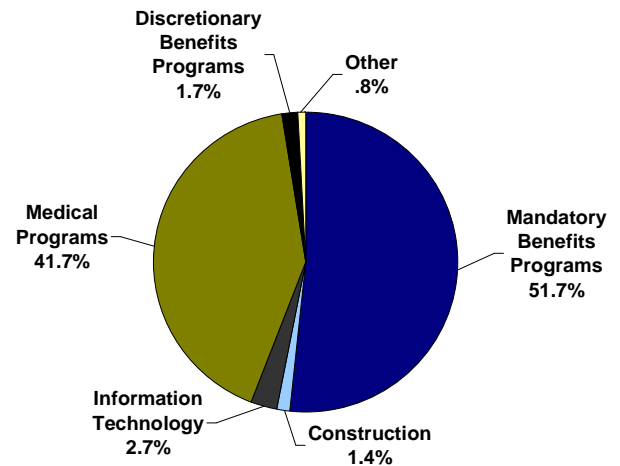
Construction

- Supports three medical facility projects already underway, and begins two new medical facility projects.
- Provides funding to begin new burial policies that will provide a burial option to an additional 500,000 Veterans and eligible family members.

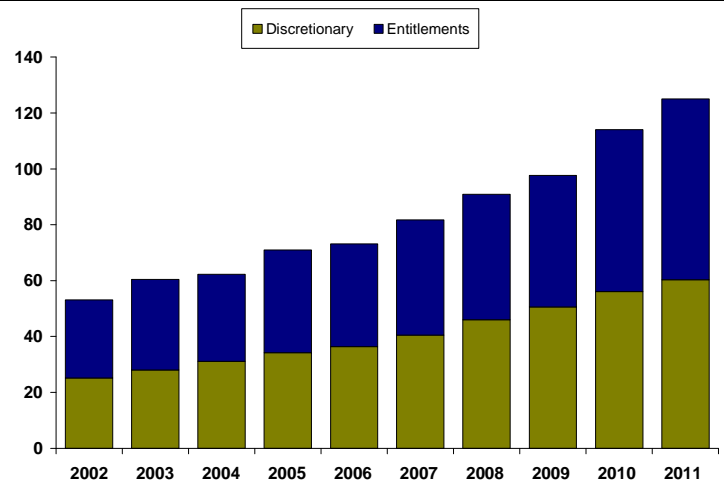
Entitlement Benefits

- \$64.7 billion for mandatory benefits including compensation for new Agent Orange presumptive conditions and Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits.

FY 2011 VA Budget Breakout



VA's Historical Perspective



	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
DISC.	25.1	28	31.1	34.2	36.4	40.5	46	50.6	56.1	60.3
ENT.	28	32.4	31.2	36.8	36.8	41.3	44.9	47.1	58.0	64.7
Total VA	53.1	60.4	62.3	71.0	73.2	81.8	90.9	97.7	114.0	125.0

Discretionary Funding by Appropriation

(\$ in millions)

Medical Care	51,538
Medical and Prosthetic Research	590
Veterans Benefits Administration	2,149
National Cemetery Administration	251
General Administration	463
Information Technology	3,307
Construction/Grants	1,750
Office of Inspector General	109
Loan Administration Funds	165
Total Discretionary	60,321