I wish to make a submission regarding the interim report on:

COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION FOR VETERANS.

1. It appears that the focus of the Commission is on reducing both DVA's expenditure and Veterans' compensation.
2. The reference to a person with just one days service being a Veteran is an insult to all Veterans. Surely one must complete initial training, corps or category training, and be posted to a corps or ship to be classed as a Veteran? I am aware that this is a government decision but it should be challenged by the Commission.
3. To say that a broken leg by a civilian and a Veteran are the same thing is a nonsense! A soldier getting an injury in action or in training for same, or a sailor breaking a leg when their ship is sailing through a hurricane is not the same as a civilian falling off a ladder whilst cleaning a window. An ambulance can't be called, and treatment would be most difficult, when being injured at sea and/or in action.
4. While the majority of cases before tribunals seem to be found in the Veterans' favour, most Veterans don't appeal to a tribunal for a number of reasons, some of those reasons being:
5. a.   On receipt of a negative result one receives a document stating that, if the Veteran loses at the tribunal, they "might" have to pay DVA's costs which may or may not be extravagant.
6. b.   Many, including myself, are not confident that DVA will give fair and honest evidence. In my case, a word was omitted in DVA's final decision which changed the whole dynamic of the actual evidence and my claim.
7. Finally.

I would like to see a totally unbiased, neutral, person such as a Magistrate, perform all appeals with a fixed and reasonable cost to be paid by the unsuccessful party.

Evidence at such a tribunal would be given by the individual who actually rejected the claim and the Veteran, with no legal representation being permitted.

The system is weighed heavily in favour of DVA at present but a system such as that above would result in fairness for all parties.