

EIGHTY-EIGHTH NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
AUGUST 29, 30, 31, 2006

RESOLUTION NO.:273

SUBJECT: Project 112/Operation "Shipboard Hazard and Defense" (SHAD)

Origin: New York

Submitted by: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

WHEREAS, Project 112 refers to a program of chemical and biological tests planned by the Department of Defense (DoD) conducted in 1962-1973 and that encompassed both land and sea-based testing; and

WHEREAS, Operation "Shipboard Hazard and Defense" (SHAD) - the ship-based portion of the testing - was conducted to assess the vulnerabilities of U.S. Navy ships and their ability to maintain operational readiness in the event of a chemical or biological attack; and

WHEREAS, Identified SHAD tests were conducted on various open sea locations in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, and off the coasts of San Diego, Hawaii, the Marshall Islands and Puerto Rico; and

WHEREAS, The land-based component was conducted in, mainly, Alaska, Florida, Hawaii, Georgia, Maryland, Utah, Canada, Great Britain, Panama and one unspecified location; and

WHEREAS, Participants included, primarily, Navy and Marine Corps personnel, with assistance from Air Force and Army personnel; and

WHEREAS, Testing the effectiveness of shipboard detection and protective procedures against chemical and biological threats exposed participants to simulated and live biological and chemical agents, as well as decontaminates, that have potential adverse health effects for those participating; and

WHEREAS, Veterans involved in the tests suffer from multiple complaints, especially illnesses associated with the respiratory system; and

WHEREAS, DoD has concluded its Project 112/SHAD investigation and submitted its report to Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, DoD has identified 5,842 participants of Project 112/SHAD and provided this information to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, VA has been attempting to notify all of the identified service members of their participation in Project 112/SHAD and encourage them to visit VA medical facilities to receive medical evaluations for health effects experienced that are believed to have resulted from Project 112/SHAD exposures, or if they believe they were exposed to harmful agents; and

WHEREAS, 134 tests had been planned: 50 tests were actually conducted and 84 cancelled; and

WHEREAS, DoD has declassified the medically relevant information necessary for VA to determine health risks to exposed participants of Project 112/SHAD and created fact sheets containing the names of the units involved with the various tests; and

WHEREAS, DoD created fact sheets with information about the nature of the tests, those who participated, the time frame and location of the tests, the chemicals, decontaminates and other agents used; and

WHEREAS, VA is working to establish a new system of records that can be used as a mechanism for processing claims; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Defense's Deployment Health Support Directorate will provide information to the Department of Veterans Affairs to assist SHAD participants in their claims by verifying their units' participation in Project SHAD; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Salt Lake City, Utah, August 29, 30, 31, 2006, That DOD consider all new information that surfaces and disclose any new developments related to Project 112/SHAD in a timely manner; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge VA to ensure that all of the 5,842 participants involved in the tests receive prompt notification of their entitlement to benefits and health care for any ailment that may have resulted from their exposures; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge VA to keep an organized account of claims from Project 112/SHAD

participants in order to monitor any trends in ailments and to keep abreast of the number of claims granted for SHAD-related ailments; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion recommend that VA routinely disseminate all declassified information pertaining to Project 112/SHAD, especially long-term health consequences of exposure to various agents used in SHAD, names of participants identified as well as ships and units involved, to all department medical facilities and regional offices responsible for processing disability benefit claims; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge VA to conduct thorough health assessments of participants as they are located, as well as the records of those deceased, to establish guidelines to be used in examining participants of SHAD and awarding appropriate compensation; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion recommend that VA and any government agency that conducts health or mortality studies on SHAD participants disclose their findings to the public; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That VA be urged to reopen all cases involving veterans of identified units to determine any long-term health effects from exposure to chemical and biological agents during these tests and, when supported by medical and scientific evidence, that these veterans be granted compensation and benefits for disabilities associated with their participation in Project SHAD and associated tests.