



F-111 deseal/reseal and other fuel tank maintenance workers

Tier Classification and Tier Definitions

Overview

This Factsheet provides information about the Tier classifications for F-111 service, for the purposes of accessing compensation, health care and support. An F-111 deseal/reseal or other F-111 fuel tank maintenance worker is someone who is, or can be, classified as being Tier 1, 2 or 3.

What is a Tier classification

Tier classification is the rating system that reflects a worker's level of involvement in F-111 fuel tank maintenance activities. Classification ratings are determined using a set of Tier definitions developed by the Department of Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA); (the Table contained in this Factsheet refers). Personnel are classified as a Tier 1, 2 or 3 by application of the Tier definitions.

The first step in making any claims for F-111 benefits, (whether for compensation, health care or ex gratia payments), is to apply for Tier classification.

What are the entitlements for a Tier 1, 2 or 3 person?

Under the special provisions of subsection 7(2) of the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA) - liability is automatically accepted for 31 listed conditions, provided the conditions are medically diagnosed. This means that there is no requirement to show how service contributed to the condition.

Other conditions, not on the list of 31, can still be claimed under the general provisions of the SRCA (and/or the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) or the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (MRCA).

Tier 1, 2 and 3 personnel are entitled to access the Study of Health Outcomes in Aircraft Maintenance Personnel (SHOAMP) Health Care Scheme (SHCS) for health care and counselling; Factsheet F111-07 – *The SHOAMP Health Care Scheme – Services Available* refers.

Tier 1 and 2 personnel (including the estates of eligible deceased persons) are entitled to a lump sum payment under the ex-gratia scheme. Factsheet F111-06 – *Ex-gratia Lump Sum Payment Scheme* refers.

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Tier 1, 2 or 3 personnel are entitled to health care and counselling under the SHOAMP Health Care Scheme; and immediate family members of Tier 1, 2 or 3 personnel are entitled to counselling.

How do I have my Tier classification determined?

You can apply to have your Tier classification determined by completing the D9021 *Application for Tier Classification* form.

What evidence is needed to support my application?

When considering your claim, DVA will take into account official records including your service records and pay slips.

Where this sort of usual documentary evidence is not available, and in the absence of evidence to the contrary, a statutory declaration confirming your involvement in eligible F-111 work, (preferably accompanied by a second corroborating statutory declaration by an *authorised person*) should be provided as evidence in support of your claim. More information about what information to provide in a statutory declaration, and who can provide them, is available in Factsheet F111-05 - *Statutory Declarations for F-111 claims*.

Definition Tier 1 personnel

A person meets the Tier 1 definition - for the purposes of accessing compensation and health care under subsection 7(2) of the SRCA; health care and counselling under the Health Care Scheme; and a lump sum payment under the ex-gratia scheme - if they meet any of the following criteria:

- Personnel who spent at least 30 cumulative working days on the formal fuselage deseal/reseal or respray programs during the period 1977 – 1982, 1991 – 1993 and 1996 – 2000, whose duties involved working inside F-111 fuel tanks.
- Personnel who spent at least 30 cumulative working days on the formal wing tank program during the period 1985 – 1992.
- Personnel who spent at least 60 cumulative working days carrying out sealant rework (pick and patch) during the period 1973 – 2000 while attached to an F-111 deseal/reseal section.
- Boiler and plant attendants whose usual place of duty was the Base incinerator as an incinerator operator, and who spent at least 30 cumulative working days undertaking these duties during the period 1976 – 1986.
- A person who can demonstrate that they would have met one of the above criteria except for the fact that they:
 - had an immediate physical reaction; and
 - required medical treatment or intervention; and

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- were given a work restriction or medical fitness advice (PM 101) stating that they should not return to that working environment.

Definition Tier 2 personnel

A person meets the Tier 2 definition - for the purposes of accessing compensation and health care under subsection 7(2) of the SRCA; health care and counselling under the Health Care Scheme; and a lump sum payment under the ex-gratia scheme - if they meet any of the following criteria:

- Personnel who spent between 10 and 29 cumulative working days on the formal fuselage deseal/reseal or respray programs during the period 1977 – 1982, 1991 – 1993 and 1996 – 2000, whose duties involved working inside F-111 fuel tanks.
- Personnel who spent between 10 and 29 cumulative working days on the formal wing tank program during the period 1985 – 1992.
- Personnel who spent between 10 and 29 cumulative working days carrying out sealant rework (pick and patch) during the period 1973 – 2000 while attached to an F-111 deseal/reseal section.
- Boiler and plant attendants whose usual place of duty was the Base incinerator as an incinerator operator and who spent between 10 and 29 cumulative working days undertaking these duties during the period 1976 – 1986.
- A person who can demonstrate that they would have met one of the above criteria except for the fact that they:
 - had an immediate physical reaction; and
 - required medical treatment or intervention; and
 - were given a work restriction or medical fitness advice (PM 101) stating that they should not return to that working environment.
- Fire fighters employed as instructors whose usual place of duty was the Fire Training School fire pits, and who spent at least 60 cumulative working days actively involved in the burning of by-products from the F-111 DSRS process during the period 1976 – 1990.
- Personnel who were not involved in tank entry and whose usual place of duty was the Rag Hangar for 60 cumulative working days during the period Dec 1977 - Nov 1983.
- Personnel who were not involved in tank entry and whose usual place of duty was Hangar 255, 260, 277 or 278 for a continuous period of 60 cumulative working days during the period 1977 – 1982, 1991 – 1993 and 1996 – 2000.

Definition Tier 3 personnel

A person meets the Tier 3 definition - for the purposes of accessing compensation and health care under subsection 7(2) of the SRCA; and health care and counselling under the Health Care Scheme - if they meet any of the following criteria:

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- Personnel who were employed in F-111 fuel tank maintenance or other maintenance or directly related tasks prior to January 2000 where their work included physical entry to the fuel tank to conduct that maintenance or task.
- Personnel who worked on the wing tank program during the period 1985 – 1992.
- Boiler and plant attendants whose usual place of duty was the Base incinerator as an incinerator operator during the period 1976 – 1986.
- Fire fighters whose usual place of duty was a Unit at RAAF Base Amberley and who were actively involved in the burning of by-products from the F-111 DSRS process during the period 1976 – 1994.
- Personnel who were not involved in tank entry and whose usual place of duty was the RAAF Base Amberley Rag Hangar during the period Dec 1977 – Nov 1983.
- Personnel who were not involved in tank entry and whose usual place of duty was Hangar 255, 260, 277 or 278 at RAAF Base Amberley during the period 1977 – 1982, 1991 – 1993 and 1996 – 2000.
- Motor transport drivers involved in the first deseal/reseal program who came into contact with aviation fuel contaminated with deseal/reseal by-products during the period 1977-1982.
- Maintenance personnel on the air transportable ('Rag') Hangar who were involved in removing /replacing canvas or dismantling the Hangar during relevant periods in 1978, 1980 and 1984.
- Personnel employed in RAAF Base Amberley Engine Test Cell No 1 during the period 1976 – 1986.
- Personnel who entered the Warrill Creek settling pond for the purpose of maintaining the physical barrier during the period 1977– 2000.

The attached Table of Tier definitions provides the above advice, and includes *Additional Information* for each definition. Please refer to the detail/s in the attached Tier Definitions Table.

Right of review

If you are not happy with a decision about how your Tier classification was determined, you may ask for a re-assessment. DVA will only re-assess your Tier classification on the provision of additional evidence. If you are not satisfied with the decision you may lodge a complaint with the Commonwealth Ombudsman about your claim, at any stage. The Ombudsman will only consider the decision-making **process** that was undertaken and the information considered by the Department which resulted in the decision. The Ombudsman cannot review the decision itself.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this Factsheet is general in nature and does not take into account individual circumstances. You should not make important decisions, such as those that affect your financial or lifestyle position, e.g. retirement, on the basis of information contained in this Factsheet. Where you are required to lodge a written claim for a benefit,

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you must take full responsibility for your decisions prior to the written claim being determined. You should seek confirmation in writing of any oral advice you receive from DVA relating to complex or important matters.

Other Factsheets

Other Factsheets related to this topic include:

- F-111 01: **Overview**
- F-111 04: **Compensation and SRCA ss7(2)**
- F-111 05: **Statutory declarations**
- F-111 06: **Ex gratia payments**
- F-111 08: **SHOAMP Health Care Scheme – Eligibility**

More information

All DVA Factsheets are available from DVA offices, and on the DVA website at www.dva.gov.au.

You can phone DVA for the cost of a local call* on **133 254** or free call **1800 555 254** if you are outside a major city.

*Note: * Use a normal landline phone if you can. Mobile phone calls may cost you more.*

You can phone the F-111 hotline on **1800 555 323**

You can visit the F-111 website: **f111.dva.gov.au**

You can email us at: **f111enquiries@dva.gov.au**

You can email DVA at: **GeneralEnquiries@dva.gov.au**.

You can also get more help from any DVA office.

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Attachment: Table of Tier definitions

Category	Tier 1 definition (formal deseal/reseal programs only)	Tier 2 definition (formal deseal/reseal programs only)	Tier 3 definition
<p>1. Fuselage deseal/reseal or respray programs and 'pick and patch' maintenance</p>	<p>A person who spent at least 30 cumulative working days on the fuselage deseal/reseal or respray programs during the period 1977 – 1982, 1991 – 1993 and 1996 – 2000, whose duties involved working inside F-111 fuel tanks.</p> <p>Additional Information: <i>Personnel who worked inside body fuel tanks of the F-111 aircraft for extended periods of time for a cumulative period of not less than 30 working days, removing sealant and/or resealing the tanks.</i></p> <p><i>This category includes only personnel employed in the formal F-111 deseal/reseal and respray programs over the period 1977 to 1982, 1991 to 1993 and 1996 to 2000.</i></p> <p><i>This does not include motor transport drivers employed as fuel tank drivers who may have been responsible for de-fuelling F-111 aircraft prior to deseal/reseal activities being undertaken.</i></p>	<p>A person who spent between 10 and 29 cumulative working days on the fuselage deseal/reseal or respray programs during the period 1977 – 1982, 1991 – 1993 and 1996 – 2000, whose duties involved working inside F-111 fuel tanks.</p> <p>Additional Information: <i>Personnel who worked inside body fuel tanks of the F-111 aircraft for extended periods of time for a cumulative period of between 10 and 29 working days, removing sealant and/or resealing the tanks.</i></p> <p><i>This category includes only personnel employed in the formal F-111 deseal/reseal and respray programs over the period 1977 to 1982, 1991 to 1993 and 1996 to 2000.</i></p> <p><i>This does not include motor transport drivers employed as fuel tank drivers who may have been responsible for de-fuelling F-111 aircraft prior to deseal/reseal activities being undertaken.</i></p>	<p>Personnel who were employed in F-111 fuel tank maintenance, or other maintenance or directly related tasks, prior to January 2000 where their work included physical entry to the fuel tank to conduct that maintenance or task.</p> <p>Additional information: <i>Personnel described in this category include those who worked as direct participants in the formal F-111 deseal/reseal programs carrying out deseal and reseal tasks, including training, inside fuel tanks. It also includes personnel who worked inside fuel tanks carrying out ad hoc 'pick and patch' fuel tank maintenance outside those formal programs.</i></p> <p><i>This category applies regardless of what location the work occurred (e.g. RAAF Base Amberley, RAAF Base Edinburgh, in the United States or at other locations).</i></p> <p><i>This category is phrased broadly. The principal trade groups in this category carrying out maintenance work on the fuel tank itself was the airframe fitter trade (later renamed aircraft technician). Other maintenance tasks were regularly carried out inside F-111 fuel tanks by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aircraft metal worker trade • surface finisher trade • electrical fitter trade. <p><i>A number of other trade groups may also have carried out maintenance and other directly related tasks inside F-111 fuel tanks including</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-destructive inspection technicians, • instrument fitters

Tier Classification and Tier Definitions, *continued*

Category	Tier 1 definition (formal deseal/reseal programs only)	Tier 2 definition (formal deseal/reseal programs only)	Tier 3 definition
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>photographers.</i> <p><i>The trade groups listed here are not exhaustive and it is possible that personnel from other trade groups carried out work inside F-111 fuel tanks and may be eligible under this definition. The most important factor is the nature of the work performed.</i></p> <p><i>This category is not intended to cover personnel who may have entered F-111 fuel tanks to perform work other than maintenance or other directly related tasks.</i></p>
2. Wing tank program	<p>A person who spent at least 30 cumulative working days on the wing tank program during the period 1985 – 1992.</p> <p>Additional Information: <i>Personnel employed full time on the formal wing tank program actively removing and replacing sealant for a period of not less than 30 cumulative working days between 1985 and 1992.</i></p>	<p>A person who spent between 10 and 29 cumulative working days on the wing tank program during the period 1985 – 1992.</p> <p>Additional Information: <i>Personnel employed full time on the formal wing tank program actively removing and replacing sealant for a cumulative period of between 10 and 29 cumulative working days between 1985 and 1992.</i></p>	<p>Personnel who were employed on the wing tank program during the period 1985 – 1992.</p> <p>Additional information: <i>Personnel described in category 2 include those who worked as direct participants in the F-111 wing tank deseal/reseal program, known as the third deseal/reseal program. It has been retained as a separate category because in the strictest sense it did not necessarily involve fuel tank 'entry'. It did however involve exposure to deseal/reseal processes.</i></p>
3. Sealant rework (pick and patch)	<p>A person who spent at least 60 cumulative working days carrying out sealant rework (pick and patch) during the period 1973 – 2000 while attached to an F-111 deseal/reseal section.</p> <p>Additional Information: <i>Personnel working on sealant rework (pick and patch) inside fuselage fuel tanks of the F - 111 aircraft for a cumulative period of not less than 60 working days while attached to a deseal/reseal section of 3AD/501WG, over the period 1973 to 2000, plus those six personnel posted to Sacramento who</i></p>	<p>A person who spent between 10 and 59 cumulative working days carrying out sealant rework (pick and patch) during the period 1973 – 2000 while attached to an F-111 deseal/reseal section.</p> <p>Additional Information: <i>Personnel working on sealant rework (pick and patch) inside fuselage fuel tanks of the F - 111 aircraft for a cumulative period of between 10 and 59 working days while attached to a deseal/reseal section of 3AD/501WG, over the period 1973 to 2000.</i></p>	As per Category 1

Tier Classification and Tier Definitions, *continued*

Category	Tier 1 definition (formal deseal/reseal programs only)	Tier 2 definition (formal deseal/reseal programs only)	Tier 3 definition
	<i>completed training in deseal/reseal procedures.</i>		
4. Boiler and plant attendants	<p>Boiler and plant attendants whose usual place of duty was the Base incinerator as an incinerator operator, and who spent at least 30 cumulative working days undertaking these duties during the period 1976 – 1986.</p> <p>Additional Information: Boiler and plant attendants regularly disposing of deseal/reseal products by burning, in particular the sealant remover SR51 and SR51A, at the RAAF Base Amberley incinerator, for a cumulative period of not less than 30 working days between 1976 and 1986.</p>	<p>Boiler and plant attendants whose usual place of duty was the Base incinerator as an incinerator operator, and who spent between 10 and 29 cumulative working days undertaking these duties during the period 1976 – 1986.</p> <p>Additional Information: Boiler and plant attendants regularly disposing of deseal/reseal products by burning, in particular the sealant remover SR51 and SR51A, at the RAAF Base Amberley incinerator, for a cumulative period of between 10 and 29 cumulative working days between 1976 and 1986.</p>	<p>Boiler and plant attendants whose usual place of duty was the RAAF Base Amberley incinerator as an incinerator operator during the period 1976 – 1986</p> <p>Additional information: Boiler and plant attendants described in category 4 were regularly engaged in disposing of deseal/reseal products by burning, in particular the sealant remover SR51 and SR51A, at the RAAF Base Amberley incinerator between 1976 and 1986. This category also includes any Department of Construction workers who undertook these duties during the period.</p>
5. Unable to continue in F-111 working environment	<p>A person who can demonstrate that they would have met one of the above criteria except for the fact that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had an immediate physical reaction; and • required medical treatment or intervention; and • were given a work restriction or medical fitness advice (PM 101) stating that they should not return to that working environment. 	<p>A person who can demonstrate that they would have met one of the above criteria except for the fact that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had an immediate physical reaction; and • required medical treatment or intervention; and • were given a work restriction or medical fitness advice (PM 101) stating that they should not return to that working environment. 	N/A
6. Fire fighters	N/A	<p>Fire fighters employed as instructors, whose usual place of duty was the Fire Training School fire pits and who spent at least 60 cumulative working days actively involved in the burning of by-products from the F-111 DSRS process during the period 1976 – 1990.</p>	<p>Fire fighters whose usual place of duty was a Unit at RAAF Base Amberley and who were actively involved in the burning of by-products from the F-111 deseal/reseal process during the period 1976 – 1994.</p>

Tier Classification and Tier Definitions, *continued*

Category	Tier 1 definition (formal deseal/reseal programs only)	Tier 2 definition (formal deseal/reseal programs only)	Tier 3 definition
		<p>Additional Information: Fire fighters employed as instructors permanently posted to a Unit at RAAF Base Amberley, and who were actively involved in burning bi-products from the F-111 DS/RS process (including the sealant remover SR51 and SR51A) at the fire pits, for training and/or disposal purposes, for a cumulative period of not less than 60 working days during the period 1976 to 1990.</p>	<p>Additional information: Personnel who were actively involved in burning by-products from the F-111 deseal/reseal process (including the sealant remover SR51 and SR51A) at the fire pits for training and/or disposal purposes between 1976 and 1994.</p>
7. Rag Hangar personnel	N/A	<p>Personnel who were not involved in tank entry and whose usual place of duty was the Rag Hangar for 60 cumulative working days during the period Dec 1977 - Nov 1983.</p> <p>Additional information: Personnel are those for whom their normal place of work was the deseal/reseal air transportable ('Rag Hangar') hangar at RAAF Base Amberley, and who provided direct support to those staff entering F-111 fuel tanks for a period of 60 cumulative days. This does not include those personnel who may have regularly visited these hangars in the course of their duty.</p>	<p>Personnel who were not involved in tank entry and whose usual place of duty was the Rag Hangar at RAAF Base Amberley during the period Dec 1977 – Nov 1983.</p> <p>Additional information: Personnel are those for whom their normal place of work was the deseal/reseal air transportable ('Rag Hangar') hangar at RAAF Base Amberley, and who provided direct support to those staff entering F-111 fuel tanks. This does not include those personnel who may have regularly visited these hangars in the course of their duty.</p>
8. Hangar 255, 260, 277 or 278 personnel	N/A	<p>Personnel who were not involved in tank entry and whose usual place of duty was Hangar 255, 260, 277 or 278 for a period of 60 cumulative working days during the period 1977 – 1982, 1991 – 1993 and 1996 – 2000.</p> <p>Additional Information: Personnel indirectly involved in DS/RS, for whom their normal place of work was Hangars 255, 260, 277 and 278, and who</p>	<p>Personnel who were not involved in tank entry and whose usual place of duty was Hangar 255, 260, 277 or 278 at RAAF Base Amberley during the period 1977 – 1982, 1991 – 1993 and 1996 – 2000.</p> <p>Additional information: Personnel described are those for whom their normal place of work was Hangars 255, 260, 277 and 278 at RAAF Base Amberley and who provided direct</p>

Tier Classification and Tier Definitions, *continued*

Category	Tier 1 definition (formal deseal/reseal programs only)	Tier 2 definition (formal deseal/reseal programs only)	Tier 3 definition
		<i>provided direct support to those staff entering F-111 fuel tanks for a period of 60 cumulative working days. This does not include those personnel who may have regularly visited these Hangars in the course of their duty.</i>	<i>support to those staff entering F-111 fuel tanks. This does not include those personnel who may have regularly visited these hangars in the course of their duty.</i>
9. Motor transport drivers	N/A	N/A	<p>Motor transport drivers involved in the first deseal/reseal program, at RAAF Base Amberley, who came into contact with aviation fuel contaminated with deseal/reseal by-products during the period 1977-1982.</p> <p>Additional information: <i>Personnel described do not include motor transport drivers employed as fuel tank drivers who may have been responsible for de-fuelling F-111 aircraft prior to deseal/reseal activities being undertaken.</i></p>
10. Canvas personnel and/or Rag Hangar dismantling workers	N/A	N/A	Maintenance personnel on the air transportable ('Rag') Hangar, at RAAF Base Amberley, who were involved in removing/replacing canvas or dismantling the Hangar during 1978, 1980 and 1984.
11. Engine Test Cell No 1 personnel	N/A	N/A	Personnel employed in Engine Test Cell No 1, at RAAF Base Amberley, during the period 1976 – 1986.
12. Warrill Creek Settling Pond – barrier maintenance personnel	N/A	N/A	<p>Personnel who entered the Warrill Creek Settling Pond for the purpose of maintaining the physical barrier during the period 1977– 2000.</p> <p>Additional information: <i>Personnel described in this category include any Department of Construction workers who undertook these duties during the period. However, this category does not include Airfield Defence Guards, Ground Defence Officers or other personnel who may have entered Warrill Creek for any other purpose or reason.</i></p>