

AO-1-03
RESEARCH ON AGENT ORANGE/DIOXIN EFFECTS

Issue: Research into human health effects of exposure to the ingredients in Agent Orange/Dioxin and other herbicides and toxic chemicals used in Vietnam needs to continue in order to provide for the most complete understanding of these effects.

Background: While numerous scientific studies have revealed significant harmful effects of exposure to the ingredients of Agent Orange/Dioxin as well as other herbicides and toxic substances on humans and animals, continued research is needed to fully understand the entire range of the possible effects of such exposure. The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) review of scientific information indicated there are a number of studies that need replication in order to reach a scientifically accepted standard of significant association. VVA believes there needs to be a large-scale study of the effects on Vietnam veterans and their children and that other studies of positively exposed groups are needed to add to the knowledge on this issue. One critical component of such studies must be the effects on the children of Vietnam veterans and other exposed individuals. This resolution amends AO-1-01.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America, in light of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) reports, demands that the U.S. Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) and other appropriate federal agencies initiate and support an independent comprehensive health study on veterans and their children, which includes determination of the delayed effects of exposure to the ingredients in Agent Orange/Dioxin and other toxic chemicals used primarily in Vietnam, this research which bases its decisions on scientifically accepted standards, i.e.: Standard Mortality Ratios (SMRs) determines significant associations for diseases currently recognized by the DVA as related to herbicide exposure to assist all veterans and families. The DVA must go beyond the SMRs and start to utilize and recognize Standard Incident measurements when determining significant associations of all diseases. In addition, VVA supports and encourages valid, independent, on-site, scientific research in Southeast Asia to ascertain the delayed effects of exposure to Agent Orange/Dioxin and other herbicides and toxic substances used during the Vietnam War. VVA supports and encourages continuing scientific research in communities, industries, and hazardous waste sites in the United States where workers and residents have been exposed to toxic substances similar to those used in Southeast Asia, and further supports studies of the delayed effects of exposure.

AO-2-03
AGENT ORANGE/DIOXIN CHILDRENS REGISTRY; RECOGNIZING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN DIOXIN & LEARNING DISABLED CHILDREN

Issue: Many veterans, having been exposed to Agent Orange/Dioxin during their military service or elsewhere; subsequently, have become parents of children who may be physically or developmentally impaired as a result of such exposure (e.g., spina bifida). Currently, there is no mechanism currently in place to monitor these children to establish patterns of physical or developmental impairments for purposes of ascertaining the effects of Agent Orange/Dioxin exposure on the parents of these children. It is also evident, from the scientific literature, that those of our children with a Learning Disabilities diagnosis lack the proper treatment and education needed to ultimately

become productive members of society. And, because of parental exposure to Dioxins during the Vietnam era, studies have shown a marked increase in the number of children with learning disabilities. In particular, such evidence has shown a proportionally higher number of veterans' offspring are affected than those of non-veterans.

Background: It would contribute significantly to the information available on the effects of exposure to Agent Orange/Dioxin on the children of exposed veterans if a data registry system were developed. Furthermore, the development and maintenance of a national register/data bank of these children must include mechanisms that protect the privacy of these children and their families. This resolution amends and combines AO-2-01 and AO-15-01.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America calls upon the U.S. Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs to recognize the work already done by the BIRTH DEFECT RESEARCH FOR CHILDREN (BDRC) ORGANIZATION, formerly the Association of Birth Defect Children. BDRC should continue to register the children of Agent Orange/Dioxin-exposed veterans for the purpose of identification of any possible linkage between parental exposure and the health problems of such children. Furthermore, VVA supports BDRC in its continuing research of present and future generations of Agent Orange/Dioxin exposed children. Furthermore, that VVA:

Strongly urge that chapters and state councils educate their membership on the cause and effect of exposure of the veteran. In addition, it should include the effect this exposure has had or could have on their children and grandchildren.

Strongly urge that VVA request that the Congress enact legislation that will mandate that the Department of Veterans Affairs or related agencies assist or compensate affected children.

AO-4-95 VVA AGENT ORANGE/DIOXIN GUIDE

Issue: New research, new Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) regulations, and new legislation have, over the years, increased the knowledge about, and access to services for veterans regarding Agent Orange/Dioxin exposure. Veterans and veterans advocates need to have timely and accurate information to address their concerns and those affected veterans and their families.

Background: Vietnam Veterans of America has printed a number of editions of the highly regarded VVA Guide on Agent Orange. Copies have been provided to all VVA chapters and state councils, VVA service representatives, congressional offices, and veterans and their families and more recently has purchased and distributed the National Veterans Legal Services Programs (NVLSP) "Self-Help Guide on Agent Orange". Through the use of this guide, VVA members have become the most knowledgeable group of veterans on this issue and have used this knowledge to advocate for successful legislative and regulatory initiatives.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America mandates biennial revision and distribution of the VVA GUIDE ON AGENT ORANGE and encourages the periodic update of the NVLSP "Self-Help Guide on Agent Orange".

AO-5-03
**ASSURE PROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGENT ORANGE ACT OF
1991**

Issue: While the legislation enacted on February 6, 1991, PL 102-04, represents legitimate progress toward a long-term resolution of the Agent Orange/Dioxin issue, success of the statute relies heavily upon the panel assembled by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) and upon the willingness of the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) to accept its recommendations.

Background: Under the circumstances, the proper execution of the law's intent requires careful monitoring of both the DVA and the NAS in order to assure that the NAS panel maintains scientific objectivity and that the DVA implements any clinical recommendations of the NAS. This resolution amends AO-5-01.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America will monitor the make-up of the NAS or any other contracted panel to assure its integrity as intended by law and will take all steps necessary to promote remedial legislation or other action as needed.

AO-6-03
DIOXIN DISPOSAL METHODS

Issue: Disposal and storage of Dioxin-contaminated materials and sediments can have a direct health impact on all citizens of this country.

Background: Ocean dumping of contaminated materials can directly impact on the food chain, leading to ingestion of food products containing Dioxin. In addition, unrestricted disposal of Dioxin-contaminated materials in landfills can affect ground water reservoirs and aquifers. Incineration of these materials may result in release into the atmosphere of potentially hazardous substances. Proper and safe disposal must be used in dealing with Dioxins. VVA must remain knowledgeable about the science of dioxin-contaminated sediments and supports necessary research to guarantee minimal health risks to the community. This resolution amends AO-6-01.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America opposes ocean dumping of Dioxin-contaminated materials and calls for immediate termination of EPA-approved dumping permits. VVA supports research on existing methods of disposal or storage of Dioxin-contaminated sediments and stands ready to work with all concerned scientific and ecological groups to ensure proper disposal or storage of these contaminated sediments.

AO-7-95
CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE

Issue: Health care, compensation, and education has been awarded to the children of veterans who have spina bifida as a result of their parents' exposure to Agent Orange/Dioxin and other toxic chemicals while in military service. However, there are more birth defects that are associated with this exposure.

Background: New studies are now showing a wide variety of birth defects in the children of civilians and veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange/Dioxin.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America, supports a comprehensive health-care and special needs program and compensation to assist Vietnam veterans' children and subsequent generations who have birth defects, deficiencies, or disabilities reasonably associated with parental exposure to Agent Orange/Dioxin and other toxic chemicals while in military service.

AO-8-95
AGENT ORANGE/DIOXIN NETWORK

Issue: Although Vietnam veterans have information available to them on Agent Orange/Dioxin, they lack the immediate help and support that could be achieved through a veterans' Agent Orange/Dioxin network. We need more expansion and development of the network because of the releases of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) reports.

Background: Vietnam veterans and their families are frustrated over the lack of immediate information on Agent Orange/Dioxin. The DVA has not cooperated in the dissemination of timely and accurate information. Veterans and their families need to know that there is immediate help and information for this intensely human problem. This includes the personal support that affected veterans can receive from other veterans through a network.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America, directs that the national Agent Orange/Dioxin Committee under the direction of the National Agent Orange/Dioxin chair, shall;

1. Hold biennial Agent Orange/Dioxin symposium in conjunction with the National Leadership Conference. Chapter and state council Agent Orange/Dioxin committee chairpersons and any other interested parties may and are encouraged to attend, for the purpose of:

Continuing the development of national programs of direct and/or referral services;

Continuing and enhancing an interstate and intrastate networking model of information and support services; and

Continuing the development and implementation of questionnaires for the purpose of recording and measuring the past and current health status of VVA members, their spouses, their children, and their grandchildren.

2. Require the National Board of Directors to maintain budget allocations for the aforementioned activities.
3. Actively promote and expand the Agent Orange/Dioxin network.

AO-9-95
PAPERMAKING MANUFACTURING PROCESSES

Issue: Promoting the elimination of Dioxins introduced into the environment from papermaking manufacturing process should be an objective of Vietnam Veterans of America.

Background: The use of chlorine in the papermaking industry's bleaching processes has been proven to create Dioxins, which are released into the environment. In recent

years, concerned with their role and their responsibility to help protect the environment, a segment of the papermaking industry has worked to develop and market chlorine-free paper. The term chlorine-free is applicable to two different processes. The most widespread process called elemental chlorine-free paper uses chlorine in the process, but does not contribute to Dioxins as a by-product. Today, elemental chlorine-free paper comprises about 60-70% of the print paper market. A small but growing segment of the industry has gone one step further. It has developed and markets a total chlorine-free paper, which is totally free of chlorine in the manufacturing process. Total chlorine-free paper now makes up less than 1% of the print paper market. Both types of chlorine-free paper are available and cost about 10-25% more than paper that is not chlorine-free.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America, commends those segments of the papermaking industry who are engaged in research and development of alternative manufacturing processes to eliminate further introduction of Dioxins into the environment, especially those papermakers who have gone the extra mile in developing and manufacturing total chlorine-free paper; and, in support of attaining a Dioxin-free environment, VVA shall take all necessary measures to maximize the use of paper products utilized and consumed by VVA that are manufactured using the chlorine-free processes and VVA encourages its state councils and chapters to do likewise. Also, Vietnam Veterans of America should make every effort to stop pulp and paper processes that create Dioxin.

AO-10-95 BAN THE MANUFACTURING, SALE AND USE OF 2,4-D

Issue: For at least fifty years, the Department of Defense has intentionally exposed military personnel to potentially dangerous substances, often in secret. During the war in Vietnam when herbicides were used to defoliate dense jungle, our service members were not aware of the toxicity of the chemicals used. As a result of the service members' exposure to 2,4-D in Vietnam, veterans are being diagnosed twenty years later with rare cancers, sarcomas, immune deficiencies and Central Nervous System disorders. Children of exposed veterans are born with learning disabilities, birth defects and deficiencies. Today, herbicide 2,4-D is being used for weed control across the United States; at National Cemeteries, schoolyards, golf courses and hospitals. Utility companies, the Department of Transportation, and railroads use it. Additionally, farmers are using 2,4-D, which in turn is contaminating food crops, cattle, pigs, chickens, etc. In addition, 2,4-D is being used to eliminate the growth of plant life in our lakes, thereby contaminating our freshwater wildlife. Over 250,000 veterans have died from diseases caused by their exposure to Agent Orange/Dioxin, and that number climbs every day. The continued use of 2,4-D today further exposes our families to the same chemical veterans were exposed to in Vietnam. This exposure jeopardizes the health of our families and future generations, making them susceptible to the same diseases from which our veterans are dying.

Background: Vietnam veterans are acutely aware of the deadly consequences of exposure to 2,4-D. Health and Welfare Canada and the United States Environmental Protection Agency have identified at least four different isomers of Dioxin as contaminants in 2,4-D. These Dioxins include the 2,3,7,8-TCDD isomer, which is the most deadly poison known to man. Dioxin is contaminating the food chain which results in the compromising of the immune system of all Americans. Even more ludicrous,

2,4-D is being used at national cemeteries, which shows the government's insensitivity to victims that have died of Dioxin-related cancers.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America, will seek legislation and administrative action to ban the manufacture, sale, and use of 2,4-D worldwide.

1. VVA will take all steps necessary to promote legislation to carry out this action.
2. VVA encourages its membership through the chapters and state councils to work with Congressional representatives and state legislators to obtain their support to ban the manufacturing, sale, and use of 2,4-D worldwide.

AO-11-95
U.S. TREATMENT FOR VIETNAMESE BIRTH DEFECT CHILDREN

Issue: With the limited health-care resources in Vietnam, many newer techniques are not available for treating the physical deformities of Vietnamese children.

Background:

Every year hundreds of nurses and surgeons in the United States travel to other countries to perform surgeries that are not available within that country's health-care system. Some of the more difficult cases are brought to the United States for more extensive treatment, surgery, and rehabilitation.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America, urges the national leadership to explore the establishment of relationships between existing organizations involved in international medical missions and the people of Vietnam.

AO-12-03
**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES (NIEHS) FUNDING FOR RESEARCH IN
VIETNAM**

Issue: The best laboratory for research on the environment and health risks associated with Agent Orange/Dioxin contamination is Vietnam. Continued funding must be provided for this essential research to find the final solution/resolution to the Dioxin problem.

Background: The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) has agreed to spend a minimal amount (less than \$2 million) for health-related studies in Vietnam. This resolution amends AO-12-01.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America, supports continued advocacy with the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) for increased funding for health-related studies in Vietnam in conjunction with the protocol established by the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the governments of Vietnam and the United States on March 10, 2002.

AO-13-03
AGENT ORANGE/DIOXIN AWARENESS MONTH

Issue: To promote and support a national Agent Orange/Dioxin Awareness Effort by expanding and developing programs for Vietnam veterans, their dependents and survivors at all levels, including all U.S. territories and possessions.

Background: The month of October has been nationally designated as Breast Cancer and Prostate/Colon Cancer Awareness Month. In conjunction with this, several state legislatures have declared October as Agent Orange Awareness Month. This resolution amends AO-13-01.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America, hereby declares October as Agent Orange/Dioxin Awareness month. Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. will take

appropriate measures to ensure that October is declared as Agent Orange/Dioxin month by all levels of government (national, state, and local). Additionally, the Vietnam Veterans of America National Agent Orange/Dioxin Committee will work closely with all VVA state councils and chapters to develop programs in their local areas. Further, that VVA publicize the Agent Orange Flag, preserve its history, and make it available to all levels of the organization and interested parties.

HC-1-03

GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR VETERANS RIGHT TO KNOW

Issue: The Department of Defense has a history of using military personnel for covert medical experiments. During deployments military personnel are often exposed to dangerous conditions such as chemicals and biological that are harmful to human health. At the time of these exposures the true nature of their effects on human health may not have been fully understood. These individuals are discharged with no knowledge of their exposure or the possible consequence to their health and the health of their families.

Background: In 2002, the Department of Defense revealed some of the details of chemical and biological tests that were conducted during the Vietnam Era which is now known as Shipboard Hazards and Decontaminations/Defense (SHAD). These experiments were part of a larger portion called Project 112 which includes land based testing. These revelations are the latest in a long line of human subject research which includes atomic testing, LSD experiments during the Korean War, and hazardous exposures like herbicides (i.e., Agent Orange) during Vietnam, depleted uranium during Gulf War I and other known and unknown exposures to toxic substances and dangerous experiments. When men and women in uniform risk their lives in service to this nation, their rights to informed consent must be paramount. Further it is incumbent on the government that these citizens be informed about any adverse health conditions resulting from exposures during their services to their country. This information will be an immediate full disclosure of what is known about these exposures and their potential threats to their health and the health of their families. In the past, this information has been intentionally withheld by various government agencies and officials, as well as, withheld from appropriate congressional committees.

Resolved, That: Vietnam Veterans of America, dedicated to ensuring that the injuries and death caused by military toxic exposures will never happen again. VVA will investigate all aspects of Project 112; promote full disclosure of our findings to the public and to hold accountable by agency and individual those responsible for injuries and deaths. This task force intends to accomplish these objectives through the legislation process, litigation, outreach and education. By so doing, we will protect the health, safety and constitutional rights of past, present and future U.S. military service personnel.