

## Hervey Bay Veterans Advice and Social Centre.

I have been told some Hervey Bay veterans have encountered confusion relating to the Great Southern Railway Special Veterans Travel Concession when they have attempted to book tickets. The Special Veterans travel concession is available to Totally and Permanently Incapacitated (TandPI) pensioners, Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA) pensioners, Intermediate Rate pensioners, Disability Pensioners on the Blind rate, Service Pensioners on the Blind rate and Disability Pensioners receiving Specific Disability listed under Section 27 of the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 such as suffering loss of a limb.

The Special Veteran travel concession provides either free rail travel in a Gold Service Sleeper Cabin (formerly known as First Class) over the Commonwealth owned track only. The 'free' component includes a sleeping berth only and does not include any Gold Service meal charges, Fuel Price Surcharges or free rail travel in a Red Service Sleeper Cabin (formerly known as holiday Class) which includes a sleeping berth (if applicable) over the Commonwealth owned track only. Meals can be purchased in Red Service.

Commonwealth owned tracks covered by the Special Veterans concession for travel on GSR services the 'Indian Pacific' between Broken Hill and Adelaide; the 'Indian Pacific' between Adelaide and Kalgoorlie; the 'Overland' between Wolseley (SA/VIC border) and Adelaide; and the 'Ghan' to Adelaide to Alice Springs. Although the section of track between Alice Springs and Darwin is not Commonwealth owned, from 1 October 2007 the Commonwealth Government extended the funding arrangements for Special Veterans to allow concession fares for travel on the 'Ghan' to Alice Springs to Darwin.

Western Australian domiciled Special Veterans are entitled to free rail travel on the Indian Pacific service between Kalgoorlie and Perth where this travel is part of an interstate journey. This additional entitlement on WA state owned track applies only to Special Veterans domiciled in WA. It is important to note that there may be additional charges that will need to be paid by the traveller. Travel over the state owned track, for example travel from Sydney to Broken Hill, Wolseley to Melbourne, Kalgoorlie to Perth will incur additional charges.

A carer may accompany eligible pensioners and receive the same concession on the Commonwealth owned section of the track, subject to the presentation of a medical certificate signed by a medical practitioner. The carer may also use a PCC to obtain a discount over State owned track. The carer does not have to be in receipt of a carer's pension or be related to the person travelling and the certificate is to be sent to GSR with payment. You may use the concession as many times as you wish and there are no restrictions on the amount of trips you can take each year. Other concessions may include a discount rate of up to 55% that is available to all Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC) holders for GSR travel.

For more information regarding these discounts or to book your trip you are best to contact GSR on 132 147 or refer to their website - <http://www.gsr.com.au>

We have received information that Carnival Australia, incorporating PandO Cruises Australia, Princess Cruises and Cunard are giving serving and ex-service personnel a \$250.00 onboard credit when taking a cruise on any of their vessels. To obtain the credit, you need to send a copy of proof of your service (Discharge Certificate, Certificate of Service), when making your booking to Defence Benefits, PO Box 2006, North Sydney NSW 2059 or email [defencebenefits@carnivalaustralia.com](mailto:defencebenefits@carnivalaustralia.com).

Please remember the Veterans Advice and Social Centre is open for business 9.00am to 12.30pm Mon – Fri at the old Pialba Railway Station for all veterans, serving members and former members of the Australian Defence Force. If you wish to see a welfare/pensions officer just “drop in” at the Centre, ring for an appointment or simply call in for a chat and a cup of coffee or contact the Centre on 41283759.

Keep smiling and in good health.

Regards

Tom.

***“Honour the dead but fight like hell for the living”***

Tom Jehn JP (Qual)  
VVAA Advocate