REPATRIATION ACTS AMENDMENT ACT (No. 2) 1976

**No. 112 of 1976**

An Act relating to Repatriation and related Matters.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen, and the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Australia, as follows:—

PART I—PRELIMINARY

**Short title.**

**1.** This Act may be cited as the Repatriation Acts Amendment Act (No. 2) 1976.

**Commencement.**

**2.** (1) Subject to sub-section (2), this Act shall come into operation on the day on which it receives the Royal Assent.

(2) Sections 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 19 and 23 shall come into operation on 25 November 1976.

PART II—AMENDMENTS OF THE REPATRIATION ACT 1920

**Citation.**

**3.** The Repatriation Act 1920 is in this Part referred to as the Principal Act.

**Rates of pension.**

**4.** Section 35 of the Principal Act is amended by omitting from sub-section (1) the words “the next succeeding section” and substituting the words “section 35aa”.

**5.** After section 35 of the Principal Act the following section is inserted:—

**Variation of rate of pension.**

“35aaa. (1) In this section, unless the contrary intention appears—

‘index number’, in relation to a quarter, means the All Groups Consumer Price Index number, being the weighted average of the 6 State capital cities, published by the Statistician in respect of that quarter;

‘relevant period’ means the period of 6 months commencing on 1 May 1977, and each subsequent period of 6 months;

‘relevant rate’ means the rate specified in Column 2 of Schedule 1, the rate specified in Column 3 of that Schedule, the rate specified in paragraph 6 of that Schedule or the Rate for Special Pensions specified in Schedule 2;

‘Statistician’ means the Australian Statistician.

“(2) Subject to sub-section (3), if at any time, whether before or after the commencement of this section, the Statistician has published or publishes an index number in respect of a quarter in substitution for an index number previously published by him in respect of that quarter, the publication of the later index number shall be disregarded for the purposes of this section.

“(3) If at any time, whether before or after the commencement of this section, the Statistician has changed or changes the reference base for the consumer price index, then, for the purposes of the application of this section after the change took place or takes place, regard shall be had only to index numbers published in terms of the new reference base.

“(4) Where the factor ascertained, in relation to a relevant period, in accordance with sub-section (5) is greater than 1, this Act and any other Act that refers to this Act have effect as if for each relevant rate there were substituted, on the first day of that period—

(a) subject to paragraph (b)—a rate calculated by multiplying by that factor—

(i) in a case to which sub-paragraph (ii) does not apply—the relevant rate; or

(ii) if, by virtue of another application or several other applications of this section, this Act has had effect as if another rate were substituted, or other rates were successively substituted, for the relevant rate—the substituted rate or the last substituted rate, as the case may be; or

(b) where the rate so calculated (in this paragraph referred to as the ‘calculated rate’) is not a multiple of -0.10 per fortnight—a rate equal to—

(i) if the calculated rate exceeds the next lower rate that is such a multiple by $0.05 per fortnight or more—the next higher rate that is such a multiple; or

(ii) if the calculated rate exceeds the next lower rate that is such a multiple by less than $0.05 per fortnight—that next lower rate.

“(5) The factor to be ascertained for the purposes of sub-section (4) in relation to a relevant period—

(a) is the number, calculated to 3 decimal places, ascertained by dividing—

(i) if the relevant period commences on 1 May—the index number for the last preceding December quarter; or

(ii) if the relevant period commences on 1 November—the index number for the last preceding June quarter,

by the highest index number in respect of a December or June quarter that preceded that quarter, not being a December or June quarter that occurred before the June quarter in the year 1976; or

(b) if the number so ascertained would, if it were calculated to 4 decimal places, end in a number greater than 4—is the number so ascertained increased by 0.001.

“(6) Where, by virtue of sub-section (4), this Act has effect as if there were substituted, on the first day of a relevant period, another rate (in this section called the ‘new special pension rate’) for the Rate for Special Pensions specified in Schedule 2 and another rate (in this sub-section called the ‘new general pension rate’) for the rate specified in Column 3 of Schedule 1, this Act and any other Act that refers to this Act also have effect as if, on that day, there were substituted for the rate specified in column 2 in each of the first 6 items of Schedule 5 a rate per fortnight equal to the difference between the new special pension rate and the new general pension rate.

“(7) Where, by virtue of the application of this section, this Act has effect as if another rate were substituted for a relevant rate or for a rate specified in Column 2 of Schedule 5 on the first day of a relevant period, the substitution, in so far as it affects instalments of pensions, has effect in relation to every instalment of such a pension that falls due on or after the first day of that period.”.

**Appropriation for pensions, &c.**

**6.** Section 51 of the Principal Act is amended by omitting paragraph and substituting the following paragraph:—

“(a) pensions and allowances under section 98a; and”.

**Interpretation.**

**7.** Section 83 of the Principal Act is amended—

(a) by omitting paragraph (ba) of the definition of “Income” in sub-section (1);

(b) by omitting paragraph (j) of the definition of ‘‘Income’’ in sub-section (1);

(c) by omitting the definition of “Income derived from property” in sub-section (1);

(d) by omitting the definition of “Means as assessed” in sub-section (1);

(e) by omitting the definition of “Property component” in sub-section (1);

(f) by omitting the definition of “Superannuation pension” in sub-section (1); and

(g) by omitting paragraph (b) of sub-section (3) and substituting the following paragraph:—

“(b) a reference in that section to the income of a person shall be read as a reference to the income of the person for the purposes of this Division;”.

**Superannuation pension may be included in “income”.**

**8.** Section 83a of the Principal Act is repealed.

**Variation of rate of service pension according to means.**

**9.** Section 87 of the Principal Act is amended by omitting from sub-section (3a) the words “for the purpose of ascertaining his means as assessed”.

**Net capital value of accumulated property.**

**10.** Section 90 of the Principal Act is repealed.

**11.** Section 91 of the Principal Act is repealed and the following section substituted:—

**Disposal of income.**

“91. (1) If, in the opinion of the Commission, an applicant for a service pension or a service pensioner has directly or indirectly deprived himself of income in order to qualify for or obtain a pension or in order to obtain a pension at a higher rate than that for which he would otherwise have been eligible, the amount of the income of which the Commission considers the applicant or service pensioner has so deprived himself shall be deemed to be the income of the applicant or service pensioner.

“(2) If, in the opinion of the Commission, the spouse of an applicant for a service pension or of a service pensioner has directly or indirectly deprived himself of income in order that the applicant or service pen­sioner might qualify for or obtain, a pension, or in order that the applicant or service pensioner might obtain a pension at a higher rate than the rate for which the applicant or service pensioner would otherwise have been eligible, the amount of the income of which the Commission considers the spouse has so deprived himself shall be deemed to be income of the spouse.”.

**Service pensioner in mental hospital.**

**12.** Section 94b of the Principal Act is amended by omitting sub-section (1) and substituting the following sub-section:—

“(1) Subject to this section, where—

(a) a service pensioner is a mental hospital patient; and

(b) the rate of his service pension exceeds—

(i) unless an allowance under section 98a is payable to him—an amount per annum equal to one-third of the maximum rate of age pension specified in paragraph (a) of sub-section (1a) of section 28 of the Social Services Act 1947, or, if that amount per annum is not a multiple of $2.60, the next higher amount that is such a multiple; or

(ii) if an allowance under section 98a is payable to him—the sum of an amount per annum equal to one-third of the maximum rate of age pension referred to in sub-paragraph (i) and an amount per annum equal to one-fifth of the maximum rate of supplementary assistance specified in paragraph (d) of sub-section (3) of section 30a of the Social Services Act 1947, or, if the sum of those amounts per annum is not a multiple of $2.60, the next higher amount per annum that is such a multiple,

that part of his service pension that is equal to pension at the rate of the excess is, by force of this section, suspended in respect of the period during which he is a mental hospital patient.”.

**Service pensioner in a public institution.**

**13.** Section 95 of the Principal Act is amended by omitting paragraph (a) of sub-section (1a) and substituting the following paragraph:—

“(a) he shall, subject to this section, for so long as he remains an inmate of the institution, be paid—

(i) unless an allowance under section 98a is payable to him—so much of his pension as does not exceed an amount per annum equal to one-third of the maximum rate of age pension specified in paragraph (a) of sub-section (1a) of section 28 of the Social Services Act 1947, or, if that amount per annum is not a multiple of $2.60, the next higher amount per annum that is such a multiple; or

(ii) if an allowance under section 98a is payable to him—so much of his pension as does not exceed the sum of an amount per annum equal to one-third of the maximum rate of age pension referred to in sub-paragraph (i) and an amount per annum equal to one-fifth of the maximum rate of supplementary assistance specified in paragraph (d) of sub-section (3) of section 30a of the Social Services Act 1947, or, if the sum of those amounts per annum is not a multiple of $2.60, the next higher amount per annum that is such a multiple;”.

**Receipt of income to be notified.**

**14.** Section 96 of the Principal Act is amended—

(a) by omitting sub-sections (1), (2), (3), (4) and (5) and substituting the following sub-sections:—

“(1) Subject to sub-section (6a), where the average weekly rate of the income, other than service pension, received in any period of 8 consecutive weeks by a service pensioner who—

(a) is not a married person, or is legally married but is living apart from his spouse; and

(b) is not a person in receipt of an allowance under section 98a, is higher than $20 per week and is higher than the average weekly rate of the income last specified by him in an application, statement or notification under this Division, the pensioner shall, within 14 days after the expiration of that period, notify the Commission, or a Board for the State or Territory in which he resides, of the amount of the income received by him in that period.

“(2) Subject to sub-section (6a), where, in any period of 8 consecutive weeks, the average weekly rate of the sum of—

(a) the income, other than service pension, received by a service pensioner who—

(i) is a married person and, if he is legally married, is not living apart from his spouse; and

(ii) is not a person in receipt of an allowance under section 98a; and

(b) the income, other than service pension, received by his spouse,

is higher than $34.50 per week and is higher than the average weekly rate of the sum of the income of the pensioner and the income of his spouse last specified by him in an application, statement or notification under this Division, the pensioner shall, within 14 days after the expiration of that period, notify the Commission, or a Board for the State or Territory in which he resides, of the amount of the income received by him and the amount of income received by his spouse, in that period.”;

(b) by omitting paragraphs (e), (f) and (g) of sub-section (6) and substituting the following word and paragraph:—

“or (e) a service pensioner becoming an inmate of a benevolent home,”;

(c) by omitting paragraph (c) of sub-section (6a) and substituting the following paragraph:—

“(c) is not an eligible pensioner within the meaning of the Health Insurance Act 1973; and”; and

(d) by omitting from sub-section (6a) the words “sub-section (1), (2) or (3) or in the event specified in paragraph (6)(e) or (g)” and substituting the words “sub-sections (1) or (2)”.

**Service pensioner to furnish information when required.**

**15.** Section 97 of the Principal Act is amended by omitting from sub-section (1) the words “and accumulated property”.

**Supplementary assistance.**

**16.** Section 98a of the Principal Act is amended—

(a) by omitting paragraph (b) of sub-section (1) and substituting the following paragraph:—

“(b) the rate of that person’s income is less than the amount per annum specified in paragraph (b) of sub-section (1) of section 30a of the Social Services Act 1947; and”; and

(b) by omitting paragraphs (d) and (e) of sub-section (3) and substituting the following paragraphs:—

“(d) where the rate of his income is not greater than the maximum rate of income specified in paragraph (d) of sub-section (3) of section 30a of the Social Services Act 1947—the rate specified in that paragraph; or

“(e) in any other case—an amount per annum equal to the amount by which the amount specified in paragraph (e) of sub-section (3) of section 30a of the Social Services Act 1947 exceeds the annual rate of his income.”.

**On death of married person, widow, widower or children to receive certain benefits for 12 weeks.**

**17.** Section 98b of the Principal Act is amended by omitting from sub-section (8) the words “and a benefit under section 98aaa”.

**Persons in receipt of payments by way of compensation or damages.**

**18.** Section 107r of the Principal Act is amended by adding at the end thereof the following sub-section:—

“(9) Where, in respect of a deceased member, both a pension and a domestic allowance are payable under this Division to the widow or to a woman referred to in section 107p, the domestic allowance shall, for the purposes of this section, be treated as a part of the pension”.

**19.** Section 123a of the Principal Act is repealed and the following sections are substituted:—

**Modification of certain other laws.**

“123a. (1) Regulation 66 of the Repatriation Regulations in force under this Act does not apply in relation to a person by reason that the person is receiving a service pension where the person is a prescribed person within the meaning of section 123ab of this Act.

“(2) Regulation 179a of the Repatriation Regulations in force under this Act has effect as if—

(a) ‘deceased pensioner’ as defined by that regulation did not include a deceased person who was, at the time of his death, a prescribed person within the meaning of section 123ab of this Act;

(b) ‘pensioner’ as defined by that regulation did not include a prescribed person within the meaning of section 123ab of this Act;

(c) the reference in sub-regulation (4) of that regulation to a person in receipt of a service pension as the wife of a member of the Forces did not include a reference to a prescribed person within the meaning of section 123ab of this Act; and

(d) the reference in paragraph (b) of sub-regulation (5) of that regulation to a person in receipt of an age or invalid pension or a wife’s pension or a widow’s pension did not include a reference to a prescribed person within the meaning of section 123ab of this Act.

**Prescribed person.**

“123ab. (1) For the purposes of section 123a, a reference to a prescribed person shall be read as a reference to a person (other than a person who is permanently blind) whose annual rate of income equals or exceeds the prescribed rate of income applicable to him.

“(2) For the purposes of this section but subject to sub-sections (3) and (4), the prescribed rate of income applicable to a person is—

(a) in the case of an unmarried person—$1,716 per annum; or

(b) in the case of a married person—$1,495 per annum.

“(3) Where a person has the custody, care and control of a child or children, the prescribed rate of income applicable to the person by virtue of sub-section (2) shall be increased—

(a) if the person is unmarried—by $572 per annum; or

(b) if the person is married—by $416 per annum,

in respect of each child.

“(4) Where an unmarried person has the custody, care and control of a child or children, the prescribed rate of income applicable to the person by virtue of sub-sections (2) and (3) shall be further increased—

(a) if that child or at least 1 of those children, as the case may be, is—

(i) under the age of 6 years; or

(ii) an invalid who, in the opinion of the Commission, requires full-time care and attention,

by $312 per annum; or

(b) in any other case—by $208 per annum.

“(5) For the purposes of this section, the income of a husband or wife shall unless—

(a) they are living apart in pursuance of a separation agreement in writing or of a decree, judgment or order of a court; or

(b) for any special reason, in a particular case, the Commission otherwise determines,

be deemed to be half the total income of both.

“(6) In this section—

‘child’ in relation to a person, means—

(a) a person who—

(i) is under the age of 16 years; and

(ii) is in the custody, care and control of the first-mentioned person; or

(b) a person who—

(i) has attained the age of 16 years;

(ii) is receiving full-time education at a school, college or university;

(iii) is not in receipt of an invalid pension under Part III of the Social Services Act 1947; and

(iv) is wholly or substantially dependent on the first-mentioned person;

‘income’ means—

(a) in relation to a person other than a service pensioner—income within the meaning of Part III of the Social Services Act 1947; or

(b) in relation to a service pensioner—income within the meaning of Division 5 of Part III of this Act;

‘married person’ means a person in relation to whose income sub-section (5) applies;

‘unmarried person’ means a person who is not a married person, and includes a widower or widow and a person whose marriage has been dissolved but has not remarried;

‘wife’ includes a woman who has lived with a man (in this section referred to as her husband) as his wife on a permanent and bona fide domestic basis, although not legally married to him, for not less than 3 years immediately preceding the operation of this section in relation to that woman or that man.’’.

**Schedule 1.**

**20.** (1) Schedule 1 to the Principal Act is amended by omitting the Schedule l table and substituting the following table:—

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 |
| Pension payable to Widowed Mother on Death of Member | Pension payable to Widow on Death of Member | Pension payable to Member on total incapacity |
| $ | $ | $ |
| per fortnight | per fortnight | per fortnight |
| 17 | 87 | 62.90 |

(2) Schedule 1 to the Principal Act is further amended by omitting from paragraph 6 the figures “$108.60” and substituting the figures “$114.70”.

**Schedule 2.**

**21.** Schedule 2 to the Principal Act is amended by omitting the words—

“RATE FOR SPECIAL PENSIONS—$157.70 PER FORTNIGHT”

and substituting the words—

“RATE FOR SPECIAL PENSIONS—$166.50 PER FORTNIGHT”.

**Schedule 5.**

**22.** Schedule 5 to the Principal Act is amended by omitting from column 2 of the table in paragraph 1 the figures “98.10” (wherever occurring) and substituting the figures “103.60”.

**Schedule 7.**

**23.** Schedule 7 to the Principal Act is repealed.

**Preservation of certain pensions.**

**24.** (1) A pension in force immediately prior to 25 November 1976 shall not be liable to reduction or cancellation as on and from that date by reason only of the amendments made by sections 7, 8, 9, 10, 16 and 23 of this Act and by sections 10 and 11 and paragraphs 7 (a), (d), (e), (f), (g) and (h) of the Social Services Amendment Act (No. 3) 1976.

(2) A pension that, but for sub-section (1), would have been cancelled or reduced in rate as on and from 25 November 1976 shall not be increased to a rate higher than the rate at which it was payable on 24 November or, if that rate has been reduced under sub-section (3), higher than the rate to which it has been so reduced or last so reduced, as the case may be, unless and until the time at which the pensioner would have been entitled to a pension at a rate higher than that rate if he were applying for a new pension and, as of that time, the rate of his pension shall be increased to that higher rate and this section ceases to apply to him.

(3) Subject to sub-section (2), a pension to which that sub-section applies is subject to adjustment by reason of each change in income of the pensioner after 25 November 1976 to the same extent as it would be adjusted if, immediately before the change, the pensioner was, having regard to the annual rate of his income, entitled, under the Repatriation Act 1920, to be paid a pension at the rate at which the pension was being paid to him.

(4) In this section, “pension” means a service pension or an allowance by way of supplementary assistance payable under section 98a of the Repatriation Act 1920.

**Preservation of eligibility for certain benefits under Repatriation Regulations.**

**25.** (1) Where a person who was, immediately before 25 November 1976, a service pensioner to whom regulation 66 of the Repatriation Regulations applied ceases to be such a service pensioner on that date by reason only that the person is, on that date, a prescribed person within the meaning of section 123ab of the Repatriation Act 1920, regulation 66 of the Repatriation Regulations continues, by force of this sub-section, to apply to the person as if he were such a service pensioner until the person ceases to be a prescribed person within the meaning of that section or the annual rate of the person’s income exceeds the annual rate of the person’s income on that date, whichever first occurs

(2) Where a person who was, immediately before 25 November 1976, a pensioner as defined by regulation 179a of the Repatriation Regulations ceases to be such a pensioner on that date by reason only that the person is, on that date, a prescribed person within the meaning of section 123ab of the Repatriation Act 1920, regulation 179a of the Repatriation Regulations continues, by force of this sub-section, to apply to and in relation to the person as if the person were a pensioner as so defined until the person ceases to be a prescribed person within the meaning of that section or the annual rate of the person’s income exceeds the annual rate of the person’s income on that date, whichever first occurs.

(3) Where a person who was, immediately before 25 November 1976, a person in receipt of an age or invalid pension or a wife’s pension or a widow’s pension within the meaning of sub-regulation (5) of regulation 179a of the Repatriation Regulations ceases to be such a person on that date by reason only that the person is, on that date, a prescribed person within the meaning of section 123ab of the Repatriation Act 1920, regulation 179a of the Repatriation Regulations continues, by force of this sub-section, to apply to and in relation to that person as if the person were a person in receipt of an age or invalid pension, a wife’s pension or a widow’s pension within the meaning of that sub-regulation until the person ceases to be a prescribed person within the meaning of that section or the annual rate of the person’s income exceeds the annual rate of the person’s income on that date, whichever first occurs.

(4) Where a person who dies after 24 November 1976 and had, on or before that date, lodged a claim for—

(a) a service pension—

(i) as a member of the Forces under section 84 or 85 of the Repatriation Act 1920; or

(ii) as a person specified in paragraph (a) or (b) of section 120 of that Act; or

(b) an allowance under section 9 of the Tuberculosis Act 1948,

would, if the claim had been determined on that date, have been on that date a pensioner as defined by regulation 179a of the Repatriation Regulations, sub-section (2) applies as if he had been on that date a pensioner as so defined.

PART III—AMENDMENTS OF THE SEAMEN’S WAR PENSIONS

AND ALLOWANCES ACT 1940

**26.** The Seamen’s War Pensions and Allowances Act 1940is in this Part referred to as the Principal Act.

**Rates of pension on death or total incapacity**

**27.** Section 18 of the Principal Act is amended by omitting from sub-section (4a) the figures “$108.60” and substituting the figures “$114.70”.

**28.** After section 18 of the Principal Act the following section is inserted:—

**Variation of rates of pension.**

“18aa. (1) In this section, unless the contrary intention appears—

‘index number’, in relation to a quarter, means the All Groups Consumer Price Index number, being the weighted average of the 6 State capital cities, published by the Statistician in respect of that quarter;

‘relevant period’ means the period of 6 months commencing on 1 May 1977, and each subsequent period of 6 months;

‘relevant rate’ means the rate specified in sub-section (4a) of section 18. the rate specified in Column 1 of Schedule 1 or the rate specified in Column 3 of that Schedule;

‘Statistician’ means the Australian Statistician.

“(2) Subject to sub-section (3), if at any time, whether before or after the commencement of this section, the Statistician has published or publishes an index number in respect of a quarter in substitution for an index number previously published by him in respect of that quarter, the publication of the later index number shall be disregarded for the purposes of this section.

“(3) If at any time, whether before or after the commencement of this section, the Statistician has changed or changes the reference base for the consumer price index, then, for the purposes of the application of this section after the change took place or takes place, regard shall be had only to index numbers published in terms of the new reference base.

“(4) Where the factor ascertained, in relation to a relevant period, in accordance with sub-section (5) is greater than 1, this Act has effect as if for each relevant rate there were substituted, on the first day of that period—

(a) subject to paragraph (b)—a rate calculated by multiplying by that factor—

(i) in a case to which sub-paragraph (ii) does not apply—the relevant rate; or

(ii) if, by virtue of another application or several other applications of this section, this Act has had effect as if another rate was substituted, or other rates were successively sub­stituted, for the relevant rate—the substituted rate or the last substituted rate, as the case may be; or

(b) where the rate so calculated (in this paragraph referred to as the ‘calculated rate’) is not a multiple of $0.10 per fortnight—a rate equal to—

(i) if the calculated rate exceeds the next lower rate that is such a multiple by $0.05 per fortnight or more—the next higher rate that is such a multiple; or

(ii) if the calculated rate exceeds the next lower rate that is such a multiple by less than $0.05 per fortnight—that next lower rate.

“(5) The factor to be ascertained for the purposes of sub-section (4) in relation to a relevant period—

(a) is the number, calculated to 3 decimal places, ascertained by dividing—

(i) if the relevant period commences on 1 May—the index number for the last preceding December quarter; or

(ii) if the relevant period commences on 1 November—the index number for the last preceding June quarter,

by the highest index number in respect of a December or June quarter that preceded that quarter, not being a December or June quarter that occurred before the June quarter in the year 1976; or

(b) if the number so ascertained would, if it were calculated to 4 decimal places, end in a number greater than 4—is the number so ascertained increased by 0.001.

“(6) Where, by virtue of the application of this section, this Act has effect as if another rate were substituted for a relevant rate on the first day of a relevant period, the substitution, in so far as it affects instalments of pensions, has effect in relation to every instalment of such a pension that falls due on or after the first day of that period.

**Schedule 1.**

**29.** Schedule 1 to the Principal Act is repealed and the following Schedule substituted:—

SCHEDULE 1 Section 18

GENERAL PENSION RATES—DEATH OR TOTAL INCAPACITY

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 |
| Rate of pension payable per fortnight to widow on death of Australian mariner | Aggregate of rates of pensions payable per fortnight to dependants other than widow and children on death of Australian mariner | Rate of pension payable per fortnight to Australian mariner on total incapacity |
| $ | $ | $ |
| 87 | 17.60 | 62.90 |

PART VI—APPLICATION OF CERTAIN AMENDMENTS

**Application of amendments.**

**30.** The amendments made by sections 20, 21, 22, 27 and 29 in so far as they affect instalments of pensions, apply in relation to an instalment of pension falling due on 4 November 1976 and to all subsequent instalments.