

Details as to the number and type of pensions being paid under the Pension Act as at March 31, 1972 are given in Table 6.29.

#### **6.9.1.2 War Veterans Allowances and Civilian War Allowances**

**War Veterans Allowance Board.** The War Veterans Allowance Board is a quasi-judicial body consisting, at present, of ten members appointed by the Governor in Council. The Board administers the War Veterans Allowance Act and Part XI of the Civilian War Pensions and Allowances Act and reports to Parliament through the Minister of Veterans Affairs. The Board acts as an appeal court for an applicant or recipient aggrieved by a decision of a District Authority and may, on its own motion, review and alter or reverse any adjudication of a District Authority. The Board is also responsible for instructing and guiding the District Authorities in the interpretation of policy and for advising the Minister with respect to regulations concerning the administration of the Act.

**War Veterans Allowance District Authorities.** In 1950, 18 District Authorities were established in the regional districts of the Department of Veterans Affairs and granted full power to adjudicate on all matters arising under the War Veterans Allowance Act. In 1960, a separate authority – the Foreign Countries District Authority – was established to look after recipients living outside Canada. The members of a District Authority are employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs appointed by the Minister with the approval of the Governor in Council.

**War Veterans Allowances.** The War Veterans Allowance Act (RSC 1970, c.W-5), provides an allowance to otherwise qualified war veterans who, because of age or infirmity, are no longer able to derive their maintenance from employment and to ensure that their income does not fall below a specified scale. Widows and orphans of qualified veterans are eligible for benefits. Since its inception in 1930, the Act has been amended on 16 different occasions to meet additional needs of veterans and their dependants. The Act was last amended on May 19, 1972 when provision was made for an annual escalated increase in the rates and ceilings in accordance with increases in the consumer price index. The rates and ceilings established to take effect on January 1, 1973 provide for monthly payments of \$131 to a single beneficiary, subject to an annual income ceiling of \$2,052; for a married veteran, the allowance is \$217.61 and the ceiling \$3,451.32; for one orphan \$74.70 and \$1,184.40, for two orphans \$131.00 and \$1,920.00 and for three orphans \$176.47 and \$2,441.64. It should be noted that the ceiling for permissible annual income is raised by \$120 a year if the recipient or spouse is blind.

As at December 31, 1972 a total of 74,719 persons were receiving War Veterans Allowances: 43,875 veterans, 30,518 widows and 326 orphans. Of the total number of beneficiaries, only 683 resided outside Canada. Annual liability for all recipients was estimated at \$77.6 million.

**Civilian War Pensions and Allowances.** Part XI of the Civilian War Pensions and Allowances Act makes available to certain groups of civilians and their widows and orphans, benefits similar to those available to veterans under the War Veterans Allowance Act. These groups, which performed meritorious service in World War I or World War II, are: Canadian merchant seamen of both wars; non-Canadians who served in Canadian merchant ships in either war; Canadian voluntary aid detachments of World War I; Canadian firefighters of World War II; Canadian welfare workers of World War II; Canadian transatlantic aircrew of World War II; and the Newfoundland Overseas Forestry Unit of World War II.

At December 31, 1972, 2,638 civilians, 651 widows and 12 orphans were in receipt of Civilian War Allowances, for a total of 3,301 of whom only five resided outside of Canada. Annual liability was estimated at \$4.7 million.

#### **6.9.1.3 Bureau of Pensions Advocates**

The Bureau of Pensions Advocates was established under the Minister of Veterans Affairs by the amendments to the Pension Act 1971 (SC 1970-71, c.31), effective March 30, 1971. It succeeds the Veterans Bureau which had been in operation since 1930. The Bureau is not part of the Department of Veterans Affairs, but provides an independent professional legal aid service to applicants for awards under the Pension Act. The Chief Pensions Advocate is the Chief Executive Officer and is assisted by pensions advocates, all of whom are lawyers, located at the Bureau's head office in Ottawa and in district offices in major centres across Canada. Pensions Advocates represent applicants as counsel at Entitlement Board and Pension Review