

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 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 provides an allowance to otherwise qualified war veterans who, because of age or incapacity, are no longer able to derive their maintenance from employment and to ensure that their income does not fall below a specified level. Widows, widowers and orphans of qualified veterans are eligible for benefits. Since its inception in 1930, the Act has been amended on numerous occasions to meet additional needs of veterans and their dependents.

With effect from October 1, 1973, the WVA/CWA income levels are escalated by 5.3% and the rates by similar dollar amounts. The income levels are increased quarterly thereafter in accordance with the increase in the cost-of-living, except that orphans' income levels will continue to be adjusted annually.

As of April 1974, the rates for orphans were increased to \$125 a month for each orphan, less any amount payable under the Family Allowances Act, 1973, for that orphan. The income level was increased to \$135.95. Effective January 1, 1975, and on January 1 of each succeeding year, the income level will be increased in accordance with the rise in the cost-of-living. The rate will be increased by similar dollar amounts.

As of April 1, 1974, the allowance paid on behalf of a child of a widow, widower or unmarried veteran ("married" rate) or an allowance paid to an orphan is continued to age 25 as long as the child or orphan continues his education. The former legislation required payment of the "married" rate of orphan's allowance to cease at age 21; otherwise, the allowance paid on behalf of the child is discontinued at age 17.

With effect from October 1, 1974, the legislation provides for the payment of an additional \$50 a month (\$51.30 as of January 1, 1975), less Family Allowances in pay under the Family Allowances Act, 1973, for each dependent child of a widow, widower or unmarried veteran after the first one and for each dependent child of all other recipients.

As at November 30, 1974 a total of 82,431 persons were receiving War Veterans Allowances: 46,821 veterans, 35,272 widows and 338 orphans; of this total, only 631 resided outside Canada. The annual cost for all recipients was estimated at \$111.8 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, widowers 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 and World War II, include: 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.

As at November 30, 1974, a total of 3,946 civilians, including 937 widows and 12 orphans, were receiving these allowances; only four resided outside Canada. Total cost for the year was estimated at \$7.0 million.

6.7.1.3 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