

### 6.10.1.3 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 Board hearings and provide a general counselling service to applicants relative to their claims under the Pension Act. No charge is made for the services of the bureau.

During the fiscal years 1974-75 and 1975-76, the Bureau of Pensions Advocates submitted 9,941 and 11,010 claims respectively to the Canadian Pension Commission, Entitlement Boards of the commission and the Pension Review Board. Of the 11,383 and 10,108 decisions rendered by these adjudicating bodies on bureau claims during the same periods of time, 35% and 29% were wholly or partially granted.

## 6.10.2 Social and health services for veterans

### 6.10.2.1 Veterans services

Welfare services for veterans and, where appropriate, their dependents, are provided by the Veterans Services Branch. These include the administration of assigned statutes; the conducting of field work and reporting for other branches of the department, the Canadian Pension Commission, the War Veterans Allowance Board and Services Benevolent Funds; and the provision of counselling services including referral to other public or private agencies and veterans organizations.

**Assistance Fund.** Recipients of benefits under the War Veterans Allowance Act and Part XI of the Civilian War Pensions and Allowances Act living in Canada may be given help from the Assistance Fund if their total income is lower than the permitted maximum. Assistance may take the form of a monthly supplement based on shelter, fuel, food, clothing, personal care and specified health costs or of a single award to meet an unusual or emergency need. The number of persons assisted in the year ended March 31, 1976 was 26,233, the number in receipt of monthly supplements at the end of 1976 was 22,297 and fund expenditures from April 1, 1975 to March 31, 1976, amounted to \$10.9 million. Comparable statistics for one year earlier, in each case, are 25,074 persons assisted, 21,211 in receipt of monthly supplements and \$10.75 million in fund expenditures.

**Education assistance to children.** The Children of War Dead (Education Assistance) Act provides help in the form of allowances and the payment of fees for the post-secondary education of children of persons whose deaths have been attributed to military service. Assistance is restricted to children registered in educational institutions in Canada that require secondary school graduation, matriculation or equivalent standing for admission, including, in addition to universities and colleges, such facilities as hospital schools of teaching and institutes of technology. From its inception in July 1953 to March 31, 1976, expenditures totalled \$15.1 million of which \$8.6 million was spent in allowances and \$6.5 million in fees. By the end of March 1976, training had been approved for 7,155 children of Canada's war dead; of these, 3,313 had successfully completed training; 811 students in university and non-university courses were receiving assistance.

**Veterans insurance.** Under the terms of the Returned Soldiers Insurance Act (SC 1920, c.54 as amended), any veteran of World War I became eligible to contract for life insurance with the federal government for a maximum of \$5,000. No