

# CYBERLEX



Are you eligible?

The Department of Veterans' Affairs have developed online modules to assist in the determination of a person's eligibility for a pension or benefit or compensation for injuries or diseases attributable to service in the Australian Defence Force.

The online modules are an example of rule based expert systems (for more information see November 2000 issue). By answering a number of questions a user is presented with a statement about the eligibility for a pension or compensation. The statement of eligibility is described as an "Outcome of Your Investigation". At the end of the investigation, the user is presented with the outcome and is able to obtain a report for the investigation.

The report outlines the facts on which the report is based (that is, the answers to the questions asked). The report provides additional information about the criteria for eligibility. For example, in the compensation module, there is a table showing the relevant legislation by the type and period of service. In addition, the report provides details on how to proceed, whether it be by making an application, testing eligibility further or contacting some to make further inquiries.

The two modules available are the Just in Case Module and the ELMNet Module. Just in Case covers compensation under the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 and the Veterans' Entitlement Act 1986. ELMNet Module covers pensions and benefits under the Veterans' Entitlement Act 1986. Both modules provide very simple explanations and navigation. The investigation is conducted on a secure server and privacy information states that the answers given during the investigation is stored only while the investigation is underway and that once terminated, the information provided is deleted. One interesting variation between the modules is that the ELMNet Module provides for personalisation of the investigation by providing a name. The ELMNet module will work with or without a name and is default set to "the veteran". After using the Department of Veterans' Affairs' online modules you can find any number of situations where expert systems might be used to assist lawyers, courts, government departments and in particular, individuals.

## Last month: Technology in the court room

Last month I wrote about the <e.law> QUT Moot Court at the Queensland

University of Technology Faculty of Law. There is a lot of interesting things happening in the e-justice arena, from e-courts and e-filing to the application of specific technologies such as voice recognition. The Australian Institute of Judicial Administration's second Technology for Justice Conference was held during October 2000. The Institute's website provides details of the conference proceedings including links to papers, website and biographical information.

Published in 2001, the *Technology for Justice 2000 Report* is now available and is a very useful overview of the issues presented at the conference.

## Links:

Department of Veterans' Affairs - <http://www.dva.gov.au>

DVA - Just in Case Module - <http://www.dva.gov.au/adf/mcrs/docs/WhatEligibleFor.htm>

DVA - ELMNet Module - <http://www.dva.gov.au/pensions/elmnet/elmnetindex.htm>

Australian Institute of Judicial Administration - <http://www.aija.org.au>

Technology for Justice - <http://www.aija.org.au/tech2/>

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## THUNDERBIRDS ARE GO AT THE DARWIN FESTIVAL



Three Darwin lawyers joined in the recent Festival of Darwin celebrations, marching to the beat of some very fine tunes in a musical group known as "The Thunderbirds".

Barrister Jenny Blokland and solicitors Mary-Lynn Griffith (Priestleys) and Helen Spowart (NTLAC) were part of the group of marching girls who performed in the giant Street Parade in Darwin's Mitchell Street on Saturday 25 August.

The Festival of Darwin ran from 16 August to 2 September 2001.