

UK nuclear veterans win new health study

- [The Age.com.au](http://www.theage.com.au)
- [Heraldsun.com.au](http://www.heraldsun.com.au)
- [The Sydney Morning Herald : smh.com.au](http://www.smh.com.au)

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Veterans of Britain's nuclear tests carried out off Australia's coast in the Pacific Ocean have won their bid for an independent study into the toll on their health.

Many of the 22,000 former soldiers who witnessed the secret tests in the 1950s and 1960s suffered a range of illnesses after being exposed to radiation.

Some developed cancer while others reported that their children had been born with deformities. Only about 3,000 are still alive.

Britain's Under Secretary of Defence Derek Twigg said the government had agreed in principle to fund a STG412,000 (\$A897,000) independent study into the health effects suffered by the veterans, the Sunday Mirror reported.

However, the new study will only go ahead if two other previous studies, including one carried out in New Zealand, are confirmed to be credible.

News of the study comes after the government agreed earlier this month to payouts of about STG8000 (\$A17,400) to 360 veterans who took part in chemical weapons tests.

The newspaper said many soldiers had been forced to swim, fish and play football on Trimouille Island, which became radioactive just hours after Britain's first nuclear bomb was detonated.

Tony Daber said his father, Sergeant Norman Daber, managed to live until he was 70 but died from cancer.

"My dad told me they built a small town to see what the effects would be," he told the newspaper.

"On the day of the blast they were told to turn away while the bomb was exploded. A day later they were back. Everything had been obliterated but they were encouraged to swim in the sea and catch the fish and eat them."

<http://news.theage.com.au/uk-nuclear-veterans-win-new-health-study/20080210-1rcw.html>