

June 2, 2019

The 'Blue Water Navy' issue has become an ongoing challenge due to the back-and-forth haggling between Congress and the Department of Justice in Washington. The DOJ has sought, and been granted by the Supreme Court, two 30 day extensions (May and June) while it decides whether to appeal a lower court ruling which has already extended presumptive VA disability benefits to the so-called Blue Water Navy veterans who served off the coast of Vietnam and who were exposed to toxic chemical defoliants during the Vietnam conflict. The VA supports the lower court ruling.

The Fleet Reserve Association, on whom we have relied to keep us informed regarding the issue has been listed as a "Friend of the Court" by the petitioner, Blue Water Navy Veteran Alfred Procopio. Mr. Procopio never stepped foot on land in Vietnam and was exposed to Agent Orange during his military service off the coast of the Republic of Vietnam. Due to this exposure, he developed medical conditions consistent with other veterans who served on land and were exposed to Agent Orange.

A favorable decision *could* affect certain AGMR-1 crewmembers, some of whom are currently experiencing those same medical conditions.

Crewmembers are urged to use the **Action Center** to ask President Trump to direct the DOJ not to appeal the *Procopio decision* thereby requiring the VA to provide this presumption to Blue Water Navy Vietnam veterans as they did before 2002. A link to the Action Center is listed below:

<https://www.votervoice.net/iframes/FRA/Campaigns/64457/Respond>