

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Regional Office**

VA File Number

**Represented By:
CHUCK R PARDUE
Rating Decision
03/13/2018**

INTRODUCTION

The records reflect that you are a veteran of the Gulf War Era and Peacetime. You served in the Army from June 5, 1979, to May 31, 1997. We received a request to reopen a previous claim on November 3, 2017. Based on a review of the evidence listed below, we have made the following decision(s) on your claim.

DECISION

1. Service connection for bilateral hearing loss is granted with an evaluation of 0 percent effective November 3, 2017.
2. Service connection for tinnitus is granted with an evaluation of 10 percent effective November 3, 2017.

EVIDENCE

- Rating decision dated February 9, 2018 to include the following:

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- Rating decision dated August 4, 2005
- Service treatment records from November 21, 1978-January 27, 1997 received March 9, 2015
- DD214 Certificate of Discharge from June 5, 1979-May 31, 1997
- DBQ dated November 3, 2017
- VA Form 21-4138, Statement in Support of Claim received November 3, 2017
- DBQ's dated November 3, 2017
- Private treatment records from Thomas J Seiter, MD dated November 3, 2017
- VCAA response received November 3, 2017
- VA Form 21-0781 Statement in Support of Claim for Service Connection for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder received November 3, 2017
- VA letter concerning your claim dated November 6, 2017
- VA letter concerning your claim dated December 11, 2017
- Written statement from Sandra Cochrane December 29, 2017
- Written statement from Wade Berzett January 8, 2018
- Your written statement received January 8, 2018
- VA Form 21-0781 Statement in Support of Claim for Service Connection for Post traumatic Stress Disorder received January 8, 2018
- Treatment records from DD Eisenhower VAMC dated January 3, 2004-November 1, 2017
- Written statement from Janet Glabas December 21, 2017
- Contract examination dated December 22, 2017 received January 10, 2018
- Contract examination dated February 21, 2018

REASONS FOR DECISION

1. Service connection for bilateral hearing loss.

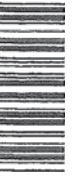
We have granted your claim for bilateral hearing loss.

The effective date of this grant is November 3, 2017. Service connection has been established from the day VA received your claim. When a claim of service connection is received more than one year after discharge from active duty, the effective date is the date VA received the claim.

Service connection is warranted because your military occupational specialty (MOS) of combat engineer is consistent with acoustic trauma and your hearing loss has been linked to that acoustic trauma.

Your VA examiner opined that it is at least as likely as not that your hearing loss is due to military noise exposure.

VA examination findings show the left ear with 94 percent discrimination. Decibel (dB) loss at the puretone threshold of 500 Hertz (Hz) is 40, at 1000 Hz is 50, at 2000 Hz is 55, at 3000 Hz is 70, and at 4000 Hz is 85. The average decibel loss is 65 in the left ear. The right ear shows a speech discrimination of 94 percent. Your right ear Decibel (dB) loss at the puretone threshold of 500 Hertz (Hz) is 35, at 1000 Hz is 45, at 2000 Hz is 65, at 3000 Hz is 75, and at 4000 Hz is 90.



The average decibel loss is 69 in the right ear.

An evaluation of 0 percent is assigned because your right ear has a speech discrimination of 94 with an average decibel loss of 69 and your left ear has a speech discrimination of 94 with an average decibel loss of 65. The evaluation for hearing loss is based on objective testing. Higher evaluations are assigned for more severe hearing impairment.

2. Service connection for tinnitus as secondary to the service-connected disability of bilateral hearing loss.

Service connection for tinnitus has been established as related to the service-connected disability of bilateral hearing loss.

An evaluation of 10 percent is assigned from November 3, 2017, the date you submitted a claim for benefits.

The examiner opined your tinnitus was at least as likely as not secondary to your service connected bilateral hearing loss.

We have assigned a 10 percent evaluation for your tinnitus based on:

- Recurrent tinnitus

A single evaluation for recurrent tinnitus is assigned whether the sound is perceived in one ear, both ears, or in the head.

This is the highest schedular evaluation allowed under the law for tinnitus.

REFERENCES:

Title 38 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Pensions, Bonuses and Veterans' Relief contains the regulations of the Department of Veterans Affairs which govern entitlement to all veteran benefits. For additional information regarding applicable laws and regulations, please consult your local library, or visit us at our website, www.va.gov.

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