



**Australian Government**  
**Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal**

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## DECISION

*Defence Act 1903*

s.58H(2)(a)—Determination of the salaries and relevant allowances to be paid to members

### **ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY – COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS – CATEGORY STREAMING**

(Matter No. 11 of 2015)

THE HON. A. HARRISON, PRESIDENT

THE HON. A. BEVIS, MEMBER

CANBERRA, 17 SEPTEMBER 2015

BRIGADIER W. ROLFE, AO (Ret'd), MEMBER

[1] This decision arises from an application<sup>i</sup> made by the Australian Defence Force (ADF) pursuant to s.58H of the *Defence Act 1903* (the Act) to restructure the Navy Communications and Information Systems (CIS) category into two streams. There was no hearing in the matter and we have dealt with the application on the basis of the submissions filed by the parties.

#### **Background**

[2] CIS sailors operate the Navy's telecommunication systems, using a range of equipment including, but not limited to, visual communications; telecommunications; information technology; information and operational security; and information management and dissemination. The CIS category performs a central part of the Navy's ability to deploy surface ships and submarines and provides support to ADF elements and shore establishments.

## Submissions

[3] In their submission<sup>ii</sup> the ADF seek to change the structure of the CIS category to enable the sub-specialisation of sailors into either CIS-Communications (CIS-C) or CIS-Information (CIS-I). They submit that the proposed restructure will provide the capacity for ‘enhanced specialisation’ within each stream.

[4] The ADF aim to:

- a. create two distinct career streams for CIS sailors;
- b. preserve workforce flexibility through retaining overall category cohesion; and
- c. deepen CIS expertise through the provision of specialist training in each stream.<sup>iii</sup>

[5] The ADF state that the restructure will “*improve the effectiveness of the category through the provision of more specialised skills...either communications or information, at the expense of reducing the necessity for a CIS to be trained as both.*”<sup>iv</sup>

[6] The ADF propose to stream submariners as CIS-I (CIS-I SM) to allow CIS-I submariners to be more widely employed and “*in part, to address submarine personnel shortfalls, as well as provide greater career development for submarine sailors.*”<sup>v</sup>

[7] The ADF is not seeking to alter any remuneration for the CIS category.

[8] The Commonwealth supports the ADF proposition in its entirety.<sup>vi</sup>

## Consideration

[9] We gave consideration to the fact that increases in technology have led to an unprecedented reliance on information networks and communication capability to support military operations. We accept the evidence that the scope of CIS responsibilities has continued to grow despite no alteration to the work value of the role.

[10] We note that sailors will be “*invited to make a submission for their streaming preference based on their employment history [and that] Reserve personnel will be allocated a CIS-C stream unless they can demonstrate their qualifications would see them better employed as a CIS-I.*”<sup>vii</sup>

[11] We note that Navy conducted presentations to personnel about the restructure and name changes in March 2015. We acknowledge that “*anecdotal information obtained during presentations...would indicate that current CIS sailors will receive their preferred stream*”<sup>viii</sup> and that “*individuals were [already] self-streaming...[by] concentrating their career focus on specific skills and/or postings.*”<sup>ix</sup>

## Conclusion

[12] We accept that sailors will be formally placed into a stream on acceptance of a letter of offer and that streamed employment is anticipated to commence at the next posting cycle. We accept that if sailors do not accept their letter of offer they can seek to transfer to another trade or Service.

[13] We accept that the category restructure is cost neutral and that there are no remunerative changes.

[14] Determination 9 of 2015 will be issued to give effect to our decision.

THE HON. A. HARRISON, PRESIDENT  
THE HON. A. BEVIS, MEMBER  
BRIGADIER W. ROLFE, AO (Ret'd), MEMBER

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<sup>i</sup> ADF Listing application of 23 July 2015.

<sup>ii</sup> Communications and Information Systems – Category Streaming – Matter 11 of 2015 dated August 2015.

<sup>iii</sup> ADF submission page 6 paragraph 4.

<sup>iv</sup> ADF submission page 12 paragraph 28.

<sup>v</sup> ADF submission page 16 paragraph 43.

<sup>vi</sup> Commonwealth submission – Matter 11 of 2015 – Navy Communications and Information Systems – Category Streaming

<sup>vii</sup> ADF submission page 16 paragraph 44.

<sup>viii</sup> ADF submission page 17 paragraph 52.

<sup>ix</sup> ADF submission page 13 paragraph 32.