



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

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## DECISION

*Defence Act 1903*

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

### **SENIOR OFFICER SPECIALIST MEDICAL OFFICER STRUCTURE – ANNUAL REVIEW**

(Matter No. 13 of 2013)

THE HON. A. HARRISON, PRESIDENT

THE HON. A. BEVIS, MEMBER

CANBERRA, 08 AUGUST 2014

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

1. This decision is made in response to the second annual review of the Senior Officer Specialist Officer Medical Officer Structure (SOSMOS). In a paper submission made in January 2014<sup>i</sup> the ADF submit that the structure is now fully implemented and seek a cessation to the practice of annual reviews for the SOSMOS.

#### **Background**

2. The SOSMOS came into effect on 17 March 2011 as part of Matter 1 of 2011 - *Star Ranks Review*. The SOSMOS moved medical star rank remuneration away from individual determinations to a competency based remuneration framework informed by external market forces, thereby achieving a long-term approach to remuneration for this specialist group.

3. Star rank senior medical officers had not been considered under Senior Officer Graded Structure (SOGS) as they come from a specialist structure and did not transfer from Graded Officer Pay Structure (GOPS). In the same way that SOGS was informed by GOPS placement, the SOSMOS was informed by prior placement in the Medical Officer Specialist Officer Career Structure.

### **Previous Reviews**

4. Matter 11 of 2012 was the first annual review of the SOSMOS and confirmed all medical star ranks had moved to the new framework. The ADF sought subtle changes to the SOSMOS based on lessons learnt and sought to:

- a. replace isolated annual reviews looking at external factors with a whole of category review;
- b. establish O6 as the salary point of reference for medical star rank salaries; and
- c. re-establish 'on-promotion' rates consistent with SOGS.

5. We endorsed that approach and concur that as a result of this series of adjustments the ADF achieved an aligned approach to maintaining senior officer (star rank) medical officers' remuneration.

### **Submissions**

6. The ADF submit that SOSMOS is fully implemented, consider the framework functional, and propose no further changes. They submit that there have not been significant changes in external market forces sufficient to justify further external bench-marking and seek the cessation of annual reviews on completion of this review.

7. The ADF propose that the rates from SOSMOS could inform other specialist remuneration submissions concerning legal, dental and chaplaincy senior officers.

8. In reply the Commonwealth supports the intention of the ADF submission and the proposal for the termination of reviews<sup>ii</sup>. However, the Commonwealth do not support the ADF statement that the principles established in SOSMOS should necessarily apply to other specialist senior officer salary structures and consider that each specialisation must be considered on its own merit<sup>iii</sup>

### **Consideration**

9. Our initial decision on this matter stated that "*there would need to be a significant change in... external market circumstances...to justify further benchmarking*"<sup>iv</sup> and we considered the ADF advice that there have not been significant changes<sup>v</sup>.

10. The same decision stated that “*we support in principle that there needs to be a long term, strategic approach to remuneration for this specialist group, and that pay arrangements for this group should not be considered transferable to other star rank specialists*”<sup>vi</sup>. We agree with the Commonwealth that star rank specialisations should be considered on their own merit and propose to adopt the approach taken in our earlier decision.

11. We further considered the ADF submission and concur that:

- a. the SOSMOS has not been amended since the first annual review;
- b. changes agreed by us previously have been successfully introduced; and
- c. no further changes are sought.

12. We accept that the need for annual reviews has concluded.

### **Conclusion**

13. This decision approves the cessation of annual reviews of the SOSMOS with effect from the date of this 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 Submission - Matter 13 of 2013, Senior Officer Specialist Medical Officer Structure 2013 Annual Review (Report Back) dated December 2013.

<sup>ii</sup> Commonwealth Submission dated 3 April 2014 – Matter 13 of 2013

<sup>iii</sup> Commonwealth Submission page 3 paragraph 14.

<sup>iv</sup> Decision - Matter 11 of 2012 – Senior Officer Specialist Medical Officer Structure, paragraph 15.

<sup>v</sup> ADF Submission page 9 paragraph 1.10A

<sup>vi</sup> Decision – Matter 11 of 2012 paragraph 16.