



Australian Government
Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal

DECISION

Defence Act 1903
s.58H—Functions and powers of Tribunal

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY: MARITIME LOGISTICS – SUPPORT OPERATIONS
(Matter 10 of 2016)

MS I. ASBURY, PRESIDENT

MR A. MORRIS, MEMBER

CANBERRA, 30 MARCH 2017

RADM J. GOLDRICK AO CSC RAN RTD, MEMBER

[1] This decision concerns an application¹ made by the Australian Defence Force (ADF) under s.58H of the *Defence Act 1903* to restructure, rename and amend the Maritime Logistics – Support Operations workgroup.

[2] There was no hearing in this matter and we dealt with the application on the papers.

Background

[3] The Maritime Logistics – Support Operations workforce, formerly known as the Steward category, consists of members who provide specialist hospitality and business capability support across Navy.

[4] The ADF submit that Navy has undertaken a series of internal reviews of the Maritime Logistics (ML) workforce resulting in a new structure which “*better meets contemporary and future needs and which will provide improved flexibility for management and employability*”.²

Submissions

- [5] The ADF submission³ specifically proposes to:
- a. rename Maritime Logistics - Steward to Maritime Logistics - Support Operations to reflect the wider scope of responsibilities;
 - b. restructure the current five skill grade structure to a four skill grade structure by amalgamating three 'Operator' skill grades into two;
 - c. renaming the existing 'Supervisor' and 'Manager' skill grades to 'Skill Grade 3' and 'Skill Grade 4' respectively;
 - d. maintain the existing pay grade placements at pay grade 2 for 'Operators' and at pay grade 3 for the renamed 'Skill Grade 3'; and
 - e. increase the pay grade for the renamed 'Skill Grade 4' from pay grade 3 to pay grade 4.
- [6] The ADF submit that these amendments apply equally to surface and submarine fleet sailors and that the restructure also involves expansion of the training continuum.
- [7] The ADF seek a commencement date of 6 April 2017.
- [8] The Commonwealth supports⁴ the ADF proposal in its entirety.

Consideration

- [9] We note the written evidence that the Chief of Navy agreed "*the title of 'Steward' no longer sufficiently recognised the level of support the workgroup provided to capability at sea and, based on feedback from the Navy community, approved a title change to Maritime Logistics – Support Operations in 2015*".⁵
- [10] We note that the Maritime Logistics – Support Operations is one of four ML workgroups with Chef, Personnel Operations and Supply Chain making up the other three. We accept that "*no significant changes are anticipated within these workgroups*"⁶ and they will retain a five skill grade/three pay grade structure at this time.
- [11] In this context we considered the consequences of amending five skill grades to four within Support Operations and note that, by merging the 'Operator' skill grades to two the trigger points for promotion will also merge.
- [12] We accept this amalgamation allows for the increased training requirements and provides employability at sea earlier in a members' career. We accept the submission that merging three skill grades to two will provide for "*clear pathways through operator levels to supervisory and management roles*".⁷

[13] We considered the impact of renaming the ‘Supervisor’ and ‘Manager’ roles to simply reflect the respective skill grade levels and accept that this still provides for recognition of qualifications.

[14] We considered the impact of maintaining the Support Operations pay grade structure with the exception of the managerial pay grade placement increasing to pay grade 4. We accept the evidence of increased professional expertise at Skill Grade 4 and the commensurate increase in leadership and governance duties.

Conclusion

[15] We accept that the amendments are structural in nature and align with placements across the ML workgroup, and Navy as a whole. We therefore agree the proposed structure as outlined below :

Previous name	Previous Pay Grade	Agreed name	Agreed Pay Grade
ML Steward Grade 1	2	ML Support Operations Grade 1	2
ML Steward Grade 2	2	ML Support Operations Grade 2	2
<i>ML Steward Grade 3</i>	2	<i>Remove</i>	
ML Steward Grade 4	3	ML Support Operations Grade 3	3
ML Steward Grade 5	3	ML Support Operations Grade 4	4

[16] We accept that there is no proposed pay grade differential for members of the Permanent or Reserve Forces and that these changes apply equally to both. We note that the proposal will affect 130 personnel with a resultant increase in salaries for “*some*”⁸ members.

[17] Determination 3 of 2017 will give effect to this decision from 6 April 2017.

MS I. ASBURY, PRESIDENT

MR A. MORRIS, MEMBER

RADM J. GOLDRICK AO CSC RAN RTD, MEMBER

¹ Listing application – Maritime Logistics Support Operations - DMR/OUT/2016/58 of 24 November 2016.

² ADF Submission Maritime Logistics Support Operations Workgroup page 4 paragraph 2.

³ ADF Submission page 4 paragraph 4.

⁴ Commonwealth submission Maritime Logistics – Support Operations dated 22 February 2017.

⁵ ADF submission page 8 paragraph 18.

⁶ ADF submission page 9 paragraph 20.

⁷ ADF submission page 4 paragraph 3.

⁸ ADF submission page 15 paragraph 47.