



Australian Government
Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal

STATEMENT

Defence Act 1903

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

**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY: OPERATOR UNMANNED
AERIAL SYSTEM AND MANAGER SURVEILLANCE AND TARGET
ACQUISITION**

(Matter No. 3 of 2016)

MS I. ASBURY, PRESIDENT

MR A. MORRIS, MEMBER

CANBERRA, 17 OCTOBER 2016

RADM J. GOLDRICK AO CSC RAN RTD, MEMBER

[1] This statement arises from a submissionⁱ made by the Australian Defence Force (ADF) under s.58(H) of the *Defence Act 1903* (the Act) to amalgamate two Royal Australian Artillery employment categories.

[2] The two categories are the Manager Surveillance and Target Acquisition category and the Operator Unmanned Aerial System category with the merged category to be known as ‘Operator Unmanned Aerial System’ employment category number 250.

[3] The ADF seeks to retain the existing pay grade placements (amending one placement trigger) and proposes non-reduction provisions be made for members affected by the changes under s.58B of the Act.

Background

[4] The Operator Unmanned Aerial System category provides aerial surveillance capability to Army. The category operates unmanned aerial vehicles and interprets and distributes the information and images gathered, providing real-time battlefield information. The Operator is responsible for the planning and conduct of unmanned aerial missions including flight and aircraft preparation, training, maintenance, piloting and mission command.

Submissions

[5] The ADF proposes to:

- a. amalgamate the Manager Surveillance and Target Acquisition and Operator Unmanned Aerial System category into a single Operator Unmanned Aerial System category;
- b. close the Manager Surveillance and Target Acquisition category;
- c. retain the current pay grade placements for all skill grades in the Operator Unmanned Aerial System category [with amendment to one pay grade trigger];
- d. amend the pay grade trigger for the proposed Operator Unmanned Aerial System – Manager from qualification courseⁱⁱ completion to on promotion to Warrant Officer; and
- e. implement 48 month non-reduction provisions under s.58B for Sergeants affected by the pay grade trigger amendment.ⁱⁱⁱ

[6] The Commonwealth supports the ADF application in its entirety.^{iv}

Consideration

[7] We considered this matter in conference with the parties on 10 August 2016.

[8] We accept that the amalgamation has come about as a result of capability changes and the closure of the Operator Radar category^v and that there is no change to any work value as a consequence of the amalgamation.

[9] We note that the category only employs Permanent members or ex-Permanent members who have transferred to the Reserves and that it is not a Reserve category available to *ab initio* members.

[10] We considered the submission that a current trigger for pay grade placement is based on the completion of manager training courses, and not on promotion to Warrant Officer, and accept this is inconsistent with other Army categories. We agree that amendment to an ‘on promotion’ pay grade will more accurately reflect the development and application of the skills required at the Warrant Officer rank.

[11] We gave consideration to the ADF proposal to create non-reduction provisions for members under s.58B of the Act. We questioned the need for this to be implemented under s.58B however we accept that this change is administrative in nature and that s.58B is suitable to provide for this.

Conclusion

[12] We agree to the amalgamation of the existing structure of the Operator Unmanned Aerial System and Manager Surveillance and Target Acquisition to create a single Operator Unmanned Aerial System category.

[13] We accept the need for non-reduction provisions for those Sergeants affected by the pay grade placement amendment and agree that it be determined under s.58B. We recognise 48 months as a sufficient period to allow career management or promotions of members affected. We require the ADF to report back to us in August 2019 in order to ascertain the number of members remaining on non-reduction provisions at that time.

[14] Determination 7 of 2016 will be issued to give effect to this decision from the proposed commencement date of 17 November 2016.

INGRID ASBURY, PRESIDENT
ADRIAN MORRIS, MEMBER
RADM JAMES GOLDRICK AO CSC RAN RTD, MEMBER

ⁱ ADF Submission - Royal Australian Artillery: Operator Unmanned Aerial System, Manager Surveillance and Target Acquisition- Matter 3 of 2016 dated 10 August 2016.

ⁱⁱ Known as 'Subject 4' course.

ⁱⁱⁱ ADF submission page 7 paragraph 7.

^{iv} Commonwealth submission – Matter 3 of 2016 – Unmanned Aerial System; Manager Surveillance and Target Acquisition dated 29 July 2016.

^v Matter 16 of 2015 – Closure of Army Reserve Radar Operator.