



Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal

DECISION

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

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN CORPS OF TRANSPORT: OPERATOR MOVEMENTS (Matter 4 of 2021)

MS I. ASBURY, PRESIDENT

MR A. MORRIS, MEMBER

CANBERRA, 12 APRIL 2021

MAJGEN G.FOGARTY AO RETD, MEMBER

[1] This decision arises from a listing application¹ for a determination to be made under Section 58H of the *Defence Act 1903* (the Act) for the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to restructure aspects of the Operator Movements employment category to better support associated capability requirements.

Background

[2] Operator Movements personnel are soldiers within the Royal Australian Corps of Transport who provide strategic flexibility and mobility of personnel, stores and equipment by air, land or sea for the ADF and other Government agencies.

[3] Operator Movements personnel are regularly tasked with coordinating administrative moves of personnel and equipment to areas, often over long distances. This includes consideration of routes, distances, rest stops, refuelling points, catering and road permits. Additionally, on operational deployments, the Operator Movements workforce must consider a range of other regulations and restrictions such as operational plans and tempo, availability of air, land and sea assets, biosecurity and customs restrictions, and cultural or religious practices.

Submissions

[4] The ADF submits that as the result of a ‘2018 Distribution Employment Category Review’ (the Review) a new workforce model was recommended in order to create a sustainable workforce structure. It further submits that a combination of workforce behaviours, coupled with the current Operator Movements structure, has resulted in workforce imbalances which require remediation.

[5] In order to achieve this the ADF proposes to:

- a. disestablish Operator Movements Assistant Manager skill grade with tasks being distributed between Operator Movements Supervisor and Operator Movements Manager;
- b. move the Operator Movements Supervisor from pay grade 3 to 4 to reflect an increase in work value; and
- c. combine Operator Movements Manager Grade 1 (pay grade 4) and Operator Movements Manager Grade 2 (pay grade 4) into a single skill grade Operator Movements Manager at pay grade 4.²

[6] The Commonwealth supports the proposal in its entirety.³

Consideration

[7] Throughout our deliberations we were conscious of the evidence that since the advent of the Graded Other Ranks Pay Structure (GORPS) in 2009, attempts to address the workforce imbalance have not succeeded in creating a sustainable structure. We accept the category now has excessive staffing at the Private rank with hollowness at the Warrant Officer Class 2 level. We were also cognisant that at the commencement of GORPS, when structural change was implemented and career progression requirements updated, no increase in pay grade was applied.⁴

[8] To assist in rebalancing the workforce the Review recommended that Army “*cease direct entry level recruitment into the Operator Movements employment category for the foreseeable future and instead rely on out of category (in Service transfer) postings from ‘feeder’ categories at the Private-Corporal rank levels*”.⁵

[9] The Review concluded that “*the assistant manager skill grade should be removed primarily to simplify the career structure and that some of the duties performed by the assistant manager can be undertaken by the supervisor level, and some should sit at the manager level*”.⁶

[10] We note that as technology has progressed Operator Movements staff have been required to learn, understand and operate different movement management systems and that the Supervisor is now “*required to have an intricate knowledge of these tools to ensure that subordinates are trained, competent and have the skills to employ these tools effectively. Such used to be within the remit of the Assistant Manager*”.⁷

Conclusion

[11] We accept that the restructure is an outcome of the changes made under the Distribution Employment Category Review and that an aim of the re-organisation is to improve the workforce imbalances currently being experienced.

[12] Further, we accept that the proposed workforce structure will improve the effectiveness, sustainability and capacity of the Operator Movements workforce and enhance capability through a more broadly skilled workforce. And finally, we agree these changes that we are approving recognise the significant increase in work value since 2009.

[13] Determination 10 of 2021 will give effect to these changes from 8 July 2021.

MS I. ASBURY, PRESIDENT
MR A. MORRIS, MEMBER
MAJGEN G.FOGARTY AO RETD, MEMBER

¹ DMR/OUT/2021/3 Listing Application *Royal Australian Corps of Transport – Operator Movements Employment Category* dated 9 March 2021.

² ADF Submission *Royal Australian Corps of Transport Operator Movements Employment Category Matter 4 of 2021* undated (ADF1)

³ Commonwealth submission *Royal Australian Corps of Transport – Operator Movements* dated 26 March 2021.(CWLTH1)

⁴ <https://dfrt.govcms.gov.au/sites/default/files/Statement-Matter-6-and-7-of-2009-GOPS-and-GORPS-15-Oct-2009.pdf>

⁵ ADF 1 page 13 paragraph 4.7

⁶ ADF1 page 14 paragraph 4.11

⁷ ADF1 page 16 paragraph 4.17