

24 AUGUST 2004

DEFENCE FORCE REMUNERATION TRIBUNAL

SPECIALIST OPERATIONS ALLOWANCE

MATTER NO 13 OF 2004

STATEMENT

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) has sought a number of changes to Specialist Operations Allowance affecting members and/ or support personnel of 4RAR (Commando), the 301 (Commando) Signals Squadron, East and West Tactical Assault Groups and the Incident Response Regiment.

Trainee Special Forces Commandos

The ADF has proposed that a component of Specialist Operations Allowance be established for Trainee Special Forces Commandos.

The ADF proposed that the new component consist of both Qualification & Skills and Disability elements (\$1,631 and \$5,438 respectively) and be applicable once members have completed the Commando Training Course, the Special Forces Weapons Course and either the Special Forces Parachute or the Commando Amphibious Operations course.

Ammunition Technicians, Ammunition Technical Officers and Medical personnel posted to a Tactical Assault Group.

The ADF has sought an increase in the Disability payment provided to Ammunition Technicians, Ammunition Technical Officers and Medical personnel who have been posted to a Tactical Assault Group. The proposed Disability payment of \$10,331 recognises the hazards and stresses associated in their involvement in Counter Terrorist roles.

The Tribunal notes that this amendment would also affect the Special Action Forces Allowance.

301 Signals Squadron

The ADF has established 301 Signals Squadron to provide a communication capability to 1 (Commando). The ADF has sought Qualification & Skills allowance of \$1,631 (or as a daily rate for reservists) and a Disability allowance of \$5,438 for Regular Army members on continuous short notice to move.

The Tribunal notes that these are the same amounts that apply to members posted to 126 and 152 Signals Squadrons.

Incident Response Regiment

The ADF has sought to clarify the payment of Specialist Operations Allowance to members of 2 Troop Emergency Response Squadron.

The Tribunal accepts the Parties submissions that, due to their role in dealing with chemical, biological and radiological incidents, Members of 2 Troop Emergency Response Squadron qualify for this allowance under Item 17 – Member undertaking medical, decontamination or search roles.

We agree that any question of underpayment, and the associated decision of a date of effect, is to be handled as an administrative issue.

All of the ADF proposals were supported by the Commonwealth and by the Armed Forces Federation of Australia.

Having regard to the evidence and submissions we are satisfied that the changes sought by the ADF, are appropriate. We have, therefore, decided to approve the changes, as agreed by the Parties.

The changes to Trainee Special Forces Commandos, Tactical Assault Group support personnel and members of the 301 Signals Squadron are to apply on and from 26 August 2004.

The Parties should prepare appropriate determinations to provide to the Tribunal Secretariat within fourteen days.

We will publish our reasons for decision in due course.