Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal

STATEMENT

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

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY: ELECTRONIC WARFARE EMPLOYMENT CATEGORY
(Matter 2 of 2020)

MS I. ASBURY, PRESIDENT

MR A. MORRIS, MEMBER

CANBERRA, 20 FEBRUARY 2020

RADM J. GOLDRICK AO CSC RAN RTD, MEMBER

[1] This statement arises from an application[1] made under s.58H of the *Defence Act 1903* by the Australian Defence Force (ADF*)* to amend the training requirements for skill grade advancement within the Navy's Electronic Warfare (EW) employment category.

[2] We considered this matter on the papers on 19 February 2020.

Background

[3] The Navy EW category sits within the Communications Information Systems workgroup and is part of the radio frequency communications, intelligence, EW, cyber, space and information communications technology workforce.

[4] The EW component of the workforce was last considered by the Tribunal in October 2018 when EW submarine training was reviewed.[2]

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Submissions

ADF

[5]   The ADF submits that on establishment of the EW employment category (within the Graded Other Ranks Pay Structure) Navy recognised the achievement of skill grades upon the successful completion of a career continuum training course at each level, coupled with demonstration of competence through the completion of a Competency Evidence Journal and on-the-job training. This was further achieved at the Supervisor/Manager level through consolidation at sea and an endorsement from the Commanding Officer.

[6]   The ADF states that Navy now needs to adopt a "*progressive mindset and be innovative in the training of the Navy EW employment category sailors*".[3]

[7]   As a result the ADF specifically seeks to:

   a.   amend the prerequisites for award of skill grade 2 to completion of the EW Support Course program;

   b.   remove the use of Competency Evidence Journals for award of skill grade 3 and skill grade 4; and

   c.   move the '*Introduction to Defence Intelligence Course*' from skill grade 3 to skill grade 4 without an associated change to pay grade placement.[4]

Commonwealth

[8]   The Commonwealth supports the ADF's proposal.[5]

Consideration

[9]   We considered the evidence that Competency Evidence Journals were used to assess the skills of EW sailors in an operational environment. We agree this process is labour intensive and time consuming and places an increased burden on the training system along with the number of positions, billets and bunks on-board sea-going vessels.

[10]   We note that competency journals were originally the prerequisite for award of skill grade 2 and that by removing the reference to journals this removes the requirement for the prerequisite. We accept that substituting the journals with completion of the 'EW Support Course' now encapsulates this requirement, and replaces it with an equivalent requirement.

Conclusion

[11]   We accept that the advancement of technology, and Navy's acquisition of simulators for training in the classroom environment, makes the requirement for journals obsolete. We accept that journals are being removed from the training regime for EW sailors in order to reduce the training burden for sea-going vessels.

[12]   We note the evidence that Navy intends to "*conduct a further extensive review into the work value of its EW employment category around 2022/23.*"[6]

[13]   We agree that the proposed changes to EW training and skill grades have no impact on the related pay grade placements and that these changes be implemented with effect from 19 March 2020.

MS I. ASBURY, PRESIDENT
MR A. MORRIS, MEMBER
RADM J. GOLDRICK AO CSC RAN RTD, MEMBER

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[1] DMR/OUT/2019/47 *Listing Application – Navy Electronic Warfare Workforce* dated 17 December 2019

[2] https://www.dfrt.gov.au/sites/default/files/decision_-_navy_ewsm.pdf

[3] ADF submission *Royal Australian Navy Electronic Warfare Category* page 2 paragraph 7.

[4] ADF submission page 1 paragraph 3.

[5] Commonwealth submission *Royal Australian Navy Electronic Warfare Category* dated 7 February 2020 page 2 paragraph 3.

[6] ADF Submission page 6 paragraph 25.