



Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal

DECISION

Defence Act 1903

s.58H—Functions and powers of Tribunal

ARMY AND AIR FORCE: IMAGERY SPECIALISTS

(Matter 11 of 2022)

MS I. ASBURY, PRESIDENT

MR A. MORRIS, MEMBER

CANBERRA, 01 FEBRUARY 2023

[1] This decision arises from a listing application from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) for a determination to be made under Section 58H of the *Defence Act 1903*. The listing application¹ seeks to modernise the photography employment categories through rationalisation, re-skilling, and changes to entry pathways. At the same time, Army and Air Force seek to change the category names from Photographer to Imagery Specialists.

Background

[2] Imagery Specialists are a key component of Defence communications capabilities. Their visual records provide context and evidence by capturing video, still images and audio. Imagery specialists capture diverse events including ceremonial and public events, unit activities, humanitarian and disaster relief, exercise and operations. This imagery is used for a wide variety of purposes from supporting information plans, technical assessments, intelligence, cultural institutions, accident investigation and evidentiary matters

[3] We considered this matter in conference, on the papers, on 6 December 2022.

Submissions

[4] The ADF submits that Army specifically seeks four changes:

- a. to introduce a new skill grade within the existing Photographer Public Relations employment category including Army Reserve members at Private (PTE) to Corporal (CPL);
- b. change the entry rank for imagery specialist from CPL to PTE for Service Category (SERCAT) 5 and SERCAT 7;
- c. introduce the rank of Warrant Officer One (WO1) into the employment category; and
- d. rename the employment category from Photographer Public Relations to Imagery Specialist.

[5] Air Force also seeks four changes:

- a. remove six redundant sub-functions within the employment category;
- b. change the name of the employment category from Photographer to Air Force Imagery Specialist (AFIS);
- c. change the title of skill grades in the category from Photographer Grade 1 and 2 to AFIS Grade 1 and 2; and
- d. amend the regrading requirements from skill grade 1 to 2.²

[6] The Commonwealth “*does not oppose*” the ADF proposal.³

Consideration

[7] We considered the evidence that, across the Services, the skills and training requirements in the digital systems, applications and equipment require “*broader and deeper skill sets*”. We accept “*the operating environments have become more complex, individually confronting and high tempo*”.⁴

[8] We accept the evidence that, since both categories were last considered by this Tribunal, “*digital technologies had replaced all the traditional film processing and chemical printing*”⁵ and the role of a photographer/imagery specialist has changed significantly.

[9] We note that Navy re-named Photographers to Imagery Specialists in October 2009.

Conclusion

[10] We agree with the proposal in its entirety and agree that the term Photographer no longer reflects the role of the category nor aligns with the broad range of contemporary and specialised skills required.

[11] Determination 2 of 2023 will give effect to this decision from the date of signature.

MS I. ASBURY, PRESIDENT
MR A. MORRIS, MEMBER

¹ DMR/OUT/2022/24 *Listing Application – Joint Submission Army Imagery Specialist and Air Force Imagery Specialist*

² ADF Submission Army Imagery Specialist and Air Force Imagery Specialist Matter 11 of 2022 (ADF1) pages 2 and 3 paragraphs 1.4 to 1.6

³ Commonwealth letter *Matter 11 of 2022 – Commonwealth reply* dated 21 December 2022.

⁴ ADF1 page 34 paragraph 7.1

⁵ ADF1 page 5 paragraph 2.9