

DEFENCE FORCE REMUNERATION TRIBUNAL

AIRFIELD DEFENCE GUARD

TRADE RESTRUCTURE

REASONS FOR DECISION

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) has sought the introduction of a new structure and Pay Groups for the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Airfield Defence Guard (ADG) mustering.

The role of the ADG is to provide the specialist ground defence force required to protect air power assets from the effects of hostile ground action and to instruct other RAAF personnel in relevant ground defence techniques.

The responsibility of the ADG is to protect facilities, equipment and personnel that are critical to air operations through the implementation of mustering specific ground defence and specialist skills.

The Airfield Defence Wing (AFDW) was formed in 1992 and consists of a headquarters element and three Air Defence Squadrons. The mustering has a permanent Air Force Constrained Establishment of 450 positions and a reserve force of 312.

The ADF sought the introduction of the new trade structure and Pay Groups with effect from 20 July 2000. The Tribunal heard the submissions and evidence on 10 July 2000 and at the conclusion of proceedings approved the new structure and Pay Groups sought by the ADF.

We now publish our reasons for decision.

BACKGROUND

In 1978 the Committee of Reference (COR) considered the RAAF ADG mustering as part of its review into the Placement of Other Ranks Employment Categories. At that time the ADG mustering had an establishment of 219 permanent members with 119 allocated to four Flights at RAAF Bases Amberley, Williamtown, Richmond and Fairbairn. There was no Squadron or Wing level structure. Airfield Defence Guards were employed to undertake static ground defence tasks or on secondary duties such as guard and ceremonial duties.

Until the 1995 Concept of Operations was endorsed by RAAF there was no approved ground defence concept or policy identifying the role of the ADG. As a result, the general ground defence focus for the RAAF was ad hoc with roles and tasks not clearly defined. To that time meaningful trade development, skills identification and acquisition were based on an informal structure.

The current trade structure for the ADG mustering is at Attachment 1.

INSPECTION

On 22 June 2000 the Tribunal undertook an inspection of the work of the ADG at the Airfield Defence Wing at RAAF Base Amberley.

The Tribunal was briefed on the roles and responsibilities of the ADG by Air Commodore C A Beatty, the Commander Combat Support Group, and members of the mustering at each of the levels. The Tribunal also witnessed practical demonstrations of the tactics, weapons and other equipment that are used by the mustering.

SUBMISSIONS

The ADF submitted that a new structure and Pay Groups for the ADG mustering are required to meet the operational needs of the RAAF for the following reasons:

- there have been significant changes in the nature of the roles, skills and responsibilities required of all ADGs;
- there has been an increase in work value that is not recognised under the existing structure;
- there was a need to create employment categories reflecting trade progression, work value and actual roles and responsibilities; and
- there was a requirement to standardise trade training to produce a multi-skilled ADG to conform with the requirements of the 1995 Concept of Operations.

It was submitted that there has been a significant increase in the work value of ADGs particularly flowing from the changed nature of the roles, with increased skills and levels of responsibility.

It was said that the proposed structure introduces a multi-tiered and graded structure that reflects the qualifications, experience and work value with each tier and grade. The characteristics of the proposed structure were stated as being:

- a. a tiered structure reflecting the transition from Airfield Defence Guard 1, (basic Airfield Defence Guard upon graduation) up to the Unit supervisory level and further to the Manager, Airfield Defence Guard;
- b. formalisation of multi-skilling at the operator, supervisor and manager levels;
- c. training throughout a member's career with competencies reached at an appropriate time;
- d. recognition of technical and instructional skills at superior levels;
- e. civil accreditation; and
- f. the removal of existing inequity."

The proposed structure is as follows:

The ADG Grade 1 will have completed the Airfield Defence Guard Basic Course and will be competent to form part of a section on patrol. They are deployable and operate a variety of vehicles and weapons. They are employable in the Ground Defence Command Post or squadron headquarters and can provide communications and specialist advice to Base Combatant Personnel. ADG1 is placed at Pay Group 2.

The ADG Grade 2 will have completed a number of mandatory trade courses and a competency log, building on the basic skills obtained during the ADG Basic Course. They have completed the Section 2IC Course covering section level tactics and leadership. Personnel at this level are required to lead a half section patrol. ADG2 commence specialist trade courses and will be placed at Pay Group 3.

The ADG Grade 3 will have completed the Junior Non-Commissioned Officers Course, which covers tactics, Instructional Techniques and Weapons Instructional Techniques, Combat Survival Course, Small Arms Coaching for Rifle and Machine Gun course and a competency log. They will have completed specialist training as required. The ADG3 leads a section or a half section and is responsible for supervision of the ADG2 leading the other half section. The ADG3 is employable on specialist duties including command of the quick response force, fire support element or assault element, and duties in the command post or squadron headquarters. The ADG3 instructs on Ground Combat Courses for base combatant personnel and at training units such as the Australian Defence Force Academy and 1 Recruit Training Unit, and is responsible for training students in weapons, ground defence subjects and general Service knowledge, as well as instilling the Service ethos, teamwork, and discipline. ADG3 will be remunerated at Pay Group 4.

The Supervisor, ADG will have successfully completed the ADG Senior NCO Course, at least two specialist instructional courses and a number of optional specialist courses. The Supervisor ADG is the subject master in at least two core skill areas. On posting to AFDW the Supervisor ADG manages Rifle Flight training and administration, acting as the Flight Commander's 2IC, he/she may command a Quick Reaction Force team, perform duties in a Command Post including Duty Officer, or be employed as a specialist (eg. Squadron Communications Officer). The Supervisor ADG is capable of taking command in the absence of a Flight Commander.

Other duties performed by the Supervisor ADG include the supervision of instructors, Search and Rescue Officer, Emergency Control Officer, Command of a Base Defence Section and provision of specialist advice to the unit commander. Supervisor ADG will be remunerated at Pay Group 5.

The Manager ADG will have completed the ADG Manager's Course. The Manager is the subject matter expert for Squadron level tactics and operations, providing specialist advice to the unit Commander. The Manager ADG may command a Support Flight, is the primary adviser to the Commander on active and passive defence measures, holds staff appointments as the senior ADG in Air or Training Commands, is the unit logistics manager and is capable of taking command in the absence of a Flight Commander or Executive Officer. The Manager ADG will be remunerated at Pay Group 5.

The proposed structure is at Attachment 2.

Commonwealth

The Commonwealth supported the proposed ADG structure and Pay Groups. It submitted that this matter could be progressed under the ADF Enterprise Productivity Arrangement: 1999 – 2002 and satisfied the requirements of the Work Value Principle and the ongoing application of the Structural Efficiency Principle.

It was stated amongst other things that the current structure fails to recognise the changed operational role of the ADG mustering brought about by doctrinal changes and the adoption of the ground defence concept of operations. The Commonwealth submitted that there have been significant changes in the responsibilities of ADGs through increased freedom of action, enhanced initiative and flexibility and the devolution of responsibility of decision making to the more junior ranks.

It said that other critical changes to the mustering included upgraded weapons systems and new equipment and training.

The Commonwealth submitted that the proposed structure “will establish a skill related career path to provide incentive for continued participation in skills formation. It will provide a contemporary assessment of category training, skills required and the duties performed”. It was stated that the proposed structure recognised the significant addition to work value and is consistent with other restructures approved by the Tribunal, most notably the Army Infantry Trade Structure.

The Commonwealth supported the commencement date sought by the ADF.

Returned and Services League of Australia

Armed Forces Federation of Australia

The Returned and Services League of Australia and the Armed Forces Federation of Australia supported the restructure and Pay Groups sought by the ADF.

CONSIDERATION

The ADF has sought the introduction of a new trade structure and Pay Groups for the Airfield Defence Guard category. The Commonwealth and interveners supported the new structure and Pay Groups sought.

Wing Commander S D Kimber, the Officer Commanding Airfield Defence Wing, testified that with the introduction of the Airfield Defence Concept of Operations, ADGs are now required to operate to a five kilometre range from the asset being protected. He said that the change to operational doctrine and the identification of the Special Forces threat to airfields, dictates that seventy per cent of operations are required to be conducted at night.

Wing Commander Kimber said that the changes to the identified roles and responsibilities have required the development of new skills. All ADGs are trained in the core skills of the utilisation of Chemical Defence Equipment and Ground Sensor devices, tactics, weapons instruction and communications and the ability to patrol at night using a new generation of Passive and Active night viewing aids and aiming devices attached to weapon systems.

Wing Commander Kimber said that all ADGs are encouraged to obtain as many specialist qualifications as possible in order to maximise the flexibility of the force to meet the multi-functional role of the ADF mustering. These include: Close Personal Protection Operations Course; a Combat Medics Course; a snipers course; assault pioneer course; language training and a demolition operators course.

Witness statements were also provided by: Warrant Officer L Best; Leading Aircraftman B Grehan; Leading Aircraftman M J Bohdal; Corporal A M Green and Sergeant D J Carlile.

Having considered the submissions and evidence presented we are satisfied that the proposed trade structure and Pay Groups sought by the ADF should be implemented.

The proposed five tiered structure will:

- recognise the command, tactical and technical skills of the members of the mustering;
- devolve responsibility to the lowest level of ADG Grade 1;
- take into account the development of a cohesive structure for the trade, new operational doctrine and changes to strategic guidance;
- formalise the specialist and supervisory skills during the ADGs career at appropriate times; and
- is competency based.

The Tribunal is satisfied that there has been a significant increase in the work value of members of the mustering and that levels of responsibility have been devolved to the more junior members of the trade.

In reaching our decision we have had regard to the structure and Pay Group placements of other ADF categories approved by the Tribunal in recent years. In particular those of the Royal Australian Infantry and Commandos. We are satisfied that the placements that we have approved do not disturb current relativities.

In considering relativities the Tribunal notes that the trade structures for the Special Air Service and Navy Clearance Divers have not yet been reviewed by the Tribunal. The ADF has submitted that these categories will be the subject of an internal review in the first half of 2001.

The new structure and pay groups will take effect on and from 20 July 2000.

APPEARANCES: R Kenzie QC, Defence Force Advocate, with Squadron Leader B Cook, for the Australian Defence Force

A O'Brien with L Cullen for the Commonwealth

J Dainer for the Returned and Services League of Australia

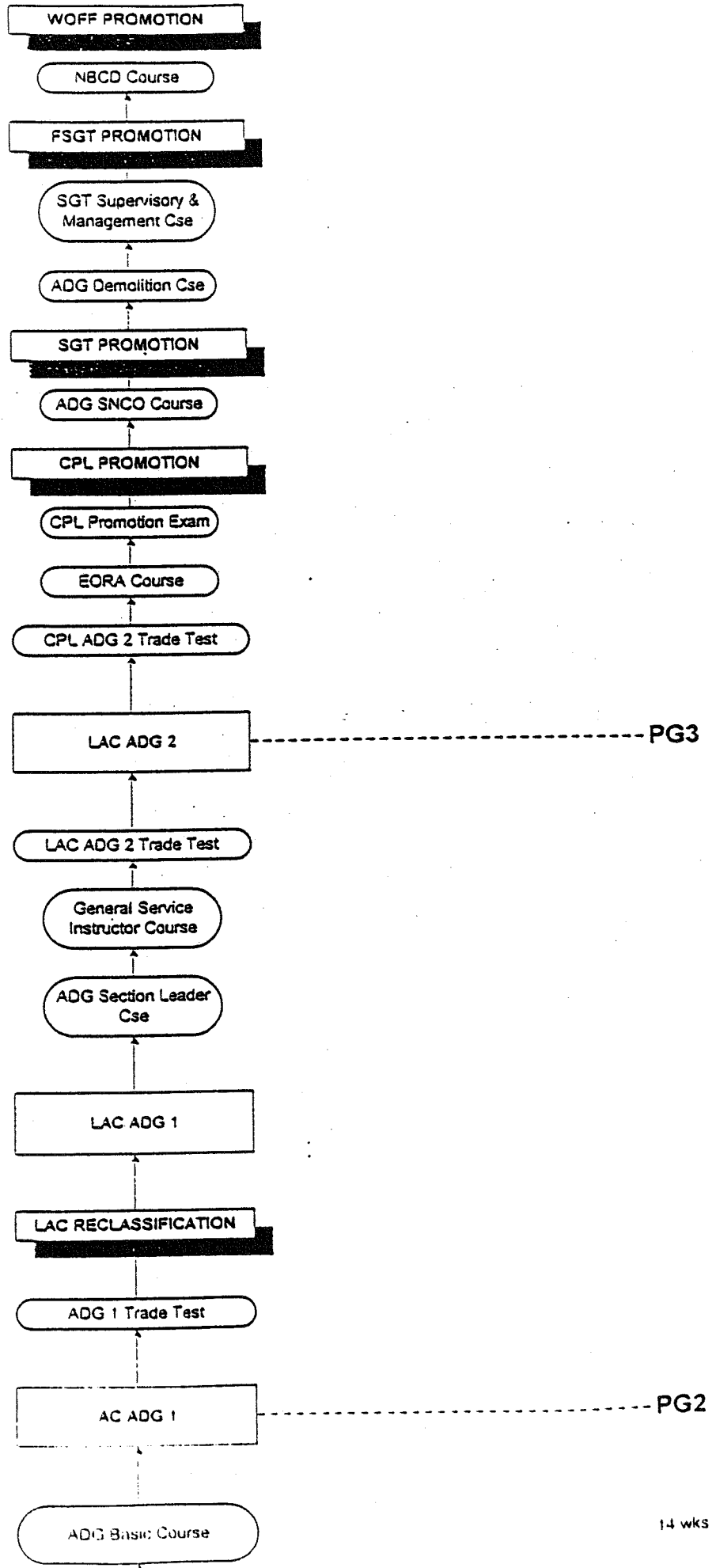
G Howatt for the Armed Forces Federation of Australia

DATE AND PLACE OF HEARING

10 July 2000 Canberra

INSPECTION

22 June 2000 RAAF Amberley



PROPOSED AIRFIELD DEFENCE GUARD CAREER PROGRESSION

