



Australian Government
Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal

STATEMENT

Defence Act 1903

s.58H(2)(a)—Determination of the salaries and relevant allowances to be paid to members

REGIONAL FORCES SURVEILLANCE UNIT – COMBAT SUPPORT OPERATOR

(Matter 6 of 2014)

THE HON. A. HARRISON, PRESIDENT

THE HON. A. BEVIS, MEMBER

CANBERRA, 7 OCTOBER 2014

BRIGADIER W. ROLFE, AO (Ret'd), MEMBER

[1] This statement relates to an application by the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to establish a new Army Reserve category titled Combat Support Operator (CSO) within the Regional Forces Surveillance Units (RFSU). The ADF sought pay placement for this employment category from pay grades one to three commensurate with rank and experience.

[2] We conducted an inspection in relation to this matter at 51st Battalion Far North Queensland Regiment (51st FNQR) on 5 June 2014. At that time we were provided with extensive briefings by the Commanding Officers, Regimental Sergeant Majors, and key personnel from all three RFSUs: North West Mobile Force, the Pilbara Regiment and 51st FNQR.

[3] The ADF submitted that, as a support category, the CSO will provide basic combat service support in administrative, logistic, catering and transport functions enabling the RFSU Patrolman to focus entirely on the primary tasks of the unit.

[4] The ADF proposed a construct consisting of one CSO troop in each RFSU with each troop broken into four detachments to suit each units' specific capability requirement, tasking and demographic.

[5] It was submitted that the CSO will have a basic knowledge of the combat service support trades and be able to apply their skills and knowledge to achieve generalist tasks across these trades. Additionally, it is proposed that the CSO category will raise community awareness of the role, strengthen public support and provide skills and experience not currently available to indigenous women and other RFSU personnel. The roles will only be carried out under direct supervision or with detailed direction; indicating that it is appropriate

to remunerate the CSO below specialist trade categories in the ADF graded other ranks pay structure.

[6] The Commonwealth supported the ADF proposal and the proposed pay structure noting the relativities to the patrolman category and the scope of tasks that the CSO is intended to provide.

[7] In consideration of this matter we note that the ADF has already commenced use of the nomenclature 'Combat Support Operator' and that training for the category commenced in August 2014.

[8] We also accept that it is not until the Sergeant rank that an expectation of supervision of subordinates is placed upon a CSO. As a divergence from the normal Army rank paradigm we accept that the pay grade reflects this.

[9] We were persuaded by the inspection and briefings that the CSO is an attractive option for personnel who do not meet patrolman requirements and acknowledge that the category provides education and work skills not easily acquired in remote communities; it is intended that the CSO will provide a limited function in support of RFSU activities and will enhance community engagement.

[10] Determination 8 of 2014 will give effect to our decision.