

**SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE  
REFERENCES COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO RECRUITMENT & RETENTION  
OF DEFENCE PERSONNEL**

**SUBMISSION**

**Submission No:** 39

**Submittor:** Warrant Officer R A Callaghan

**Address:** 11 Squadron  
RAAF Base  
EDINBURGH SA 5111

**Telephone No:** (08) 8393 3055

**Fax:**

**E-Mail:** robert.callaghan@defence.gov.au

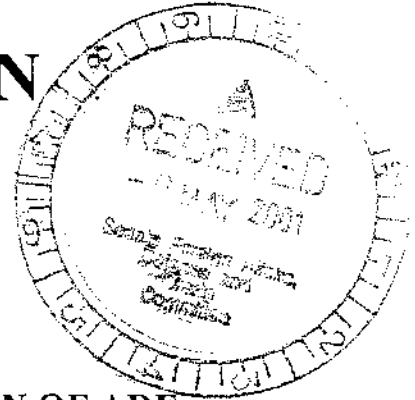
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# No 11 SQUADRON


RAAF BASE EDINBURGH SA 5111



Secretary (Paul Barsdell)  
The Senate  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

## INQUIRY INTO RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF ADF PERSONNEL

At Enclosure 1 is a submission to the Senate inquiry into the recruitment and retention of Australian Defence Force personnel. This submission looks primarily at the impact of changes to Australian Defence Force conditions of service, pay and allowances on retention and recruitment of Airborne Electronic Analyst.

  
R.A. CALLAGHAN  
Warrant Officer  
11 Squadron  
[robert.callaghan@defence.gov.au](mailto:robert.callaghan@defence.gov.au)  
Tel (08) 83933055

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**Enclosure:**

1. Senate submission

**SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE COMMITTEE HEARING  
INTO THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF ADF PERSONNEL**

**Background**

1. Airborne Electronic Officers were employed on maritime patrol aircraft from 1965 until 1982. In 1982 Air Force decided that no more Airborne Electronic Officers would be appointed and that suitably trained Navigators would undertake their duties. The existing Airborne Electronic Officers were amalgamated into the Navigator Category. At the same time it was decided that a new mustering of Airborne Electronic Analyst would be introduced to man all the sensor stations on the P3C Orion, including the Sensor Employment Manager position. At this time all Airborne Electronic Analyst were senior non commissioned officers.
2. As early as October 1982 the need for limited commissioning of Airborne Electronic Analyst was recognised in order to meet the need for officers with backgrounds primarily in the maritime and electronic warfare areas, to move into executive staff positions as the dwindling number of Navigators with these skills vacate them.

**1986 Review of Flying Allowance**

3. As a consequence of the 1986 review of Flying Allowance by the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal, at which Airborne Electronic Analyst were not represented by an Airborne Electronic Analyst, Airborne Electronic Analyst enquired as to why Other Rank Aircrew did not receive the same significant increase in the skill component of Flying Allowance as granted to Officer Aircrew. Air Commodore M.J. Brennan, Director General Personnel Services, responded to this request by stating that the majority of Other Rank Aircrew skill allowance was compensated for by way of pay levels and rapid promotion. These remarks are correct for Sergeant and Flight Sergeant Airborne Electronic Analyst, but not Warrant Officer Airborne Electronic Analyst. All Warrant Officers, irrespective of mustering, receive the same remuneration, which is similar to the way all Officers, irrespective of category, are remunerated. Nor did the Air Commodore's comments take into account the fact that all junior officers (Pilot Officer, Flying Officer and Flight Lieutenant) actually receive faster automatic promotion to Flight Lieutenant than Airborne Electronic Analyst do to Warrant Officer.

**1988 / 1990 Review of Flying Allowance**

4. The hearing for the 1988 Flying Allowance review was completed in August 1988 at which time the imminent implementation of the Airborne Electronic Analyst commissioning policy was not anticipated. As a consequence, Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal Determination No. 15 of 1988 did not allow for the payment of Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill or Disability) (Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill), Flying Allowance (Disability)) to Airborne Electronic Officers. Therefore Air Force requested that Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal Determination No. 15 of 1988 be amended to allow payment of Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) and Flying Allowance (Disability) to Airborne Electronic Officers. Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal Determination No. 15 of 1990 extended the payment of officer aircrew rates of Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) and Flying Allowance (Disability) to Airborne Electronic Officers.

5. The first Airborne Electronic Officers was appointed in July 1990 and by December 1990 four Airborne Electronic Officers had been appointed to fill thirty two established positions. In evidence presented to Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal Determination No. 15 of 1990, Air Force stated;

- a. that Airborne Electronic Officers will **not** be commissioned to perform as operators of sensor equipment in P3C aircraft, those tasks will continue to be performed by Airborne Electronic Analyst,
- b. Airborne Electronic Officers will be employed in executive positions in P3C Crews primarily in Sensor Employment Managers (Sensor Employment Manager) positions, but they may also become Tactical Co-ordinators,
- c. there are many positions (eg. in maritime training, airmen aircrew training, acoustic and electronic warfare training), which require manning by officers with airborne electronics skills and experience.
- d. the graduation requirements of the P3C Sensor Employment Manager conversion demonstrates a degree of knowledge and proficiency greater than that required of Airborne Electronic Analyst. These requirements represent the basic technical qualifications required of the Airborne Electronic Officers,
- e. the Airborne Electronic Officers is considered of equal importance as the Captain and Tactical Co-ordinator in P3C Orion operations, and
- f. under the anomalies and inequities provisions, the extension of Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) and Flying Allowance (Disability) to Airborne Electronic Officers will resolve inequities existing where employees performing similar work are paid dissimilar rates of pay without good reason, in that Airborne Electronic Officers will be entitled to Flying Allowance on the same terms as Navigators who are also eligible to fill the Tactical Co-ordinator and Sensor Employment Manager roles.

6. The situation still exists today where non Sensor Employment Manager qualified Airborne Electronic Analyst upon commissioning, receive the Airborne Electronic Officers rate of Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) from the date of commissioning, not the date of completion of Sensor Employment Manager Conversion. This is contrary to the evidence presented to the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal in 1990, which stated that the Airborne Electronic Officers qualified for the higher rate of Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) by completion of the Sensor Employment Manager conversion.

7. From the inception of the Airborne Electronic Analyst mustering until 1998 Sensor Employment Manager qualified Airborne Electronic Analyst manned the executive position of Sensor Employment Manager on P3C Orion aircraft, as well as training positions in acoustic and electronic warfare, as there were insufficient Airborne Electronic Officers to fill these positions. Yet Airborne Electronic Analyst with exactly the same Sensor Employment Manager qualification, performing the executive duties of an Sensor Employment Manager on P3C Orion aircraft, as well as acoustic and electronic warfare training positions, were not granted the same rate of Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) as granted Airborne Electronic Officers in Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal Determination No 15 of 1990.

## 1997 Review of Flying Allowance

8. Following Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal Determination No 15 of 1997 there existed an opinion amongst Other Rank Aircrew that they were again poorly served by the Australian Defence Force (ADF) during this determination. The decision handed down by the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal was regarded by the ADF as a success. This view was not shared by many of the Other Rank Aircrew of the ADF in regards to the Qualification and Skill component of the Other Rank's Flying Allowance.

9. The sunset provision introduced by the 1997 determination saw Officer Aircrew granted a six years sunset provision, where as Other Rank Aircrew received a three years sunset provision. There appeared to be no logic behind this rationale other than to incongruously favour commissioned aircrew.

10. Airborne Electronic Analyst with more than ten years flying experience, who accept a commission as an Airborne Electronic Officers, will following the 1997 Determination, have their flying experience reduced. An Airborne Electronic Analyst with more than ten years flying experience upon commissioning will be paid Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) at the officer rate of five to six years, not ten years plus. Ten years flying experience is ten years flying experience. Airborne Electronic Analyst upon commissioning do not suddenly lose experience, the ADF still receives the full benefit of their experience.

11. Throughout the 1997 review of flying allowance there was very little consultation with the Other Rank Aircrew musterings of the ADF. The only input sought from the Other Rank Aircrew was justification as to why an increase in Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) and Flying Allowance (Disability) was warranted. The policy governing the way in which Other Rank Aircrew is paid Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill), and the amount of Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) to be paid to Other Rank Aircrew had already been set long before submissions were heard.

12. This review of flying allowance offered the ADF an opportunity to redress the concerns raised following the previous reviews of flying allowance. In fact Group Captain Benjamin, Flying Allowance Project Manager, stated in a document dated 2nd September 1997, that he avoided the inequities between Airborne Electronic Analyst and Airborne Electronic Officers as much as possible throughout the review.

## Time Promotion

13. The minimum rank for an Airborne Electronic Analyst upon graduation is set at Sergeant. Initially an Airborne Electronic Analyst was granted promotion to Flight Sergeant after three years, and Warrant Officer after a further five years. This condition of service has been removed, as the Airborne Electronic Analyst mustering does not have a pyramid shape to it. That is, a small number of members at the top of the pyramid and a much larger number of members at the bottom. This is totally opposite to what has occurred with automatic promotion of Airmen Aircrew to Warrant Officer, in that there is a larger number of Warrant Officers and a smaller number of Sergeants. Now all Airmen Aircrew are automatically promoted to Flight Sergeant after three years with merit promotion to Warrant Officer after a further three years, but only to fill vacancies. Now the bottleneck will occur at Flight Sergeant not Warrant Officer.

14. In 1986 Air Commodore M.J. Brennan, Director General Personnel Services, stated that one of the reasons for not remunerating Airborne Electronic Analyst with a higher rate of Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) was due to the rapid promotion of Airborne Electronic Analyst to Warrant Officer. As this condition of service has been removed, does this now justify Airborne Electronic Analyst receiving a higher rate of Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill)?

15. Another justification for this change in policy is the perceived saving in wages. In fact the difference in salary between a Warrant Officer and a Flight Sergeant is negligible. The largest increase in salary occurs between Sergeant and Flight Sergeant.

16. Due to the small size of the three Airmen Aircrew musterings, time promotion was introduced in an attempt to attract and retain members in the musterings. This point is still valid today. The removal of time promotion occurred without consultation with any of the three musterings and has had a detrimental effect upon moral.

17. Recently Air Force changed the promotion policy for Flight Engineers in an attempt to attract more remusters. Corporals upon completion of the Flight Engineer Course will be promoted to Sergeant and Flight Sergeant after a further three years. Sergeants with more than 3 years seniority upon completion of the Flight Engineer Course will be promoted to Flight Sergeant. After three years service as an FE both members may return to their feeder musterings and compete for promotion to Warrant Officer. Any gain in salary following promotion from Flight Sergeant to Warrant Officer will not offset the deficit of Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) and Flying Allowance (Disability). This change in policy is both divisive and discriminative in nature in that why was this policy change only offered to the FE mustering and not all Airmen Aircrew musterings?

### **Manning**

18. In 1982 Airborne Electronic Analyst were recruited from other mustering within the ADF or directly from civilian life. Since the mid 1990s the only way to join the Airborne Electronic Analyst mustering is to remuster from another position within the ADF. Initially it was envisaged that only ten percent of the Airborne Electronic Analyst would be commissioned as Airborne Electronic Officers. Currently approximately fifty percent of Airborne Electronic Analyst are commissioned and with the declining number of remusters, the number of Airborne Electronic Analyst available to man P3C Orion's is declining.

19. Air Force prefers to recruit Airborne Electronic Analyst from technical mustering within the ADF. One of the reasons for the declining number of remusters is that Air Force is attempting to attract members from technical mustering currently on pay levels five, six or seven and upon graduation as an Airborne Electronic Analyst place them on pay levels four and five. This has a detrimental effect upon a members pension, as flying allowance has no effect on a member's pension.

20. As the number of Airborne Electronic Analyst available to man P3C Orion's declines Air Force is attempting to recruit laterally from other Commonwealth Nations, as well as attempting to attract retired members of the Airborne Electronic Analyst mustering back to the Air Force. These lateral recruits will probably be granted Warrant Officer rank upon joining the Royal Australian Air Force, which will have a detrimental effect upon the moral of the non Warrant Officer members of the Airborne Electronic Analyst mustering. Previously

when other aircrew categories and mustering have declined this low, Air Force has paid an attraction and retention bonus or completion bonus in an attempt to retain current levels. At this time Air Force is attempting to bolster the number of Airborne Electronic Analyst without worrying about retaining the current number of Airborne Electronic Analyst in the mustering. Due to the low number of Airborne Electronic Analyst available Airborne Electronic Officers continue to be employed as sensor operators, which is contrary to the evidence presented to the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal in 1990.

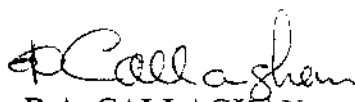
### **Remuneration**

21. Air Force has recently stated that personnel are remunerated for the job they do not the qualifications they hold. Whilst this is true for the majority of Air Force personnel it does not hold true for aircrew. Aircrew are paid Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) in recognition of the acquisition and maintenance of the substantial skills and knowledge required of military aviation, and the need to attract and retain members as aircrew. This would appear to only apply to officer aircrew as Airborne Electronic Analyst with the same Sensor Employment Manager qualification as Airborne Electronic Officers do not receive the same amount of Flying Allowance (Qualification and Skill) as granted Airborne Electronic Officers following Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal Determination No 15 of 1990.

### **Conclusion**

22. Since the inception of the Airborne Electronic Analyst mustering, Air Force has not made one change to policy that has had a positive outcome for the mustering. Changes to policy continually occur without consultation with the Airborne Electronic Analyst mustering. Air Force continually fails to represent Airborne Electronic Analyst equitably at tribunal hearings. Due to the divisive and discriminative nature of the inequities between Airborne Electronic Analyst and Airborne Electronic Officers there is possibly only one solution, which is the commissioning of all Airborne Electronic Analyst.

23. Whilst these comments are only the views of one person and probably don't cover all the concerns of the Airborne Electronic Analyst mustering, hopefully they go some way to explaining why moral is dwindling in the Airborne Electronic Analyst mustering.

  
**R.A. CALLAGHAN**  
Warrant Officer  
No 11 Squadron  
robert.callaghan@defence.gov.au  
Tel 08 83933055

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