

[REDACTED]

PS10(A) 4/25

18 Mar 10

[REDACTED]

Copy to:

[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION OF SERVICE COMPLAINT IN RELATION TO FLYING PAY

ISSUE

1. Service Complaint raised against the tri-Service harmonisation of Specialist Pay (Flying (SP(F))).

RECOMMENDATION

2. [REDACTED] is invited to **note** that:

a. when the tri-Service harmonisation of SP(F) took place with effect from 1 Apr 08, it was agreed that there would be no retrospective action taken for those who had qualified under the previous regulations;

b. SP(F) is paid for recruiting and retention purposes and, therefore, each Service can construct the payment of SP(F), with the agreement of MoD Centre and the other 2 Services, based on its particular need, not in recognition of a particular skill gained;

c. the basis for the Service Complaint raised is incorrect as there has been no change in interpretation of the rules, but rather the change was in recognition of a potentially more challenging retention environment for AAC pilots whilst working alongside RN, RM and RAF counterparts;

d. there remains no new evidence necessitating a change to the current policy of making no retrospective payment for those pilots qualified before 1 Apr 08.

TIMING

3. Routine.

BACKGROUND

4. Prior to 1 Apr 08, Army pilots, unlike pilots in the RN, RM and RAF, were awarded the lower (P2) Non-Commander rates of pay at the end of their flying courses. This resulted in Army pilots remaining behind their peers in the other Services in progressing to the higher flying pay bands.

5. The joint nature of training and deployment for pilots revealed this inequity and, as a consequence, HQ DAAvn submitted a case for the award of P1 rates of pay for Army pilots following the completion of flying training (**FLAG A**). It was the view of HQ DAAvn that this pay disparity between the Services was having an impact on the morale of Army pilots, was retention negative and would also have a negative effect on recruiting.¹ The case for a change was

¹ D/AAvn/31/003 dated 18 Feb 08.

[REDACTED]

approved, and LF subsequently provided for a one-off migration cost of approximately £200K, and agreed to meet the increased the cost to SP(F) of approximately £125K per year. No retrospective payment to those who qualified prior to 1 Apr 08 was agreed to be made.

GENERAL

6. **Principle of Specialist Pay.** Specialist Pay (SP), as defined by the Joint Service Publication 754 (JSP 754) tri-Service Regulations for Pay and Charges, is paid to assist with recruitment and retention requirements. It is not paid as a reward for acquisition of a specific skill, nor is it required to be harmonised across the 3 Services.

7. **Pay Warrant and the Joint Personnel Administration.** There was no change in policy resulting from the introduction in 2006 of either JSP 754 or the Joint Personnel Administration system. The Pay Warrant (1964) states that 'officer pilots who are not qualified as aircraft commanders receive the Army NCO pilot (P2) rate until they achieve aircraft commander (P1) status'.² The introduction of JPA ensured that there was no ambiguity with this regulation and, prior to 1 Apr 08, until a pilot had on their record P1 status, they were paid at the P2 rate.

8. **Service Differences.** In line with the principle of SP, the payment of SP(F) can, and does, vary between the Services in direct correlation to their particular requirements. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that, currently, a Financial Retention Incentive of £50K is paid to RN, RM and RAF helicopter pilots, and not to Army pilots. The change in SP(F) policy for the Army was made in recognition of the potentially negative recruiting and retention situation created by a more joint approach to operating as highlighted by the submission from HQ DAAvn.

SUMMARY

9. The issue of retrospective payment of P1 rates of SP(F) for Army pilots qualified prior to 1 Apr 08 was considered when the initial changes were made. It was decided that, in line with existing and prior policy, there was no need for a change to be made.

10. The basis of the Service Complaint is incorrect, as there has not been a change to SP(F) policy with the introduction of JPA. Changes to SP(F) policy have been made as a direct result of the increasingly joint nature of flying within the Services, and the concern that recruiting and retention for the Army could be significantly more difficult if there was not equity with the RN and RAF.

[SIGNED]

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Flag:

A. Harmonisation of Specialist Pay (Flying) submission from HQ DAAvn dated 18 Feb 08.

² Army Pay Warrant (1964), Section 7, Para 221.

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D/AAvn/31/003

18 Feb 08

SP Pol (P+C) – through PS10(A)

HARMONISATION OF SPECIALIST PAY (FLYING)

Reference:

A. JSP 754 – Tri-Service Regulations for Pay and Charges.

ISSUE

1. That Army pilots who complete flying training after 1 Apr 08 are awarded Aircraft Commander (P1) rates of Specialist Pay (Flying) (SP(F)), rather than P2 rates, thereby aligning SP(F) rates across all three Services.

BACKGROUND

2. Section 17 of Reference A lays down the policy for the award of SP(F). In all three Services, SP(F) commences on completion of flying training, however, there are significant differences between the rates of SP(F) awarded. All RN, RM and RAF helicopter pilots are initially granted Aircraft Commander rates of SP(F)³. However, Army helicopter pilots are initially granted Non-Aircraft Commander rates of SP(F)⁴. Once granted the higher Aircraft Commander rates of SP(F) by the CO of their units⁵, they remain behind their peers in the other two Services in progressing to the higher flying pay bands⁶.

PILOT TRAINING

3. **Formation of a Tri-Service Helicopter Flying Training System.** Prior to 1997, helicopter flying training was undertaken under single Service arrangements. On 1 Apr 97, the Joint Elementary Flying Training School⁷ (JEFTS) and the Defence Helicopter Flying Training School (DHFS) were established to teach student pilots from all three Services.

4. **Comparison of Flying Training Across Defence.** Following basic fixed wing training at DEFTS⁸, students move to DHFS at RAF Shawbury for helicopter training. After completing the Single Engine Basic Rotary Wing syllabus within 660 Sqn, students move on to 705 Sqn to complete instrument flying, navigation and night flying. RN students complete an additional 3 weeks captaincy and secondary role training at 705 Sqn before streaming to their different aircraft types. Once this phase is complete, the final elements of flying training are undertaken under single Service arrangements as shown at Annex A and summarised below:

³ JSP 754 refers to the higher rates of pay as P1 rates of pay.

⁴ JSP 754 refers to the lower rates of pay as P2 rates of pay, though P2 is no longer a term in use in the Services.

⁵ Normally 6 – 18 months following completion of the Army Pilots' Course.

⁶ For example 5 years after qualifying as a pilot, a pilot in the RN or RAF would be in receipt of £21.97 per day SP(F). The majority of Army pilots would be in receipt of £12.95 per day.

⁷ Later re-named the Defence Elementary Flying Training School (DEFTS).

⁸ RAF students do not attend DEFTS, they undertake basic fixed wing flying training under separate RAF arrangements. RN EFT training syllabus is a total of 65 hrs, longer than Army EFT syllabus because of the requirement to identify RN FJ pilot candidates.

a. **RN.** RN student pilots remain within 705 Sqn for an extended syllabus to develop captaincy skills and determine the nature of aircraft on which they will subsequently qualify. Most rotary pilots will then progress to either the Lynx Mk8, Sea King or Merlin Operational Conversion Phase (OCP) at Culdrose and Yeovilton before joining their operational unit. A small number of RN & RM students identified for Lynx Mk7 training join AAC students for training delivered by SAAvn.

b. **Army.** Army student pilots move to the School of Army Aviation (SAAvn) at Middle Wallop for the Operational Training Phase (OTP) of their course. This is followed by a Conversion To Type (CTT) course on the aircraft they will subsequently fly in their unit. On successful completion of CTT, they join their operational unit.

c. **RAF.** RAF student pilots complete Griffin helicopter training at 60 Sqn, RAF Shawbury. Thereafter, they undertake operational conversion training on the Chinook, Merlin or Puma helicopter before joining their operational unit.

5. **Output Standards.** The output standard at the end of all Service flying training courses⁹ is Aircraft Commander, as shown at Annex A, which is also the input standard for all pilots joining the Joint Helicopter Command (JHC). It is at this point that the award of wings is confirmed for pilots from all three Services. Each Service has a system of progression in flying units to further develop the flying skills and experience of newly qualified pilots.

6. **Recruiting and Retention.** The inequality in SP(F) has been brought into focus by the increase in the level of joint activity between the Services. Pilots from all three Services undergo joint flying training and are subsequently employed together on training exercises and on operations. It is thus possible to find two pilots from different Services who, having attended the same training course and subsequently qualified as pilots at the same time, are flying in the same operational theatre on similar tasks, but on very different rates of SP(F). This disparity and perceived unfairness is having a detrimental effect on morale. Additionally, and on a financial level, the lower rates of SP(F) do not provide the required incentive for personnel to remain in the Army¹⁰ rather than leave the Services to find employment with the airlines¹¹. These factors are contributing to the current retention problems within Army Aviation¹². Moreover, since each Service recruits officers from the same pool of manpower, any difference in pay and allowances on qualification as a pilot is likely to have an impact on recruiting.

7. **Summary.** The Army Pilots' Course has been developed over the years. As with pilots in the other Services, Army personnel are qualified Aircraft Commanders on completion of their flying training. However, unlike pilots in the RN, RM and RAF, Army pilots are awarded the lower Non-Aircraft Commander (P2) rates of pay at the end of their flying course. The increasingly joint nature of training and deployment has served to reveal this inequity and it is now common knowledge throughout military aviation. This has

⁹ The end of flying training is after the OCF (RN), CTT (Army and RM) and OCP (RAF). Following each of these courses, qualified pilots join a flying unit, though RM pilots undertake a short course at RNAS Yeovilton immediately following CTT.

¹⁰ Once the Training Return of Service (currently 5 years, rising to 6 years from 1 Apr 08) has expired.

¹¹ A buoyant civil aviation market was a major factor in the recent award of an FRI to RN and RAF career stream officers at the IPP. This award further contributed to poor morale in the Army.

¹² The PVR rate for Direct Entry (DE) Capts has more than doubled during the last year. Similarly, 14 officers are in the process of transferring to the RN and RAF, compared to a historical rate of 1 or 2 a year.



had an impact on the morale of Army pilots, it is retention negative, and it is likely to have an effect on recruiting.

DELIVERABILITY

8. This change does not require any SPVA action; the only action required is by Career Managers. The old competence for those personnel currently receiving the P2 rate of SP(F) should be 'end-dated' on 31 Mar 08 and positions should be correctly flagged so that they attract the P1 rate of SP thereafter, with the new competence being awarded as of 1 Apr 08. All newly qualified Pilots post 1 Apr 08 should be awarded the new competence.

AFFORDABILITY

9. The harmonisation from 1 Apr 08 will cost the Army approximately £125k per year, with a one-off cost of approximately £200k. Land Forces have agreed to fund this requirement.

REGULATION CHANGE.

10. A proposed amendment to Reference A is enclosed at Annex B.

Signed on DII



HQ DAAvn



Annexes:

- A. Pilot training timelines.
- B. Proposed amendments to JSP 754.

