

Civil Service Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme

General Council Report 1493

(Meeting/s of 31 July 2007, 28 November 2007)

That the terms of the agreed Decentralisation Training Allowance (DTA) be applied to staff who are promoted on the same basis as staff moving on lateral transfer.

Background

1. The Government decided to make ex-gratia Decentralisation Training Allowance (DTA) payments, subject to certain conditions, to officers serving and living in existing regional locations who volunteer for decentralisation and who are required to take up duty in a Department/Office in Dublin (or other suitable provincial location) for an initial training period prior to assignment to a new decentralised location as follows:

- A taxable payment of €3,000 to each officer in Dublin for up to 8 weeks, for any further period of between 9 and 14 weeks a second taxable payment of €2,000 and in exceptional circumstances and with the sanction of the Department of Finance a third taxable payment of €300 per week for any period of training in Dublin, in excess of 14 weeks.

Payment of the DTA where an Officer is Promoted

2. The issue is whether the DTA should be paid to an officer from an existing rural location who is promoted to a post in a Department or Office which is to be decentralised and who has to come to Dublin to fill the post for the period until that decentralisation takes place. The Official Side determined that the DTA was not payable in such cases.

Views of the Staff Side

3. The Staff Side pointed out that there was no exclusion of promoted officers in the agreement and that the matter had never been raised by the Official Side in the discussions that led to the agreement and had only been raised after agreement was concluded. The Staff Side stated that staff promoted to locations other than those to which they had committed to re-locate, incurred additional costs in being forced to stay in this location by the employer in the same way as their colleagues who transfer laterally. Indeed as, in most instances, they are required to stay in that location for prolonged periods, the burden on them is, if anything, likely to be greater than that placed on staff transferring laterally. In any event, the Staff Side remain of the clear view that promoted staff are covered by the agreement.

Views of the Official Side

4. The Official Side's position is that the purpose of the allowance by definition is to compensate officers who are required to transfer temporarily to Dublin for

training purposes prior to decentralising to another provincial location. It was not intended to be paid to existing civil servants in provincial locations who have been promoted and who have to spend time in Dublin before moving to another decentralisation location. The transfer of such officers to Dublin arises from promotion rather than from their training needs.

5. The allowance is structured in a manner designed to minimise the periods for which staff would be brought to Dublin for training periods. The instructions issued to Departments and Offices makes clear that they should minimise such training periods. It is illogical to suggest that these arrangements were also intended to cover situations where officers were moving to Dublin on promotion as the option of minimising the period of relocation does not arise; the promotion post needs to be filled and the officer cannot remain in their previous post having been promoted to a higher post.

Disagreement recorded

6. This report records disagreement on the claim and was adopted at the meeting held on 28 November 2007.

Aengus O Riain
Official Side Secretary

Joan Byrne
Staff Side Secretary

Agreed Report recording disagreement

This report was adopted on 28 November 2007