

Civil Service Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme

General Council Report 1293

(Meeting/s of 26 April 1995, 28 June 1995, 26 July 1995)

Claim on behalf of Law Clerks, Legal Clerks and Senior Legal Clerks, Legal Staff Officers, Principal Legal Clerks and Chief Clerks for the provision of a clothing allowance for the grades concerned.

1. In presenting the claim the Staff Side said that the grades concerned were officers of the court and were expected to comply with a dress code when attending court which would not apply to civil servants of equivalent grades who frequently dressed in casual clothing. Custom and practice and court rules required that the grades concerned spend considerable amounts of money in the provision of dark suits and footwear and the maintenance of such clothing in a high quality and acceptable manner. What was sought was an allowance which would allow for the purchase of two good quality suits and two pairs of footwear per annum.
2. In responding to the claim the Official Side said that there was an onus on officers to dress in a manner suitable to meet the requirements of the job. In the case of the grades covered by this claim there is no legal requirement on officers to comply with a particular dress code. It was accepted that they are expected by the court to be neatly and somberly dressed. However, the Official Side did not accept that what was expected of officers was unreasonable. A number of the grades covered by the claim are middle management grades. In the case of Law Clerks, which is the recruitment grade, those accepted for the position must have had at least one years' experience on law clerk duties in a solicitor's office and consequently would be fully aware of the dress requirements of the court when applying for the position.
3. Were the claim to be conceded it would almost certainly lead to similar claims from other groups.
4. For the above reasons the Official Side said they were not prepared to make an offer on the claim.
5. Following further discussion it was decided that a report recording disagreement be prepared.
5. This report, recording disagreement, was adopted on 26 June 1995.

This report was adopted on 28 June 1995