

Civil Service Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme

General Council Report 1342

(Meeting/s of 21 December 1998)

Agreement in relation to the retention of IT staff on year 2000 work including the payment of a loyalty bonus to grades represented by the CPSU, PSEU and IMPACT

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Agreement in relation to the retention of IT staff on Year 2000 work including the payment of a loyalty bonus to grades represented by the Civil & Public Service Union (CPSU), Public Service Executive Union (PSEU) and IMPACT.

Meetings of 6 August, 25 September, 13 October, and 6 November 1998.

1. Following an analysis of staff attrition rates in IT areas in the Civil Service and their adverse impact on achieving Year 2000 compliance, the Official Side proposed a set of once-off, exceptional measures to retain key skilled IT staff on Year 2000 work until it is completed and a mechanism to allow for interdepartmental assistance.
2. Following discussions on the Official Side proposed measures, they were extended to include payment of a loyalty bonus to key IT staff on Year 2000 work.
3. The revised measures, which are set out in Appendix 1, were accepted by the Staff Side.
4. Both Sides accept that these measures are once-off and exceptional and are designed to deal with the critical time-bound problem of achieving Year 2000 compliance of computerised systems in the civil service. Both Sides also accept that the measures apply only to staff on Year 2000 compliance work as set out in the Annex of Appendix 1.
5. Both Sides agree that the continuing problem of recruiting and retaining skilled IT staff generally requires to be addressed, and the Official Side undertakes to bring forward proposals to help alleviate these problems at an early date.

6. At its meeting on 21 December 1998 the Council agreed to recommend for acceptance the exceptional measures referred to in paragraph 3.
7. This report accordingly records such agreement.
8. This report was adopted on 21 December 1998.

Appendix 1

Measures to Help Retain Skilled IT Staff on Year 2000 Remedial Work

Introduction

1. A set of once-off exceptional measures is being introduced to help alleviate the loss of skilled IT staff working on Year 2000 remedial work by way of mechanisms for the retention/reassignment of skilled IT staff on/to Year 2000 remedial work.
2. These measures, which will come into effect immediately and remain in force until 31 March 2000, will apply to IT staff on Year 2000 work as set out in the Annex.

IT Staff Retention Mechanisms

3. IT staff on Year 2000 remedial work who are promoted internally to a post in another area within the Department/Office may be retained on that work until it is completed.
4. IT staff on Year 2000 remedial work who are promoted from Interdepartmental panels to a post in another area in their existing Department/Office or to another Department/Office may also be retained on that work in their existing Department/Office until it is completed.
5. Where necessary, former IT staff who are working on administrative duties and who have skills/experience relevant to their existing Department/Office's Year 2000 remedial work may be temporarily deployed to that work. Department of Finance sanction is required for these reassignments if they result in supernumerary posts.
6. Where any of the mechanisms at 3, 4 and 5 results in a vacancy in an administrative area, Departments/Offices may make temporary higher duty payments to a staff member in that area.

Interdepartmental Assistance

7. As an additional measure, the Department of Finance will, if necessary, examine in early 1999 the putting together of a temporary team/s of skilled IT staff to assist a Department/Office which requires assistance to complete its Year 2000 work programme. These teams would be drawn from other Departments/Offices which have completed their Year 2000 Compliance Programmes.

Loyalty Bonus

8. A flat-rate loyalty bonus, calculated on the basis of time spent on Year 2000 remedial work, will be paid as a lump sum in April 2000 to officers who are eligible under the criteria set down in the Annex and who are still serving in the Civil Service at that date.
9. The bonus payable will be calculated at the rate of £7,500 per annum

subject to a maximum of 18 months payment.

10. Staff in the following circumstances, who fulfil the criteria set down in the Annex, will qualify for receipt of a loyalty bonus on a pro-rata basis,

- Job-sharers; and
- Personnel who have been working on, or have completed, Year 2000 remedial work already.

11. The loyalty bonus is a personal incentive payment to skilled IT staff working on Year 2000 remedial work.

12. IT management at Principal Officer level must certify that the officer fulfils the criteria set down and is eligible for receipt of the loyalty bonus.

ANNEX

Staff on Year 2000 remedial work

1. The officer is serving as a HEO/SA, EO/JSA, SO/Senior Programmer or CO/Programmer or equivalents and is working on essential Year 2000 work in one or more of the following areas :-

- (a) Programming/program testing
- (b) Systems Analysis
- (c) Systems design/testing
- (d) Systems programming/testing
- (e) Database administration and production management
- (f) Management and maintenance of Local and Wide Area Network components
- (g) Technical support;

2. The officer possesses the necessary skills and experience essential to working in one or more of these areas;

3. IT management must certify that the services of the officer are essential to ensure the achievement of Year 2000 compliance in critical systems or infrastructures; and

4. The officer is performing his/her duties to a consistently high standard and has an appropriate record of attendance, sick leave, and behaviour.

This report was adopted on 21 December 1998