

Civil Service Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme

General Council Report 1402

(Meeting/s of 27 June 2001, 26 September 2001, 27 February 2002)

(I) That the members of voluntary search and rescue organisations (including, for example, the Irish Marine Emergency Service, the RNLI and mountain rescue teams) should have the same special leave arrangements for training as that granted to members of the FCA and the Civil Defence.

(II) that members of these organisations be granted special leave with pay when called out on search and rescue operations.

1. The claim was presented by the Staff Side at the meeting of 27 June 2001. The Staff Side highlighted that special leave with pay is available to members of the FCA and the Civil Defence for training purposes. The Staff Side also mentioned the vital role of such organisations in the community and were hopeful of a positive outcome in recognition of volunteers' services.

2. The claim was considered in detail. Given the meritorious activities of voluntary search and rescue organisations, it was felt that some paid special leave should be introduced. Civil servants who wish to attend training courses with voluntary search and rescue organisations will be facilitated as far as possible consistent with the exigencies of the public service.

3. The following proposals were put to the Staff Side.

The relevant organisations include:

- (i) the Irish Coast Guard,
- (ii) the Royal National Lifeboat Institution,
- (iii) the Community Inshore Rescue Service,
- (iv) Irish Water Safety, and
- (v) the Irish Mountain Rescue Association.

Officers would be granted special leave with pay for half the period of the training course subject to the following qualifications:

- (i) no more than 10 days special leave with pay, for attendance at a training course, in any one leave year;
- (ii) documentary evidence of attendance for the full period of the course will be required;

- (iii) Officers will be eligible for release to attend a training course once only in any leave year;
- (iv) special leave is also available under circulars 22/62 (Civil Defence) and 51/79 (Reserve Defence Forces). Officers availing of special leave under either of those circulars may not apply for special leave under this circular in the same calendar year.

Special leave with pay would also be granted where officers are called out on search and rescue operations, subject to satisfactory documentary evidence being provided as soon as possible after the call-out. No more than 5 days special leave with pay would be allowed in any one leave year. An absence for part of a day would be counted as one day for the purposes of this leave.

Special leave with pay in addition to the allowances above would also be granted in respect of any time necessarily spent in travelling to and from a course of training.

Periods of leave, over and above the allowances of special leave with pay, which are necessary in order to cover the full course of training, would, at the officer's option, be treated as annual leave or as special leave without pay or partly in each category.

4. The proposals were acceptable to, and welcomed by, the Staff Side.
5. This report, recording agreement, was adopted on 27 February 2002.

Agreed Report, recording agreement.

This report was adopted on 27 February 2002